



**GEDIS - Gender Diversity in Information Science:
Challenges in Higher Education**

Project Reference: 2024-1-ES01-KA220-HED-000246558

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Embedding Gender Perspectives in Information Science Education: Barriers, Opportunities, and Pathways for Change — 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, quality offices, policy-makers, ministries, accreditation agencies and all stakeholders committed to fostering more inclusive and equitable academic environments.

Co-funded by the European Union. The opinions and views expressed are solely those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Spanish Service for the Internationalisation of Education (SEPIE). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.





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Gender Diversity in Information Science: Challenges in Higher Education

Barcelona, 31/08/2025



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Note on Dataset Availability

The full dataset, is still under methodological development and will be made publicly available once the analysis framework is consolidated and peer-reviewed.



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Executive summary

This white paper examines the integration of gender perspectives into Library and Information Science (LIS) curricula across six European countries within the GEDIS consortium (Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czechia, Germany, and Spain). A cross-national online survey (April–July 2025) generated 115 valid responses, mainly from mid-career and senior academics. While gender diversity was the focus, the binary classification framework applied represents a methodological limitation.

Findings reveal broad acknowledgement of the importance of gender perspectives, alongside recognition that classroom-ready strategies, inclusive approaches, and collaboration with gender experts are essential. Nevertheless, implementation remains uneven. Teaching absorbs the largest share of academic time (average 4,55/5), limiting opportunities for curriculum redesign. Structural support is inconsistent: 62,5% reported insufficient training opportunities, 44,8% noted difficulties balancing bibliographies in male-dominated subfields, and 39,6% highlighted limited institutional recognition. Workload pressures and cultural resistance, shaped by national contexts, further constrain progress.

Despite these barriers, opportunities for change are evident. Shared faculty commitment, inter-faculty collaboration (rated 4,17/5), and demand for practical resources provide a strong foundation. Embedding gender as a transversal competence, supported by expert input and Open Educational Resources (OER), can deliver scalable change—particularly when linked to accreditation, promotion, and evaluation frameworks.

The recommendations presented prioritise: (1) visible institutional commitment and leadership endorsement; (2) systematic capacity-building and interdisciplinary



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training with gender-studies experts; (3) curriculum innovation that mainstreams gender across compulsory and elective modules, adopting intersectional approaches; (4) targeted support mechanisms, including toolkits, mentorship, and funded initiatives integrating AI/data literacy; and (5) structured monitoring and recognition so gender-sensitive teaching is embedded within quality assurance and faculty advancement.

Integrating gender perspectives in LIS education is not a peripheral goal but a structural challenge requiring coordinated, context-sensitive action. With adequate institutional support, higher education institutions can move beyond symbolic inclusion towards sustainable transformations. Such efforts will not only strengthen equity and inclusiveness in academia but also prepare future LIS professionals to address societal challenges responsibly.



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1. Introduction

Gender perspective has progressively gained attention in higher education, yet their integration into Library and Information Science (LIS) curricula remains uneven and often fragmented. While international frameworks and European policies highlight gender equality as a cross-cutting priority, the translation of these commitments into teaching practice is still limited. In LIS, where questions of information access, representation, and knowledge organisation are central, overlooking gender not only restricts the scope of academic reflection but also diminishes the potential societal impact of the discipline. Addressing this gap requires empirical evidence on how educators and institutions perceive both the opportunities and barriers for gender-sensitive innovation in teaching.

The present study was conducted within the framework of the GEDIS consortium, which brings together academic institutions from Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czechia, Germany and Spain. These six countries represent diverse higher education systems and cultural contexts, allowing for a comparative perspective on the integration of gender perspectives in LIS education. By situating the analysis within this transnational consortium, the study captures both common challenges and country-specific dynamics, offering a nuanced understanding of how support mechanisms and barriers are distributed across institutional contexts.

It should be acknowledged that, although this study engages with issues of gender diversity, it applies a binary classification framework. As a result, the representation of non-binary and gender-diverse identities is limited. This methodological constraint is recognised as a limitation of the study, and not as a reflection of oversight or disregard for the broader spectrum of gender identities.



The aim of the study is twofold: first, to explore the perceived opportunities that may facilitate the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in LIS teaching; and second, to identify the structural and cultural barriers that hinder this process. In doing so, the research seeks not only to document current practices but also to provide insights for future capacity-building and curriculum design. The focus on faculty perceptions ensures that the results reflect the lived realities of academic work, where teaching, research, and leadership responsibilities often compete for time and recognition.

By combining a cross-country analysis with a thematic exploration of supports and obstacles, this study contributes to the growing body of scholarship on gender in higher education. At the same time, it generates practical knowledge for policymakers, institutional leaders, and educators seeking to strengthen the role of gender perspectives in LIS curricula. Ultimately, the findings are intended to inform strategies that move beyond symbolic inclusion towards meaningful, sustained, and context-sensitive integration.

2. Methodology

The study was based on a cross-national survey designed to explore the teaching experience, working conditions, and institutional support available to academics in Library and Information Science (LIS) and related disciplines. The instrument employed was an online questionnaire, carefully structured into four main sections: demographics, work allocation, institutional support, and barriers. The demographic section collected background information such as age, gender, ethnicity, country of residence, and academic trajectory, which provided the foundation for interpreting the data in context. The work allocation section investigated the distribution of academic time across teaching, research, administrative, management, and innovation-related tasks, offering insight into how responsibilities are balanced in



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daily professional practice. The institutional support section examined the resources, recognition, and training opportunities that respondents perceived as being provided by their universities, with a specific emphasis on innovation and teaching development. Finally, the barriers section explored the main obstacles encountered when attempting to implement curricular redesign, pedagogical innovations, or gender mainstreaming in academic contexts. Taken together, these sections allowed for a comprehensive assessment of the structural and individual factors shaping academic practice.

The survey was distributed between the end of April and July 2025 in three rounds of data collection. Administration was carried out through institutional mailing lists coordinated by the project partners. To maximise accessibility, the questionnaire was offered in several languages. A common version in English was created for all partners, who then translated it into their respective native languages. The Austrian and German partners translated the questionnaire into German. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the local partner translated it into Bosnian and managed dissemination. In Croatia, the instrument was circulated in English only. The Czech partner translated it into Czech. Finally, the Spanish partner prepared versions in both Catalan and Spanish. This multilingual approach ensured that respondents could engage with the questions in their preferred academic and cultural context.

In total, 115 valid responses were collected after data cleaning. The national distribution of cases was uneven, reflecting the size and engagement of the academic communities involved: Austria (n=2), Bosnia and Herzegovina (n=6), Croatia (n=19), Czechia (n=9), Germany (n=14), and Spain (n=65). Although the smaller subsamples, such as Austria, limit the representativeness of some analyses, they were retained in order to capture the diversity of perspectives across the consortium.



All responses were treated as raw data, cleaned and normalised prior to analysis. Only valid answers for each question were included. The data were processed exclusively in aggregated form for reporting, with no identification of individual participants. Participation was entirely anonymous and voluntary, and ethical guidelines were followed throughout the study to ensure the protection of respondents' privacy and the responsible handling of their information.

