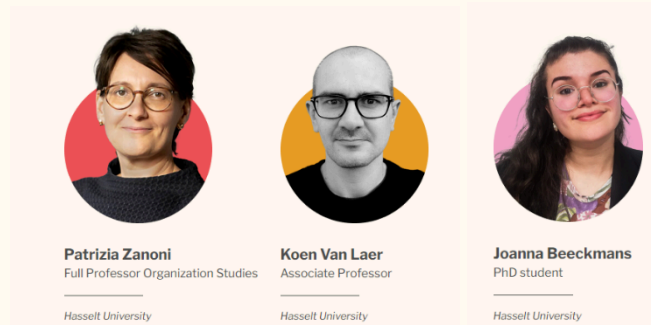


## Towards Intersectional and Inclusive Equality Policies in Research & Innovation Organizations



### About INSPIRE

[INSPIRE](#) is Europe's sustainable Centre of Excellence on Inclusive Gender Equality in Research and Innovation (R&I). Coordinated by Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, it brings together 14 consortium members, which aim to contribute to create a more inclusive European Research Area. INSPIRE provides a gateway for scholars, equality experts and practitioners to connect, co-create new practices and resources, and fill key knowledge gaps on intersectionality in organizational policymaking and inclusive Gender Equality Plans (GEPs). Reflecting the European Commission's shift from a focus on gender equality to inclusive gender equality, INSPIRE works on multiple thematic areas of inclusive gender equality: sustaining institutional change towards inclusive gender equality, widening the implementation of inclusive gender equality policies in Europe and Latin America, fostering inclusive innovation and change in the private sector, and ensuring the adoption of an intersectional perspective in GEPs. It does so through 4 Knowledge & Support Hubs (KSH) and 12 Communities of Practice (CoPs), which build on the pioneering work of the ACT project.



### Knowledge & Support Hub on Intersectionality

The UHasselt team, composed of Patrizia Zanoni, Koen Van Laer and Joanna Beeckmans is, together with Notus, the leader of KSH3 on Intersectionality. Intersectionality highlights the interconnectedness of social identities in experiences of discrimination and inequality at individual, organizational, and structural levels. Most current equality policies (such as GEPs and Equality/Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) interventions) address inequality from a siloed, single-axis approach, which neglects the simultaneous and cumulative effects of multiple grounds of discrimination and inequality experienced by individuals in research organizations. The knowledge on what inclusive, intersectional GEPs entail and, more broadly, on how to practically design and implement intersectional equality policies remains to date limited. Hence, our knowledge and support hub looks at how R&I organizations can move from GEPs and EDI interventions to inclusive

intersectional policies and practices fostering transformative change towards equality. In this endeavour, we are supported by four external experts: Ashlee Christoffersen, Bruna Cristina Pereira, Irina Lungu, and Barbara De Micheli.

Notus, which has extensive track record on applied social research on equality, leads and facilitates the support of 3 Communities of Practices. (1) The WISE CoP works towards Inclusive Strategies for GEPs in the Health ecosystem. This CoP has 10 members from 5 countries (Spain, Portugal, Poland, Italy and Germany). (2) The Intersectionality for Change CoP works on intersectionality in gender policies, especially on Gender Based Violence (GBV). This CoP has 22 members from 13 universities or research centres in Spain, Chile, Ireland, Lithuania and Portugal. (3) The OpenEU CoP works on projects and initiatives related to the digital dimension of education, innovative digitally-enhanced pedagogies and the inclusion and diversity in education. This CoP has 10 members from 10 universities in Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal, Iceland, Germany and Latvia. Through their participative and co-creative approach, CoPs aim to connect practitioners, ensure capacity building and build knowledge in a bottom-up way.

### Building the Evidence Base on intersectional equality policies and practices in R&I

So far, UHasselt has conducted a [scoping literature review](#) of 61 articles on the use of intersectional approaches in the policies of organizations in higher education and research. The results showed that most research investigates the experiences of intersectional discrimination and oppression by staff and students. The research on intersectional policies is very limited and either theoretical or analysing policy documents. There is a clear lack of empirical research investigating on whether and how R&I organizations design, implement and govern intersectional policies and with which emerging effects on their personnel and students.

UHasselt coordinates a large comparative study of 10 case studies of R&I organizations across Europe. The study is carried out in collaboration with Radboud University (The Netherlands), Fraunhofer Institute (Germany), Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (Spain) and ZRC SAZU (Slovenia). We have to date developed [the methodology guidelines and protocols](#) to jointly explore how R&I organisations and institutions with relevant experience on gender and diversity policies approach intersecting inequalities. The goal of this research is to generate theory on the nature, characteristics and effectiveness of existing design, implementation and governance of intersectional GEPs and, more broadly, equality policies in R&I organisations, with the goal of fostering equality.

