

ATGENDER Board Members' Report June 2014 – June 2015

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Introduction

The following Board Members' report of **ATGENDER** serves the purpose of providing information about the activities of the organization during the last year and to project ideas and plans for the future. The report is in accordance with our mission to constitute a permanent structure that consolidates and expands established connections between academic educators, researchers, employers of Gender Studies graduates and to connect them with policy oriented institutions, libraries, information centers and other organizations that work on gender equality in Europe.

Background

ATGENDER: the European association for gender research, education and documentation was established on September 30, 2009. **ATGENDER** brought together the three earlier main organizations in the field of women's and gender studies, feminist research, education and documentation in Europe: AOIFE, ATHENA and Wise. **ATGENDER**'s main purpose is to:

- provide a professional association for academics in the interdisciplinary field of women's and gender studies, feminist research and professionals that promote women's rights, gender equality and diversity in Europe;
- advance and disseminate the knowledge and experience from the above-mentioned groups;
- support and sustain the institutionalization of women's, gender and feminist studies;
- support the development of education and training programs in women's and gender studies, feminist research, women's rights, gender equality, and diversity.

To achieve the aims of the association, **ATGENDER** employs a wide range of activities. Since its inauguration it has engaged in establishing a sustainable European platform for multidirectional academic exchange, research collaboration, dissemination and information within and between the areas in focus for the association, i.e. women's and gender studies, feminist research and professionals that promote women's rights, gender equality and diversity in Europe.

Organisation

The Board Members

The current **ATGENDER** Board consists of eleven members. The Board is directed by two chairs, and has appointed two co-treasurers and two co-secretaries. The Board currently meets bi-monthly via Skype and initiates board meetings IRL during the annual Spring Conferences. According to the statutes of the organization the members of the Board are appointed for three years and can be re-elected for another three year term. The association strives for a balanced representation of the different European regions on the Board as well as a balanced representation of disciplines and professional interests.

The Board Members 2014-2015 are the following:

- ✓ Aino-Maija Hiltunen, Coordinator at the University of Helsinki, Finland
- ✓ Sveva Magaraggia, Lecturer, Department of Philosophy, Communication and Performing Arts, University of Rome Tre, Italy
- ✓ Edyta Just, Assistant Professor, Gender Studies, Department of Thematic Studies, Linköping University, Sweden
- ✓ Beatriz Revelles Benavente, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain
- ✓ Maria Grönroos, Deputy Manager at the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, responsible for Nordic Information on Gender, NIKK, University of Gothenburg, Sweden
- ✓ Rasa Navickaite, PhD Candidate in Comparative Gender Studies at the Central European University, Budapest, Hungary
- ✓ Sara de Jong, Research Fellow, Department of Development Studies, University of Vienna, Austria; Affiliated Researcher at Atria, Institute on Gender Equality and Women's History, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- ✓ Soledad Bravo, Policy maker, Barcelona Provincial Government, Francesca Bonnemaison Centre, Barcelona, Spain
- ✓ Dasa Duhacek, Professor at Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade, Serbia
- ✓ Bilijana Kasic, Co-leader of the Centre for Women's Studies, Zagreb, Croatia, and Professor at the University of Zadar, Department of Sociology
- ✓ Giovanna Vingelli, Assistant Professor at the University of Calabria, Italy, Department of Political and Social Sciences, Centre of Women's Studies "Milly Villa"

The Central Office

The Central Office is the visible contact point of the association and carries out Board decisions and other tasks delegated to it by the Board. Delegated tasks may include tasks of the Secretaries and the Treasurers. The Board supervises and is responsible for the activities of the Central Office. The Office is a precondition for further growth of membership and activities. It is run by one part time employee who contributes 10h/week (Office Manager), one to two interns and nine volunteers.

Under the responsibility of the Board, the Central office carries out the following tasks:

- Organization of meetings of the Board and General Assembly;
- Coordination and facilitation of Board activities and decisions;
- Management of Membership and maintenance of membership database;
- Production and dissemination of information materials (newsletter, website, social media);
- Promotion and representation the association at important meetings and activities.