3. Descriptive Analysis

3.1. Descriptive analysis of academic staff distribution

In total, 115 professors participated in the survey. The respondents represented a broad age range, with a concentration among mid-career to senior academics. Early-career academics were also represented, though less prominently.

The age distribution of respondents reflects broad representation across generational cohorts. The largest shares correspond to those aged 41–45 and 56–60 (17,4% each), followed closely by the 61–65 group (15,7%). Early-career researchers in the 30–40 range represent a smaller share (22,6% combined), while only 0,9% are aged 66–70. This profile indicates a predominance of mid-career and senior academics, complemented by early-career scholars and a notable group of respondents over 60, thus providing a comprehensive view of academic careers at different stages of development.

In terms of gender identity, the majority of respondents identified as women (53,9%, n=62), followed by men (44,3%, n=51). A smaller proportion identified with other gender identities or preferred not to disclose their gender (1,7%, n=2) (see Figure 1). This distribution suggests that, while uneven, gender diversity is present across



academic contexts and underlines the relevance of considering gender perspectives in the analysis.

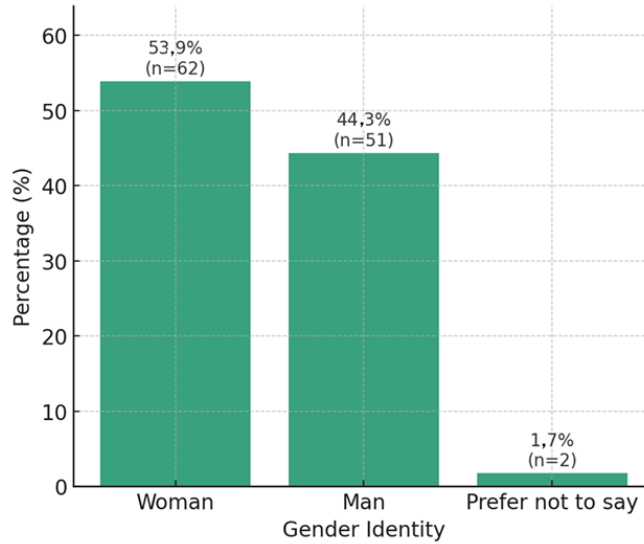


Figure 1. Gender Identity of Respondents

Academic qualifications were predominantly at the doctoral level (ISCED 8), with a smaller proportion holding Master's degrees (ISCED 7) (see Figure 2).

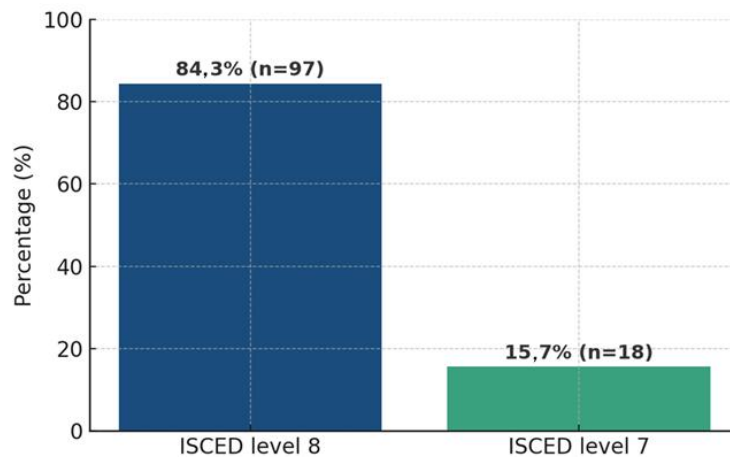


Figure 2. Highest Academic Degree of Respondents



This distribution reflects the advanced academic profile and high qualification levels of the surveyed teaching staff, aligning with the common requirement of a PhD for university teaching in many higher education systems.

The teaching experience profile reveals a balanced distribution across career stages. About one-quarter of respondents (25,4%, n=29) reported 0–5 years of teaching experience, while 23,7% (n=27) indicated 6–15 years. The largest group corresponds to those with 16–25 years of academic teaching (28,1%, n=32), followed closely by respondents with more than 26 years (22,8%, n=26) (see Figure 4). This mix highlights the combination of early-career academics with highly experienced faculty members within the sample (see Figure 3).

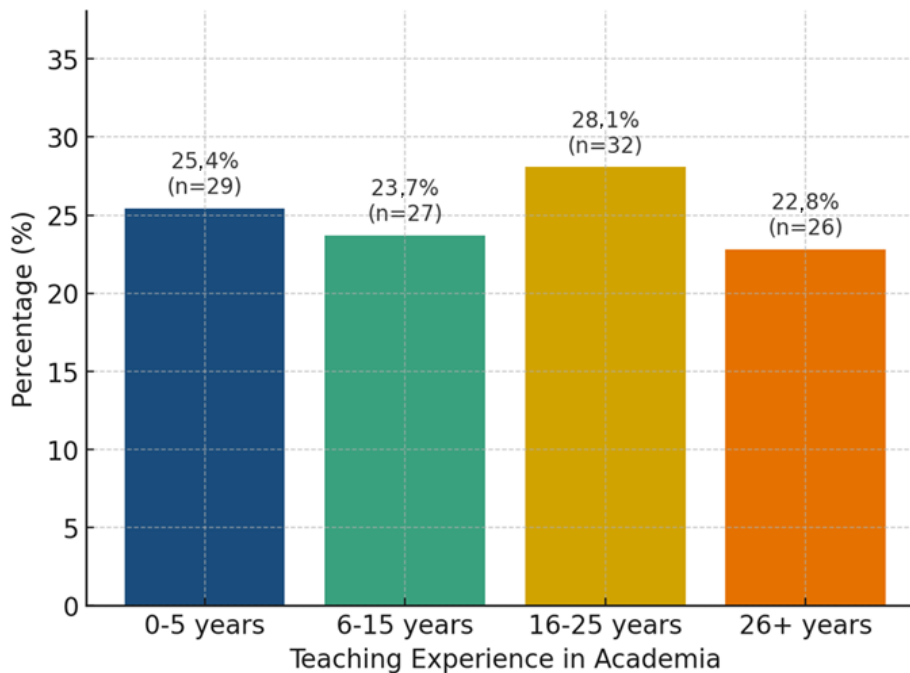


Figure 3. Teaching Experience of Respondents



Together, these sociodemographic profiles indicate that the perspectives captured in the survey are those of a predominantly senior and highly qualified academic community, with diversity across gender and age.

