

Gender4STEM

A learning content recommendation system designed to support teachers in dealing with gender issues in secondary-level classes and increase girls' participation in STEM disciplines.



Inspiration

Nowadays, innovation is mainly driven by Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines. These skills are recognised as being key to rising to current challenges, which are leading us to become a knowledge-driven economy and society. The problem is that not only do girls seem to lack a calling for these disciplines, they are also very under-represented on courses in the disciplines in question.

One of the reasons why STEM disciplines are unappealing to girls might be persistent stereotypes. Teachers are not always equipped to manage gender diversity in their classrooms. Educational materials also lack female characters, role-models likely to stir young girls' interest in these subjects from a young age.

While there have been many awareness campaigns aimed at girls in recent years, there are currently few tools specifically for teachers, and yet they are on the front line when it comes to engaging pupils with STEM subjects.

Innovation

In order to spark greater interest in STEM disciplines among girls, the Gender4STEM project aims to create an online platform where educational and awareness-raising materials will be uploaded for use by secondary-level teachers (of pupils aged 11 to 18).

As part of a co-creation model bringing together partners from five participating European countries, the project seeks to develop reference materials, tools and content enabling staff to teach these high-potential subjects and also ensure a better gender balance. In each country, partners will go out and meet teachers and pupils to try to identify existing stereotypes in order to develop the best tools for debunking them. The planned content includes awareness-raising campaigns, lesson plans, quizzes, videos, and so on.

The digital platform will also include a self-assessment tool so that teachers can take stock of their own gendered education practices. Depending on each teacher's profile, the tool will recommend learning content to help them better manage gender diversity in their classrooms.

Impact

The platform, tools and content produced at the end of the project will be made available to all teachers. Training and awareness courses for teachers will also be developed and taught. They aim to boost uptake of the platform but also to contribute to teaching that fosters gender diversity across the scientific disciplines.

In the long run, the project hopes to increase the number of girls who choose to STEM education and plan STEM careers.

Partners

Smart Venice (IT) , Consulio (HR) , Women in Digital Initiatives Luxembourg Asbl (LU) , Stichting VHTO (NL) , Fundatia Professional (RO)

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