ATGENDER office is kindly hosted by the Faculty of Humanities, University of Utrecht, the Netherlands. This brings good synergies with international gender studies students working as **ATGENDER** interns and getting valuable support from Utrecht University international office with all our EU- applications.

During the budget year 2014, **ATGENDER** has taken several measures to improve the communication between the secretariat and the board as well as between the secretariat and **ATGENDER** members.

- The paypal service for membership payment also proved to be effective and it reduced the paper work of the office.
- Several working documents were updated in order to regulate the mode and rhythm of communication between the board members and the office.
- From September 2013 until January 2014 Lara Hager undertook the management of the office and took part in the preparation of the latest board meetings, application proposals and the communication with the members. Since February 2014, a new office manager, Jessica Lima, replaced Lara Hager in this role.
- During the budget year 2014, **ATGENDER** maintained the number of internships affiliated to **ATGENDER** board and office (September 2014 – January 2015: Jessica Lima; September 2014 – May 2015: Anna Robinson; November 2014 – January 2015: Maria Gelotte; February 2015 – April 2015: Sanne van der Wal; April 2015 – June 2015: Athina Mara). A fair regional spread of interns (North-South, East-West) is part of the goals of **ATGENDER** and this recruitment process has made it possible for students from outside the Netherlands to work for **ATGENDER**. Their personal skills benefited from their work at the office thus preparing them for future employment, and it makes sure that their mobility increases.
- **ATGENDER** has a new website platform. This translates in a new visual, and a more user-friendly and appealing website, which facilitates **ATGENDER**'s interaction with its members online.
- Besides the website and social media presence on Facebook and Twitter, **ATGENDER** has also a LinkedIn page to better promote our network and share relevant calls, events, and other information.
- With the support of our interns, and additionally to the day-to-day operations, the central office has carried out a social media survey, in order to better assess the efficacy of **ATGENDER** pages. With this survey **ATGENDER** did not only get useful feedback from

our members for improving our external communication, as it also proved to be a guiding tool. 100 responders participated between March 24th and April 4th.

General Assembly

The yearly General Assembly for all our members will be held on the 3rd of June from 18.30 till 19.30 during the 9th European Feminist Research Conference in Rovaniemi, Finland.

Activities June 2014 – June 2015

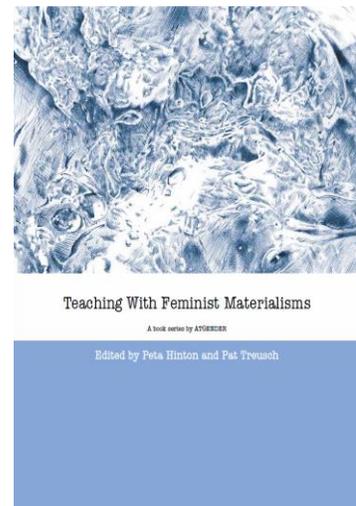
During this time frame, **ATGENDER** has been involved in a wide variety of activities, encompassing participation, publication and policy oriented work that will provide visibility of the organization among the European gender academic community and also on EU level. From June 2014 until June 2015, **ATGENDER** has:

- Produced and distributed 35 weekly news updates for subscribers and one newsletter for members.
- Developed and streamlined the internal organization, membership- and financial administration.
- Increased the participation of students and young scholars as interns and staff at the Central office.
- Offered discounts to members on the subscription of the book series “Advances in Feminist Studies and Intersectionality”.
- Offered grants for student members to attend the conferences co-organized by **ATGENDER**.
- Co-organized with the Diputació de Barcelona the 2014 **ATGENDER** spring conference, “A New Agenda for Gender Equality Policies”, Spain, June 25th-27th 2014
- Held the yearly General Assembly in Barcelona, June 26, 2014 and prepared the next General Assembly in Rovaniemi, June 2015.
- Worked on the preparation for the co-organised 9th European Feminist Research Conference in Rovaniemi, “Sex and Capital”, Lapland, Finland, 3rd – 6th June 2015.
- Published one volume of the Teaching with Gender series “Teaching With Feminist Materialisms” (editors Peta Hinton and Pat Treusch).
- Promoted the further institutionalization of gender studies, through developing and disseminating the Tuning Gender Studies brochure.