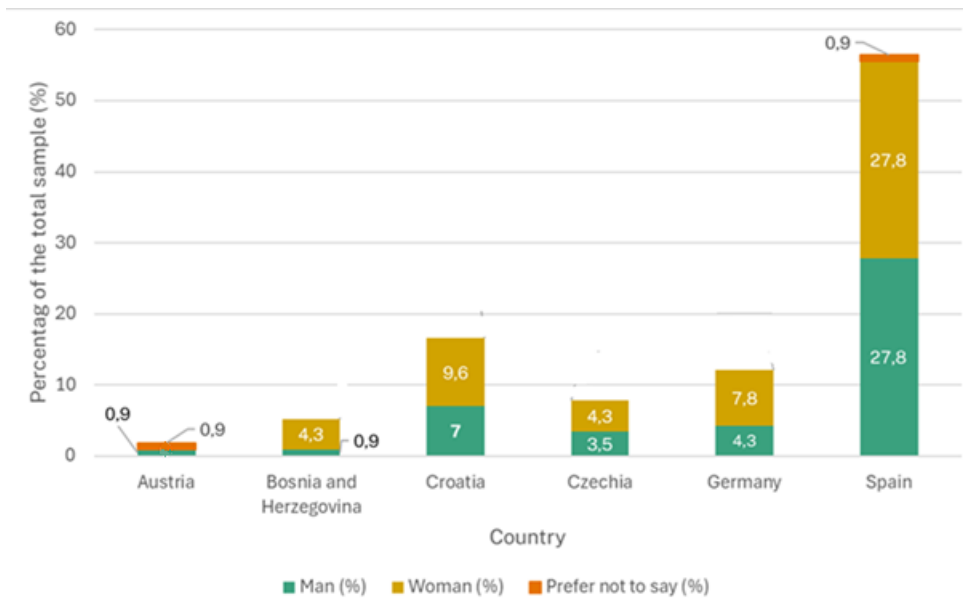


Figure 4 - Gender by Country of Residence

The gender distribution by country of residence (Figure 4) reflects the composition of the entire sample (N=115). Men and women are represented in broadly similar proportions, though with variations linked to the relative size of national subsamples. Spain and Croatia contribute the largest shares of respondents, followed by Germany, Czechia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, while Austria represents only a marginal fraction. The option “prefer not to say” was selected by just two participants (0,9%), making its impact negligible in comparative terms. These results suggest that the gender balance observed is not confined to one national context but emerges consistently across the consortium countries, reinforcing the reliability of the overall pattern.

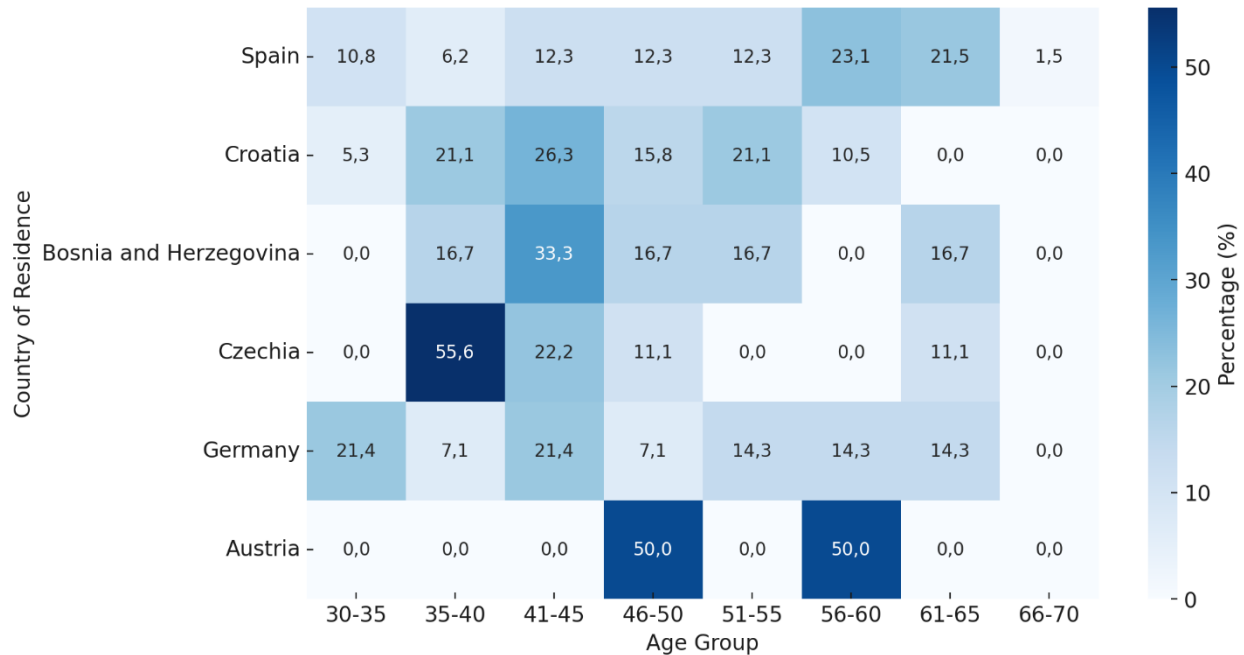


Figure 5 - Heatmap of Age by Country of Residence

Figure 5 illustrates how age groups are spread across countries. Spain displayed the widest distribution, ranging from early-career to senior academics, with notable concentrations in the 56–60 (n=15; 23,1%) and 61–65 (n=14; 21,5%) groups. Croatia also revealed a broad spread of ages, though mid-career cohorts were most common, particularly 41–45 (n=5; 26,3%) and 51–55 (n=4; 21,1%), with further representation in 35–40 (n=4; 21,1%). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, although the subsample was smaller, respondents were concentrated in the 41–45 (n=2; 33,3%) range, with additional individuals in 35–40, 46–50, 51–55, and 61–65 (all n=1; 16,7%). Czechia, with a similar sample size, was dominated by younger mid-career academics, most notably 35–40 (n=5; 55,6%), followed by 41–45 (n=2; 22,2%). Germany presented a balanced distribution across different age ranges, with the largest proportions in 30–35 (n=3; 21,4%) and 41–45 (n=3; 21,4%), complemented by steady representation in 51–65 (n=2 each; 14,3%). Austria, represented by only two participants, included one



respondent in 46–50 and another in 56–60, illustrating the limitations of interpretation for very small subsamples.

The results highlight both common patterns and national particularities. Mid-career academics (41–55 years old) formed the majority in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Czechia, while Spain displayed a stronger presence of late-career respondents. Germany showed a balanced mix of younger and older participants, contrasting with Austria's minimal representation. Overall, the distribution underlines the coexistence of shared trends with country-specific features in the age composition of respondents.

Distribution of teaching experience across countries

The distribution of teaching experience across countries reveals both commonalities and national specificities. In Spain (n=65), the pattern is relatively balanced, with 0–5 years (29,2%), 16–25 years (23,1%), and 26+ years (30,8%) all well represented, showing a mix of early-career, mid-career, and senior academics. Germany (n=14) is similar in its balance, though early-career academics form the largest group (35,7%), followed by mid-career groups of 6–15 and 16–25 years (both 28,6%). Croatia (n=19) differs by presenting a strong predominance of the 16–25 years group (52,6%), confirming a mid-career profile. In Czechia (n=9), the 6–15 years group dominates (55,6%), complemented by smaller shares in the other categories. Bosnia and Herzegovina (n=6) is more evenly distributed, with 6–15 years and 16–25 years both at 33,3%, while Austria, represented by only two respondents, is split between 6–15 and 26+ years.

Taken together, the results highlight the predominance of mid-career academics (6–25 years of teaching experience) in most contexts, though early-career (0–5 years) participants are more visible in Germany and Spain, while senior staff (26+ years) are more present in Spain and Austria.

