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Executive Summary: Summative Evaluation Report of the Baltic Gender Project

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This document provides an **executive summary for the Summative Evaluation report of the Baltic Gender project**. It gives a brief summary of the purpose, key content, project highlights and conclusions that are **elaborated on in more detail in the full version of the report** (submitted to the European Commission in August 2020).

Purpose

The Summative Evaluation **focuses on the outcome and the progress made at the end of the project** (month 48), as opposed to the Formative Evaluation (Deliverable 8.3 in month 32), which provided interim feedback about the Gender Equality Plan implementation process. Specifically, it presents the results of project partners' efforts to initiate, support and sustain systemic **institutional changes** towards gender equality, particularly through the implementation of **Gender Equality Plans (GEPs)**. At best, the evaluation targets to reveal value creation that has led to changes in interactions, knowledge, practice, performance and ultimately improvement in gender equality within and across Baltic Gender partner institutions.

The Summative Evaluation speaks to **the success and impact** of the Baltic Gender project in pursuit of the following learnings:

- An interest in the increase of knowledge concerning gender equality and the means by which it can be supported, increased and sustained.
- A wish to increase the accountability and the acceptance of gender equality measures within and across marine research institutions.
- An interest in pulling together a sound knowledge base on gender issues as evidence base for decision-making that tackles gender pay gap, glass ceiling and other phenomena.
- An interest in maintaining and increasing exchange between Baltic Gender partners as well as others on best practices.
- An interest in providing insights into capability and capacity to address gender inequality in marine sciences.

Key Content

Overall, the Summative Evaluation assesses the different modes of fostering and promoting gender equality in the partner institutions in a multi-framework analysis. The full report was written collaboratively by all members of the consortium and concentrates on the following three areas:

1. [Assessment of the gender sensitive indicators used in Baltic Gender from different institutional perspectives](#)

Baltic Gender selected a set of **quantitative and qualitative indicators** against which actions can be assessed and resources allocated. Seven of these indicators are calculated from sex-disaggregated data; they monitor and quantify the equality of women and men during career

advancement and in leadership (the subject of WP 1) as well as the equity of their chances during allocation of resources, decision making and recruitment (the subject of WP3). The remaining six indicators, the so-called commitment indicators, monitor the quality of the process of change via the presence or absence of gender policies at the institutional level for work and family (the subject of WP2) as well as for research content, language or teaching (the subject of WP4). The data for the indicators were collected twice from the partner institutions, once in November 2017 and then again in August 2019. The Summative Evaluation explains the history and development of indicators in detail. It reflects on project perspectives, providing context for the data that has been collected in the two rounds and discussing any monitored changes as well as usefulness of the indicators. Finally, the report presents data analysis for each partner institution, drawing institution specific conclusions and discussing how far this data helps to shape measures and policies.¹

2. Content analysis of the institutional Gender Equality Plans from the perspective of how Baltic Gender shaped measures and policies in the institutions

The Summative Evaluation presents an **overview of Gender Equality Plans (GEPs)** for each Baltic Gender Partner, providing institutional and structural context as well as reflections on the role that Baltic Gender has played in the design of (new) components and measures. Furthermore, partners reflect on the impact of those changes regarding an increase in gender equality. This section once more underscores the relevance that the participation in the project has had for the acceptance of measures, the legitimacy of new and/or updated programs as well as the success of their respective implementation. Each partner provides insights into the institutional-operational, historical and social context of designing and implementing a GEP in their respective institutions and countries. Lund University is an exception here, as they describe the legislative and operative realities of implementing gender mainstreaming as required by their national law.

3. Qualitative assessment of institutional change based on interviews with actors of change from each institution

The Summative Evaluation describes the result of a **qualitative evaluation of change processes**. The section provides insights into the perceived added values as well as enablers and barriers of change toward increased gender equality. 16 interviewees were invited to talk about their personal motivation to work on gender equality, their past and present experiences and their hopes for the future – both in regard to their workplace as well as in general. Most of them reflected on their own careers and experiences, on imbalances, injustice and thus a personally motivated wish to improve the status quo. Some said that Baltic Gender was the starting point for their work on gender equality. In general, Baltic Gender and its association with EU Horizon 2020 programme is regarded as a catalyst for changes, providing credibility and legitimacy to plans and actions as well as funding for interviewees and colleagues who are working on gender equality/equal opportunities.

