

Press release

Strasbourg, 15 February 2021

Launch of UniSAFE, a project to end gender-based violence in universities and research organisations

Gender-based violence is a complex, prevalent, persistent feature and force in many organisations, including universities and research organisations. Violence, violations, and abuse may be physical, sexual, economic/financial, psychological - online or offline - and can include gender or sexual harassment. Despite the scale, the political significance and the growing interest in academia, gender-based violence in research organisations remains largely under-reported and under-researched. Without sufficient knowledge, infrastructure, measures, and activities in place in academia, it is difficult to fully prevent, protect or even prosecute.

UniSAFE, a three-year, EU-funded research project, aims to produce in-depth knowledge on gender-based violence and sexual harassment in research performing organisations, and to translate this research into operational tools for higher education and research organisations.

This exciting new project was kicked off on 8 and 9 February 2021. Over the next three years, research and outreach activities will be led across Europe, targeting researchers, stakeholders, and policymakers. The project will analyse the mechanisms of GBV - its social determinants, antecedents, and consequences - at three different levels, using a holistic research model:

- **Prevalence and impacts of GBV** will be analysed via data gathered by a survey among 45 RPOs (micro level).
- **Organisational responses and infrastructure** will be investigated via data gathered by in-depth case studies, interviews, and a strategic mapping of research organisations in 15 member states (meso level).
- **Legal and policy frameworks** will be examined through extensive mapping by national experts in 27 European states and 3 associated states (macro level).

This multi-field research design will provide in-depth knowledge of existing problems, current and future priorities and will result in **an operational toolkit and recommendations** to reduce gender-based violence in the European academic and research area.

"Research performing organisations don't always have the necessary policies or measures to tackle gender-based violence. By joining the project, we offer them the opportunity to learn from experts, and adapt first-hand knowledge, recommendations and tools to their own structures." says Sofia Strid, project scientific coordinator.

UniSAFE relies on a strong multi-disciplinary consortium of nine European partners. The strength of the consortium is based on the partners' in-depth knowledge and extensive collaborative track record on **researching** GBV, **transforming** academic insights into operational tools, and knowledge **dissemination**.

For further info on the project please contact us at unisafe-eu@esf.org and follow us on Twitter @UniSAFE_gbv