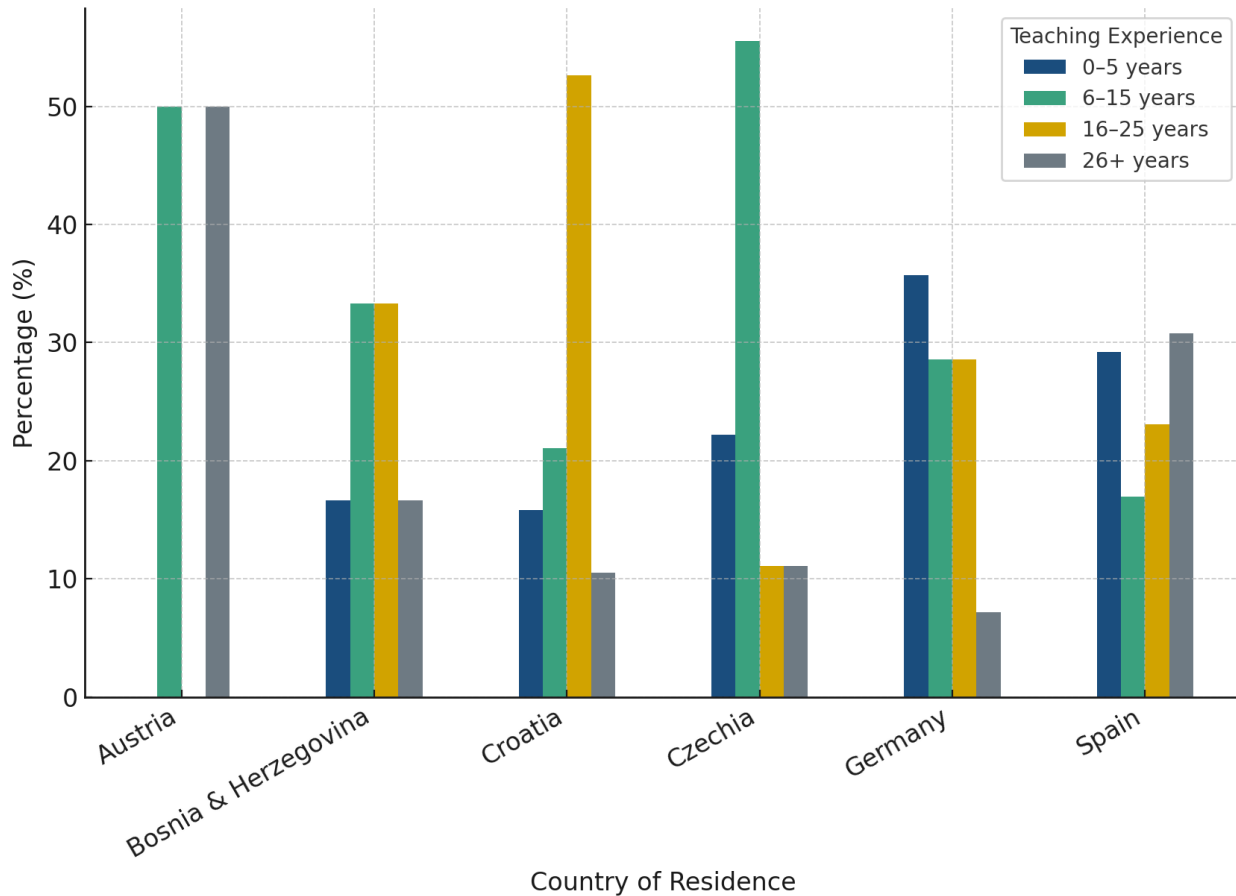


Figure 6. Teaching Experience by Country of Residence

Professional category

The distribution of professional categories largely mirrors the academic qualifications and teaching experience of participants. The largest share corresponds to tenure-track or senior professors, who together make up around one-third of the sample. Established academics in full professorships also appear prominently. By contrast, early-career roles, post-doctoral researchers, and temporary or adjunct positions account for only a small minority, indicating that the survey primarily reflects consolidated academic trajectories.

Ethnic self-identification

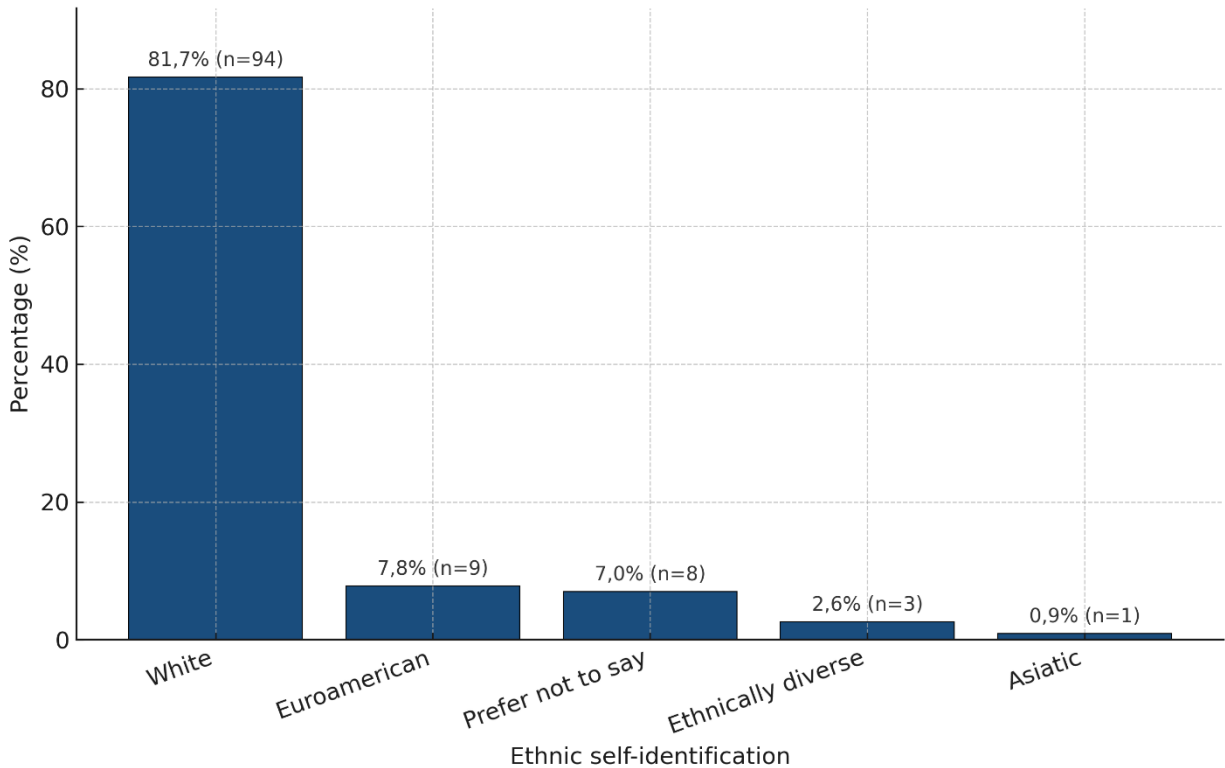


Figure 7 – Ethnic self-identification of respondents

A bar chart (Figure 7) of ethnic self-identification highlights the predominance of respondents identifying as White (81,7%, n=94). Smaller groups included those identifying as Euroamerican (7,8%, n=9) and respondents who preferred not to disclose their ethnicity (7,0%, n=8). Ethnically diverse participants accounted for a minor share (2,6%, n=3), while Asiatic respondents represented less than one percent of the sample (0,9%, n=1).