- Submitted the Erasmus + proposal AGETA, the Advanced Gender Studies Teaching Academy, a 36 months long project that involves 11 partners.
- Participated in the proposal for Horizon2020 “GenIUS – Gender Implementation University Strategy”.
- Maintained the strategic partnerships with other European Gender Studies organizations (Amongst others EIGE, WINE, ALLEA).
- Participated in the Women's World Conference, Hyderabad, August 2014, both with an information stand and by organising a workshop on “Gender Studies & Equal Opportunities Associations: new challenges, new obstacles?”
- Arranged book launch of the volume “Teaching With Feminist Materialisms” at the 9th EFRC in Rovaniemi, Lapland 3-6.6.2015.
- The ATGENDER student network arranged a panel during the spring conference. During the Spring Conference **ATGENDER** board members met with the students network for Lapland to organize the students’ day. Out of this meeting, it was programmed one roundtable focused on improving ways of publishing and developing professional careers and a speech research-date focused on producing inter-generational relations between junior and senior researchers destined to facilitate mentoring relations. For the 9th EFRC, **ATGENDER** has organized a roundtable entitled “Survival Kit for Young Researchers: Getting Funded, Getting Published” in which Clare Hemmings, Mia Liinason and Katrine Smiet will guide PhD students through the many different challenges that pursuing an academic career entail.

Publications: Teaching with Gender Series

- The book “Teaching with Feminist Materialisms” has been published in Summer 2015 (editors: Peta Hinton and Pat Treusch). The book contributes to feminist materialisms' growing and wide-spanning field of research, teaching, and collaboration, which takes up increasing space in our (queer and feminist) pedagogical settings. *Teaching with Feminist Materialisms* assembles a collection of chapters that work to map European Feminist Materialisms across a diversity of classrooms, and to demonstrate the contribution these approaches make in thinking and transforming pedagogical praxis, offering a compilation of practical teaching and learning examples to put to work in the classroom.



- All **ATGENDER** members will receive a copy of the newest Teaching Gender Volume (institutional members receive 2 copies). The volume will also be made available on our website. All previous volumes can be downloaded for free from the **ATGENDER** website.

Conferences

ATGENDER has established a tradition of organizing „Spring Conferences“ dedicated to learning and teaching in women’s, gender and feminist studies. So far, **ATGENDER** organized the following conferences:

In Brussels 2010 Spring conference the *Tuning Brochure Gender Studies (reference points for design & delivery of degree programs in gender studies)* was launched.

In Utrecht, April 2011, at the Conference “Feminist Pasts-Feminist Futures” teaching, research and documentation were discussed in new **ATGENDER** working groups.

On 26-28 April 2013 the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research hosted the **ATGENDER** spring conference for its members on learning and teaching in gender, women’s and feminist studies.

During 25-27 June, **ATGENDER** co-organized with Disputació de Barcelona the 2014’s Spring Conference, under the title: “A New Agenda for Gender Equality Policies”.

Applications for Funding

GenIUS

In Autumn 2014 we participated in the proposal for an Horizon2020 “GenIUS – Gender Implementation University Strategy”. The project was developed by a multi-agency Consortium made up of 8 Partners with complementary expertise and competencies in the field of Gender Studies and Equal Opportunities. Partners are: University of Naples Federico II; Equal Challenge Unit – London; Edinburgh University, Oxford Brookes University, the Instituto Superior de Psicologia, Aplicada, the Association des Femmes de l’Europe Meridionale, **ATGENDER**. The aims of the project are the construction of a Gender Equality Plan i.e. a group of creative solutions for facing gender imbalance in the involved research organizations, based on the quality of inter-gender and inter-generational relationships, and built around the centrality of caring in families and institutions. This project was not funded.