¹ The indicator data from the Baltic Gender partners are publicly available at <https://www.baltic-gender.eu/outcomes>.

Project Highlights and Conclusions

In order to improve the gender equality in Marine Sciences, eight scientific institutions in five countries around the Baltic Sea have worked towards the empowerment of women through specific tools, methods and support materials that improve structures within their respective institutions. Highlights from the project partners' successes are:

- establishing **data collection for 13 gender-sensitive indicators** such as "gender pay gap" or "sex of the chief scientist on cruises"
- promoting **13 best practices on structural changes**, e.g., the Women's Executive Board and the mentoring program via:mento ocean, which support equal chances, transparent processes and fair cooperation
- **GenderWave**, an innovative tool that guides scientists to consider gender issues in their projects, supports the incorporation of gender perspectives into marine research and innovation
- two cohorts of a **mentoring programme** that provided 16 early-stage women researchers with personal guidance, opportunities for networking and financial support for further qualification
- implementing the **first Gender Equality Plans (GEPs)** at the level of the marine institutes of the Estonian and Lithuanian partners
- an initiative for the **prevention of sexualized violence** on sea-going expeditions
- empowerment of teaching staff in STEM with trainings and a handbook on **gender sensitive teaching**
- providing a **platform for exchange as well as support for the changes of institutional practices and the transfer of know-how between the consortium partners**
- **workshops and training sessions** on topics such as leadership and decision making, unconscious bias, border violations in academia
- a blog series featuring 18 successful women scientists and engineers as **role models**
- developing **support materials for policies that reconcile work and family**.

Over the course of four years, while Baltic Gender partners worked on improving gender equality in their respective institutions, it has become clear that location, social, historical and institutional context have an effect on time specific outcomes and progress. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to gender equality, as is explained in the Summative Evaluation with regard to change processes as well as the reflections on the implementation of GEPs. However, common trends and trigger points can be identified as well as a similarity in supporting, sustaining and promoting structures and system characteristics.

Data collection has been an important source of insight and legitimacy. In some institutions, the collection of sex-disaggregated data was the first step to reflect on this topic and get a broader awareness on unequal proportions of female and male scientists in the institution. Some institutions have been collecting sex-disaggregated data for decades, whereas others had not yet collected any at the start of the Baltic Gender project. All in all, the systematic and detailed data collection has been improved during the project time. The insights that came with project-level monitoring and evaluation of indicators have proven to be especially valuable for discussions on necessary changes. This kind of data collection can help to ensure relevance, saliency and legitimacy of outcomes. The continued effort to measure gender

sensitive indicators is advisable to establish a sound quantitative and qualitative metric for long-term monitoring and evaluation. In this context, it would be useful to include monitoring and evaluation across different scales of institutions, e.g., as part of contracts, funding and progress reporting components, to provide evidence and reassurance of value and impact, and to enable action-oriented learning. To ensure a broad dissemination of such insights, relevant data should be made available to everybody who would like to access it, so that learnings can be shared and spread within and across institutions.

Project partners utilised a high number of **best practice approaches** and display strong evidence of promoting knowledge exchange and building increased awareness and knowledge in the topic area. The use of novel methods and techniques that have been developed over the course of the past five years seems to coincide with a high degree of capacity building to conduct research in the topic area. It is essential to safeguard and grow the research and practical capabilities that partners acquired during their participation in the project, so that they can act as multipliers of their work, insights and experiences. For this to happen, partners need to be in a position where they can advance equal opportunity within their institutions and in other contexts with increased, sustainable and long-term funding. In order to make gender equality and equal opportunity easier to grasp, promote and monitor, recommendations need to include translation skills to ensure knowledge is taken up and used to inform decision making at different institutional levels. To do this, future research projects could pick up where Baltic Gender has left off, and further emphasise activities to address drivers of behaviour change (attitudes, skills and aspirations).