Overall, the distribution reflects a relative homogeneity in the sample, with limited representation of other ethnic groups. This imbalance suggests that the perspectives captured may be shaped predominantly by respondents from similar ethnic backgrounds, underlining the importance of greater inclusion in future research. It



should also be noted that in some national contexts, such as Czechia, this question approaches legal sensitivity and therefore required additional clarification and emphasis on the voluntary nature of response.

Geographical distribution

Geographically, participants were drawn from several European countries, with notable representation from Spain, Croatia, Germany, Czechia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. This distribution reflects the multi-country scope of the project.

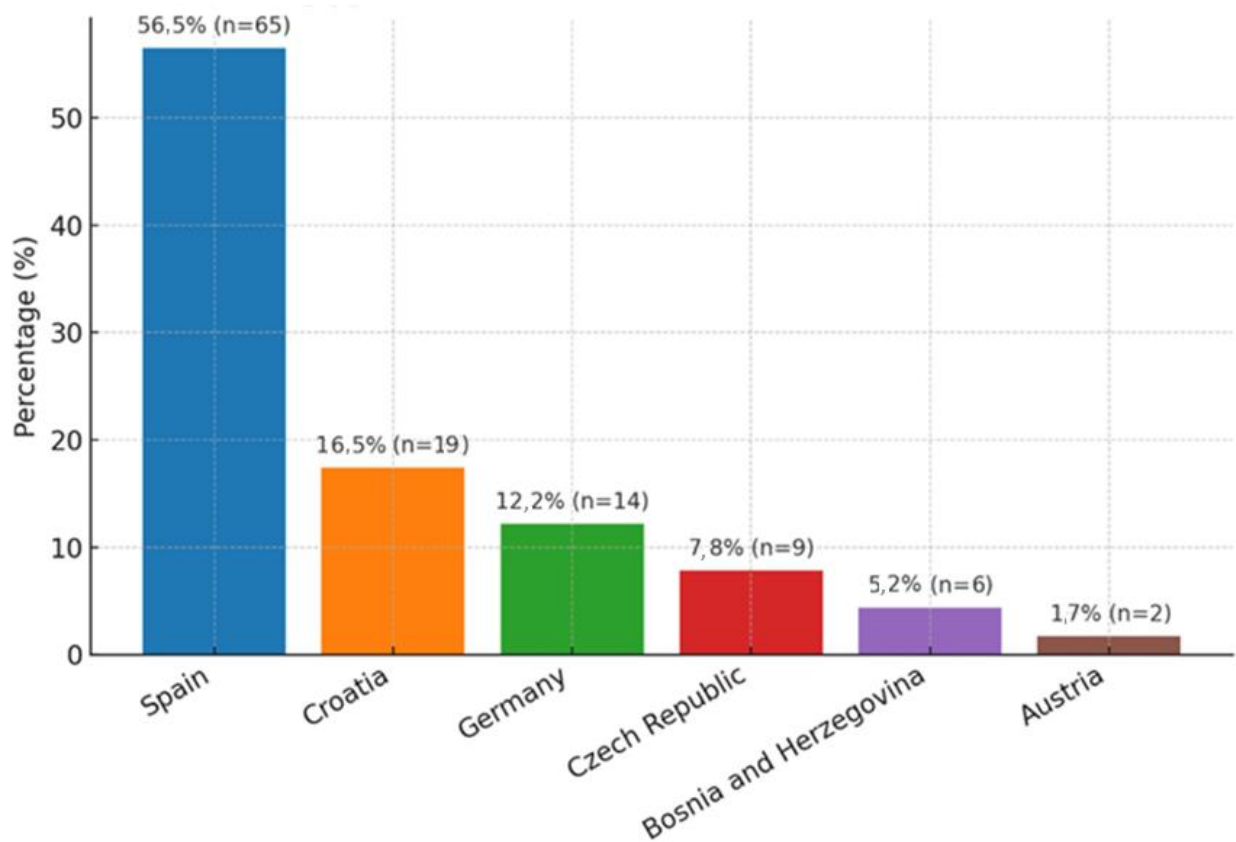


Figure 8 – Country of residence distribution

The geographical distribution of respondents shows a strong concentration in Spain, with 65 individuals representing 56,5% of the total sample. Croatia follows as the



second largest group, with 19 respondents (16,5%), while Germany accounts for 14 participants (12,2%). Czechia contributes 9 responses (7,8%), and Bosnia and Herzegovina adds a smaller share of 6 respondents (5,2%). Finally, Austria is represented by 2 individuals (1,7%). This distribution highlights the predominance of Southern European participants, particularly Spain, with notable contributions from Central and Eastern European countries, reflecting a diverse but uneven geographical spread.

Nearly all respondents identified as not living with a disability, although a smaller group reported living with a disability, and some participants preferred not to disclose this information. This distribution highlights the underrepresentation of persons with disabilities in the sample and underscores the importance of promoting more inclusive participation in academic research. Ensuring that the voices and perspectives of individuals with disabilities are adequately represented remains essential for advancing equity and accessibility in higher education contexts.

3.2. Work Allocation in Academia

According to self-reported data, academic time is unevenly distributed across activities. Teaching receives the greatest emphasis, followed by research. Management and leadership tasks, together with administrative work, yield lower results, yet still represent a steady load that competes with innovation and course redesign (see Figure 9).

Management and leadership-related responsibilities, though secondary, represent a considerable share of the academic workload. Their mean values indicate that they are not occasional or marginal, but rather regular tasks that occupy a significant part of academics' professional time. Similarly, administrative duties, although reported with the lowest intensity, remain a steady component of everyday responsibilities.

These activities, while less prestigious in academic recognition systems, nonetheless compete directly with time allocated to innovation, research development, and course redesign.

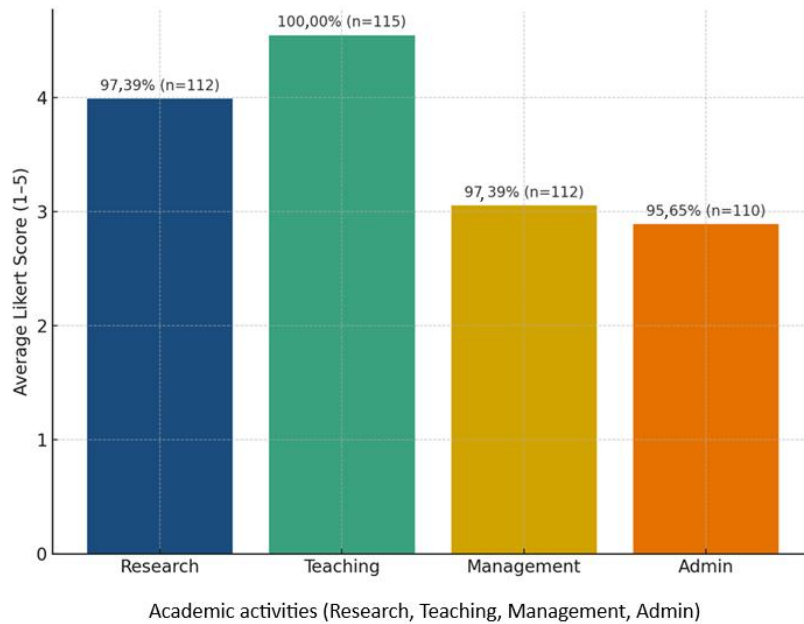


Figure 9. Average self-reported emphasis by activity (P14)

The detailed results show that teaching received the highest average score, 4,55 out of 5, reported by all 115 respondents (100,00% of valid responses). Research followed with an average of 3,99, based on 112 responses (97,39%). Management and leadership tasks obtained a mean score of 3,05, also reported by 112 participants (97,39%). Finally, administrative tasks were assessed with an average of 2,89, mentioned by 110 respondents (95,65%).