AGETA

In Winter 2014 an Erasmus + application “AGETA - European Teaching Academy for Gender Studies” was re-submitted by the board. In this application, **ATGENDER** and 10 institutional partners applied for ca 400 000 Euro to establish a teaching network and to organize workshops and meetings. The aim of AGETA is to make a gender studies teachers network working on

feminist pedagogies, translating our expertise to universities' policies on training, accreditation etc. **ATGENDER** is key partner in this application: it provides the network and the infrastructure to make all this work. Partners in this application are: **ATGENDER**, Utrecht University, Helsinki University, University of Gent, Centar za zenske Studije, University of Vienna, Univerzitet u Beogradu, University of Roma Tre, University of Warwick, Tampere University, Linköping University. The decision will be taken by the ERASMUS+ commission in the summer 2015.

ATGENDER & Women's World Congress, Hyderabad, India

During the Women's Worlds conference in Hyderabad in August 2014 **ATGENDER** was represented by Aino-Maija Hiltunen, Sara de Jong and Sveva Magaraggia. They organized an information stand at the main conference venue, which received a lot of interest. **ATGENDER** also contributed by organising a workshop on *Gender Studies & Equal Opportunities Associations: new challenges, new obstacles?*

As people were not familiar with European gender studies and co-operation, this was an excellent opportunity to promote the Teaching Gender-series, **ATGENDER** in general and the 9th EFRC in 2015 in particular.

Over 30 people participated in our interactive workshop, and many said that it was the best event of the whole conference as there was so much room for transnational feminist exchange! The responses to the first topic 'What does co-operation mean to you?' stressed how co-operation makes us able to do more and could challenge us in our thinking, but also that shared rules and guidelines are needed and that questions of power have to be addressed. The second topic, 'What are the (positive and negative) lessons we have learned in previous co-operations and associations?' addressed the power dynamics between small and larger organisations, the need for open-minded leadership, the breaking down of stereotypes, internal impact evaluations and the long term sustainability of programs. Finally, we discussed the question 'Which particular feminist issues should be addressed in and through transnational co-operations, why and how?'

Participants from all over the world stressed the importance of finding ways to act in solidarity without imposing views on each other. As transnational feminists, we need to be vigilant in questioning the mechanisms that make some issues become 'hyper-visible' in international media, at the expense of other important topics. We should share 'best practices' from different contexts as an advocacy tool, but also to challenge stakeholders that claim that something is impossible or incompatible with certain religious or cultural views. Reflecting on the significance of capital flows across borders, global media, migration global consumerism, and environmental issues, it turns out that the question 'what should be addressed by transnational feminism, should be answered with a resounding 'pretty much everything'. It is rather a challenge to think of issues that would lack any transnational dimension! That's why it is so important for **ATGENDER** to connect with feminists from all over the world. So, we hope we can be present again for the next Women's World Congress in Brazil in 2017!

Grants

For the **ATGENDER** Barcelona Conference in 2014 **ATGENDER** provided full grants for 18 students. To the Hyderabad Conference, 2 grants were provided.

Membership numbers

2010: 87 individual and student members, 31 institutional members;
2011: 202 individual and student members, 54 institutional members;
2012: 347 individual and student members, 56 institutional members;
2013: 85 individual and student members, 44 institutional members;
2014: 93 individual and students, 44 institutional members;
2015 (up until May 2015): 80 individual and student members, 22 institutional members.

As **ATGENDER** is very much depending of membership fees, we hope all our old members will renew their membership and bring new active members with them.

Plans for the future

10th European Feminist Research Conference: The 10th European Feminist Research Conference will be organized in the spring/summer 2018. This is a call for proposals and bids: could you and your university host this unique and great event? As it will be the tenth conference, let's make it even more like a celebration of feminist scholarship and activism in Europe.

Future Spring conferences: The next two **ATGENDER** spring conferences will take place at the University of Ghent (Belgium), focusing on learning, teaching, and pedagogy, and at the University of Calabria (Italy), with specific focus on gender equality if the Erasmus + Project will be funded.

Signed on behalf of the Board,

Aino-Maija Hiltunen, co-chair, **ATGENDER**
Sveva Magaraggia, co-chair, **ATGENDER**