This distribution illustrates the uneven allocation of time across academic duties, with teaching and research clearly prioritised, but with management and administrative obligations continuing to weigh heavily on respondents. The results therefore



underscore a tension between the formal priorities of academic work and the more practical demands of institutional functioning.

3.3. Institutional supports and opportunities

Responses indicate broad recognition that the gender perspective is relevant and necessary in LIS and related fields. The strongest areas of agreement highlight that collaboration across diverse teaching groups drives progress, that the field requires more inclusive approaches to diversity, and that there is a pressing need for practical strategies applicable in the classroom. Respondents stressed the importance of collaborative and diversity-oriented approaches. The highest value was observed for collaboration across faculty, with an average of 4,17, based on 93 responses (89,42%). This was closely followed by an inclusive understanding of diversity, with an average of 4,16, based on 100 responses (96,15%), and the need to develop practical strategies, with an average of 4,10, based on 104 responses (100,00%). Involvement of gender experts also received strong support, with an average of 4,01, based on 98 responses (94,23%). Slightly lower, though still positive, results were recorded for recognising gender perspective as a transversal competence, with an average of 3,98, based on 91 responses (87,50%), and for the statement that universities actively support the incorporation of gender perspective in teaching, with an average of 3,85, based on 101 responses (97,12%). Overall, the pattern indicates broad endorsement of mid- to high-level pedagogical actions, while perceptions of institutional support remain comparatively weaker, suggesting scope for reinforcement across contexts.

Participants appear to distinguish between what educators can do collectively (collaboration, inclusive practice, expert input, and practical strategies – each rated highly) and what institutions must guarantee structurally (leadership commitment, administrative resourcing, and policy implementation), where confidence is less robust. Taken together, the results depict a strong consensus on pedagogical



priorities and actionable needs, coupled with a perceived implementation gap at the organisational level. This gap underscores the importance of sustained leadership, clear accountability, and resourced frameworks to translate institutional commitments into everyday teaching practice.

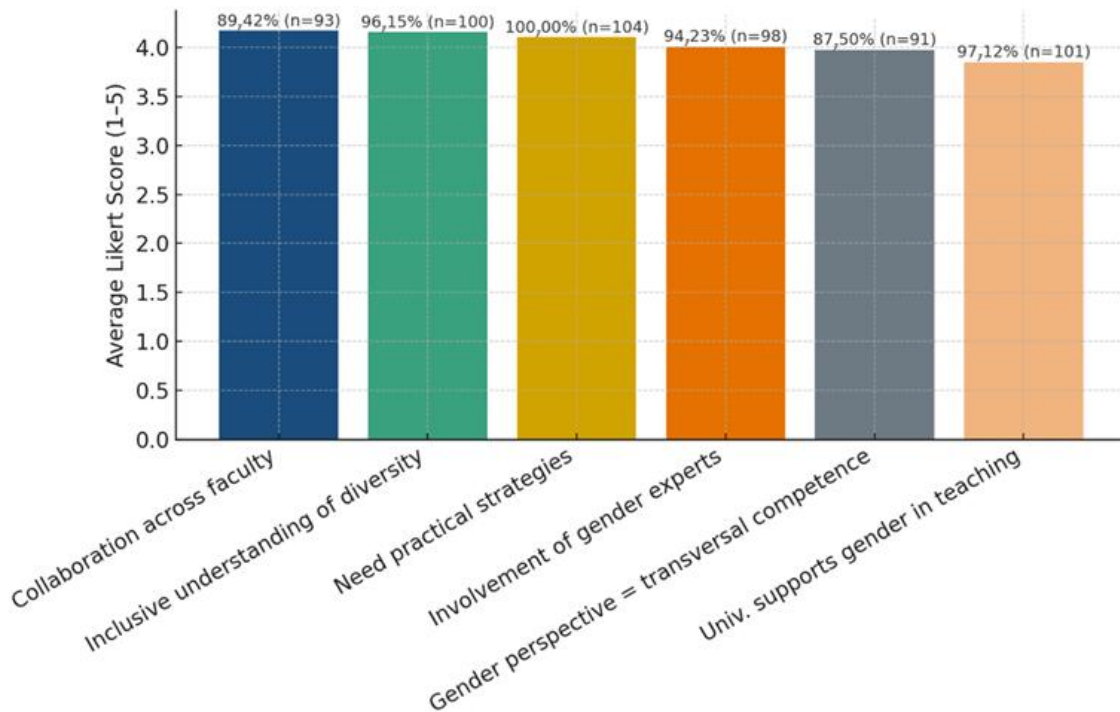


Figure 10. Institutional support and culture

The highest levels of agreement emerged around the importance of inter-faculty collaboration, the need for inclusive approaches, and practical tools. Explicit institutional support exists, but its translation into effective implementation is irregular.

3.4. Barriers and limitations

The main barriers identified by teaching staff cluster around a combination of structural and practical challenges that complicate the integration of gender perspectives in teaching. A majority pointed to the lack of training opportunities as the most pressing difficulty (62,5%, n=104), suggesting that awareness and capacity-building remain insufficient. Concerns were also raised regarding the balance of authorship within bibliographies, particularly in fields historically dominated by men, with 44,8% (n=105) indicating that achieving diversity without compromising disciplinary relevance remains complex. Similarly, insufficient resources and limited institutional recognition were highlighted as obstacles (44,6%, n=83 and 39,6%, n=96 respectively), reflecting that individual efforts are not always supported by adequate institutional frameworks.

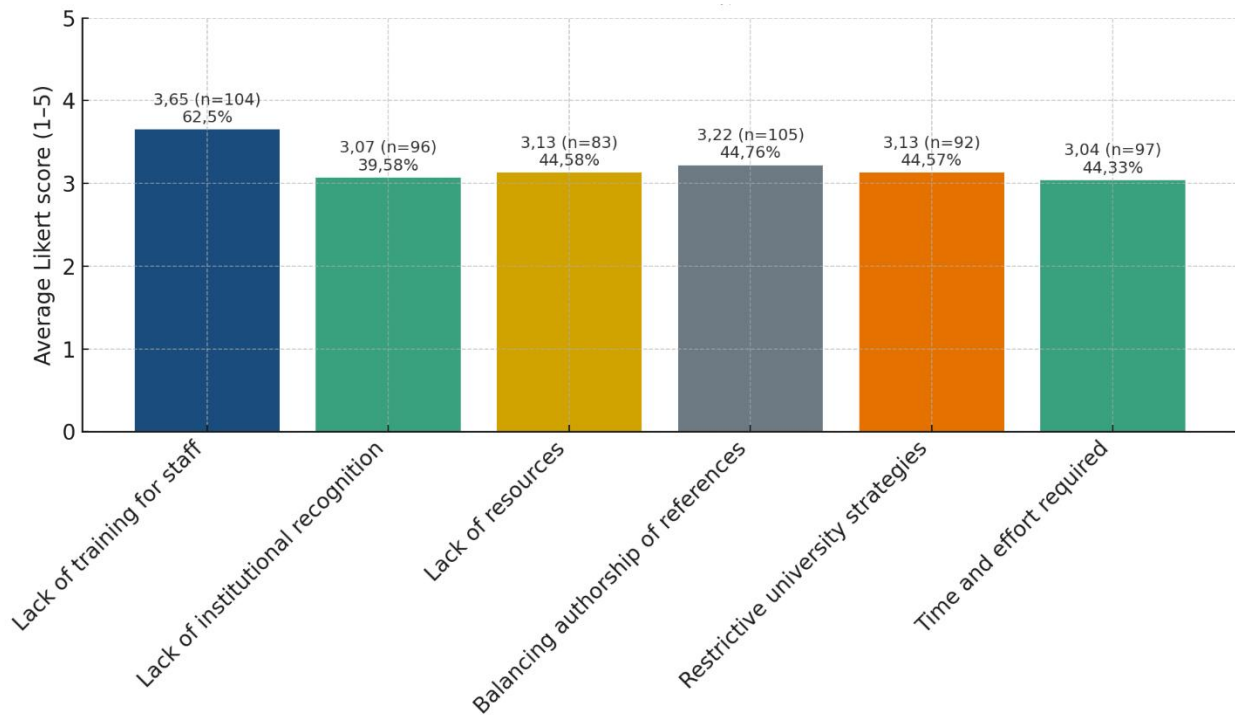


Figure 11. Reported barriers – top agreement



Beyond these structural aspects, participants also underlined cultural and procedural challenges. Almost half (44,6%, n=92) noted that university strategies developed without co-creation may be perceived as restrictive, while 44,3% (n=97) identified the time and effort required to sustain meaningful integration as a significant deterrent. Moreover, several respondents emphasised the persistence of resistance and the limited dissemination of activities and resources, alongside broader sociocultural contexts that in certain settings hinder adoption and contribute to slow progress (see Figure 11).

Training and resources stand out as the most urgent needs. Challenges also emerge in authorship balance, recognition, and workload, together with resistance and limited access to existing activities.

3.5. Discussion

The findings reveal a clear imbalance between teaching, research, and leadership responsibilities. Teaching absorbs the largest share of academic time, leaving less space for curriculum innovation or the systematic integration of gender perspectives. Research and knowledge transfer remain central but often compete with heavy administrative duties. These competing responsibilities suggest a limited capacity for curricular innovation. This imbalance underlines the need for structural adjustments that free time for reflection, redesign, and experimentation in teaching practices. Integrating a gender perspective in teaching requires time, expertise, and financial investment, yet many institutions lack adequate support. Updating curricula, sourcing diverse materials, and developing inclusive case studies often depend on individual efforts rather than structured funding. Faculty may not have access to training in gender-sensitive pedagogy or the necessary research resources to enrich course content. Without designated budgets or support staff, initiatives risk remaining superficial or short-lived, limiting their overall impact on learning environments.



However, coupled with high levels of teaching experience (16–25+ years) and a predominance of established academics, a stronger focus on pedagogy, community engagement, and peer learning may create opportunities to more effectively integrate gender diversity into curricula.

Institutional opportunities exist, particularly in terms of collaboration across faculties and the shared recognition that gender is relevant to the future of LIS. Respondents highlight the importance of inclusive approaches, expert guidance, and practical resources. These results indicate fertile ground for progress, provided that supports are consolidated and extended beyond individual commitment. Moreover, considering the predominance of women among respondents, there is a strong foundation for gender-informed leadership and policy advocacy within academic institutions, which may be further reinforced by their seniority and professional standing.

Inclusive approaches, expert guidance, and practical resources are essential for embedding a gender perspective in higher education. Inclusive approaches ensure that curricula, teaching methods, and classroom environments reflect diverse experiences and challenge stereotypes, creating meaningful engagement for all students. Expert guidance provides the theoretical and methodological foundation for designing rigorous, equity-oriented courses while avoiding tokenistic practices. Practical resources—such as toolkits, case studies, and gender-disaggregated data—offer concrete support, making integration efficient, consistent, and sustainable across programs.

At the same time, barriers remain substantial and are concentrated in specific domains. Limited training opportunities were the most frequently mentioned challenge, with the majority of respondents identifying it as a barrier rather than a support. Imbalance in bibliographic authorship reflects the persistence of male-dominated subfields and the difficulties of ensuring representative course materials.



Likewise, lack of institutional recognition was reported more often as an obstacle than as an enabling factor, suggesting that individual initiatives are not yet sufficiently valued or rewarded.

Limited training opportunities hinder faculty from developing the knowledge and skills needed to integrate a gender perspective effectively. Without structured workshops, seminars, or professional development programs, educators may lack awareness of inclusive teaching practices or confidence in addressing gender-related issues in their courses. This results in inconsistent or superficial application, where efforts rely on individual initiative rather than institutional capacity building. Expanding training ensures that faculty have the tools, theoretical grounding, and pedagogical strategies necessary to create inclusive, equity-focused learning environments.

Equally challenging is the limited recognition of gender perspectives within institutional priorities and evaluation frameworks. When gender inclusion is not embedded in strategic plans, accreditation standards, or faculty assessment criteria, it is often treated as optional rather than integral to academic quality. This lack of institutional backing discourages faculty engagement, as contributions to equity and inclusion may not influence promotion or research evaluations. Without clear mandates and visible leadership support, efforts remain fragmented and dependent on individual initiative rather than systemic commitment.

The comparative analysis also highlights contrasts: while collaboration across faculty groups was predominantly viewed as support, cultural and contextual factors — including resistance among colleagues and broader societal opposition — were reported mainly as barriers. Culturally, it is also the case that some organisations are resistant to change, and implementing systemic transformations often requires considerable time. Nevertheless, incremental steps remain feasible, and well-



founded recommendations can contribute to the development of a more inclusive and gender-balanced environment. These results suggest that institutional and regional culture strongly shapes the conditions under which gender integration either advances or stalls.

Cultural context shapes how gender perspectives are understood, received, and implemented within university settings. It influences perceptions of gender roles, equity, and inclusion, determining whether such initiatives are embraced, questioned, or resisted. In regions where traditional norms dominate, integrating gender perspectives may require careful framing to align with local values while promoting progressive change. Conversely, in more inclusive academic cultures, gender-sensitive teaching may be expected and well-supported. Understanding cultural context helps educators design curricula, select examples, and use language that resonate with students while fostering critical reflection on how cultural norms shape knowledge and academic practice.

Taken together, the results suggest that capacity-building, resource allocation, and institutional commitment are essential to move forward. Training initiatives, collaborative frameworks, and the co-creation of teaching materials may address the most pressing needs. Furthermore, aligning evaluation and recognition systems with gender integration would ensure that individual efforts are not isolated but embedded into broader institutional strategies. Policy interventions at both institutional and national levels can further reinforce these processes by providing structural backing and long-term sustainability. Without such alignment, attempts to mainstream gender risk remain symbolic rather than transformative (Figures 10 and 11).



4. Conclusions

This study explored the integration of gender perspectives in Library and Information Science (LIS) education, analysing both opportunities and barriers reported by academics across different contexts. The results reveal a complex but consistent picture: although there is widespread recognition of the importance of gender-sensitive teaching, actual practices remain uneven and strongly conditioned by institutional structures, academic workloads, and region or national contexts.

A first conclusion concerns the imbalance between teaching, research, and leadership responsibilities. Teaching absorbs the largest proportion of academic time, often leaving limited room for reflection, experimentation, and innovation. This imbalance not only constrains the capacity to redesign curricula but also hinders the systematic incorporation of gender perspectives into teaching practices. Research and knowledge transfer remain valued, yet they frequently compete with administrative obligations, reducing the available energy to engage in sustained pedagogical transformation. Time and resource constraints emerge as structural disincentives for the integration of gender perspectives. Structural adjustments at the institutional level therefore emerge as essential to enable academics to move beyond routine teaching and develop gender-sensitive approaches that are reflective, practicable and transformative.

It is also important to acknowledge the limitations in the diversity of respondent profiles. The predominance of White-identifying participants and the limited representation of non-binary and disabled voices indicate that current institutional practices may not yet fully support the inclusion of underrepresented identities. This reliance on binary gender frameworks, evident in both institutional practices and research design, restricts the capacity to capture the full spectrum of gendered



academic experiences. Future strategies for gender integration should adopt an intersectional approach, moving beyond binary and able-bodied frameworks to ensure that academic environments reflect and support the diversity of their communities.

A second conclusion relates to the supports and opportunities identified. The analysis shows that collaboration across faculties, expert guidance, and access to inclusive teaching resources constitute clear enablers for progress. Respondents perceive that there is fertile ground for change, particularly when initiatives are supported collectively rather than left to individual commitment. Training programmes, co-creation of teaching materials, and institutional encouragement of inclusive pedagogies represent concrete strategies that can generate cumulative impact. In this sense, opportunities extend beyond isolated actions and suggest that with adequate investment, institutions can foster sustainable practices of gender integration.

However, the persistence of barriers underscores the fragility of current progress. Limited training opportunities, lack of bibliographic balance, and insufficient institutional recognition are among the most recurrent obstacles. Moreover, cultural resistance and contextual constraints complicate the implementation of uniform solutions. These findings point to the need for adaptive strategies that consider the specificities of each academic environment. Institutional cultures, policy environments, and national contexts clearly influence the extent to which gender integration is embraced and embedded as a practice. Without such tailored, context-sensitive approaches, gender mainstreaming risks remaining symbolic, with efforts dependent on individual goodwill rather than embedded in systemic frameworks.

A third conclusion concerns the necessity of aligning institutional recognition and evaluation systems with the objectives of gender integration. At present, individual



initiatives often remain invisible within promotion and assessment frameworks, discouraging broader uptake. Recognition of gender-sensitive teaching as a valued academic contribution would provide strong incentives and ensure that efforts are not marginal but central to academic culture. This alignment is particularly important for embedding gender perspectives into curricula in a way that is durable, legitimate, and transformative.

Taken together, the findings highlight that integrating gender perspectives into LIS education is not a marginal issue but a structural challenge requiring coordinated, systemic action. Capacity-building, resource allocation, and institutional commitment are indispensable conditions for progress. Addressing both supports and barriers enables higher education institutions to move from symbolic gestures towards substantive change. By embedding gender into curricula, universities not only strengthen academic equity but also contribute to preparing future professionals who can respond to societal challenges with inclusive and socially responsible approaches.

5. Recommendations:

Based on the cross-country analysis conducted within the GEDIS consortium, the following recommendations are proposed to advance the meaningful integration of gender perspectives in LIS curricula:

1. Institutional Commitment

- Establish explicit institutional policies and guidelines that mandate the embedding of gender perspectives across all LIS teaching programmes.
- Recognise and reward faculty engagement with gender-sensitive teaching through promotion criteria, workload allocation, and incentives.



- Incorporate gender perspective requirements into accreditation and quality assurance processes to strengthen institutional accountability.
- Foster leadership endorsement to ensure gender integration becomes a visible institutional priority.
- Tailor gender integration strategies to the specific cultural, policy, and institutional contexts of each institution, while maintaining shared principles across the GEDIS consortium.

2. Capacity Building and Training

- Develop structured, ongoing professional development programmes focused on gender-sensitive pedagogies for academic staff.
- Promote interdisciplinary collaborations with gender studies experts to co-design course materials, ensuring theoretical rigour and practical relevance.
- Encourage international staff exchanges and joint workshops within the GEDIS network to disseminate innovative practices.

3. Curriculum Design and Innovation

- Integrate gender perspectives as transversal dimensions within both compulsory and elective courses, avoiding their marginalisation into isolated modules.
- Encourage the use of inclusive pedagogical strategies, case studies, and Open Educational Resources (OER) tailored to LIS contexts.
- Pilot curriculum innovations across GEDIS partner institutions, generating transferable models for broader adoption in Europe. These pilots should adopt an intersectional approach to gender integration, recognising intersections with race, ethnicity, disability, age, class, and other identity dimensions. They should also expand gender identity categories in surveys, student feedback forms, and curriculum audits to



include non-binary, trans, and other gender-diverse identities, ensuring more inclusive representation.

- Involve students as co-creators of gender-inclusive content and pedagogical strategies, through participatory design, curriculum feedback, and peer-led initiatives.

4. Support Mechanisms

- Provide accessible teaching resources, including toolkits, curated reading lists, and sample assignments that embed gender perspectives.
- Establish mentorship schemes and peer-learning communities where faculty can share experiences, challenges, and solutions.
- Ensure institutional funding and administrative support for gender-focused teaching initiatives, while equipping academic staff with digital and AI literacy to critically evaluate and mitigate gender bias in pedagogies, datasets, and learning platforms used in LIS education.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Sustainability

- Implement systematic frameworks for evaluating the extent and quality of gender integration in LIS teaching.
- Collect and analyse feedback from both students and academic staff, using results to refine and strengthen approaches.
- Disseminate outcomes within the GEDIS consortium and beyond, positioning LIS as a reference field for advancing gender equality in higher education.
- Ensure that gender-sensitive teaching practices are formally recognised in faculty evaluation, promotion, and accreditation criteria, acknowledging them as core indicators of teaching excellence.

By adopting these measures, LIS faculties can move from fragmented initiatives towards sustainable, evidence-based strategies that strengthen



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gender perspectives as a central element of inclusive and innovative education. Such actions will not only benefit students and faculty, but also reinforce the societal relevance of LIS in addressing equity and diversity challenges.