

## Project description sheet issued by a federal administration

This description sheet is issued by a federal administration. It describes the nature of the project it wants to implement, the tasks that should be attributed to a scientific team yet to be selected, the budget and timing devoted to the scientific team. It also describes the way the public institution will implement the end result of the scientific team both in terms of integration in its own functioning as in terms of dissemination of valuable information for researchers and the public at large.

### **Practical information**

Name of the public institutions who have issued the project:

1. Directorate-general Statistics Belgium of the FPS Economy, SME's, Self-Employed and Energy
2. Institute for the Equality of women and men (IEWM)

Name of the project:

Gender and income: analysis and development of indicators – BGIA (Belgian Gender and Income Analysis)

Timing of the scientific tasks to be accomplished: 24 months

Deliverables and valorisation activities by the scientific team (not foreseen in the project description below):

- *International seminar (beginning of the project, state of the art concerning the data/work to perform) ;*
- *report* exposing the way the data concerned by the project could make international/European comparisons or harmonisation possible by the public authority;
- *Valorisation activity by the end of the project:* the team will make a proposal in this respect in its submission form.
- Deliverables from the research contract with federal Science Policy Office: *project description* (max. 25 lines in French, Dutch, English and German for the Web site of the Science Policy Office), *summary of the project* in max. 10 pages in F/D/EN/G for the web site of the Federal Science Policy Office, *a document in max. 40 lines* destined to the AGORA Newsletter at the end of the project in F/D/EN, *interims reports* (max. 2 pages, issued every 6 months destined to the financing of the project), *reports for the users' committee* (see below); *description sheet of the database* (in English, Dutch and French) ;

All these activities are to be financed within the allocated budget.

Working of the project:

The public authority steers and manages the project and collaborates closely with the team and the federal Science Policy Office (which form the technical committee of the project). The project is followed up by a users' committee who comes together at least three times in the course of the project (at the beginning, in the middle and at the end). Its role is to give a positive input to the team and the public authority in the management of the project. It is composed by representatives of other public administrations and by other researchers. The scientific team is in charge of preparing the documents for this committee, the public institution is responsible of the agenda and the minutes of the meetings.

Date of the information session with a delegate of the public institution (inscription at least a week in advance by e-mail – [naji@belspo.be](mailto:naji@belspo.be) . without mark of interest, the meeting will be cancelled):  
**18 January**, Federal Science Policy Office, **10 a.m.**

## **The project**

### **1. Name of the Public institution**

1. Directorate-general Statistics Belgium of the FPS Economy, SME's, Self-Employed and Energy (<http://www.statbel.fgov.be/>)
2. Institute for the Equality of women and men (IEWM) (<http://www.iefh.fgov.be/>)

### **2. Name of the project**

Gender and income: analysis and development of indicators

### **3. Acronym**

BGIA (Belgian Gender and Income Analysis)

### **4. Description of the project and situation within the framework of the institution**

Definition of the problem:

The current income data offer little information about the differences in income between men and women. This information is available for single persons, but for couples the analysis is made on the basis of an assumption of an equal distribution between men and women. This lack of information is a serious obstacle for a good policy preparation and for income and/or gender research.

Social and policy relevance:

For a number of reasons it is important to have a clear picture of the income differences between men and women. Firstly, income is a fundamental factor in our society; it is both the cause and the effect of people's social status. Differences between men and women with regard to their income touch the core of gender inequality. Secondly the analysis of poverty risks on the level of households offers a snapshot, but it contains little information on the social insecurity of the household members in case of a break up. In the context of family destabilization this is a relevant question. The current data do not pay enough attention to the relationship between (the personal access to) income and events during life. The cost of having children, in the sense of short or long term or future loss of income is disproportionately carried by women. The high poverty risks of older single women are directly related to the gender differences in accumulated pension rights.

Finally, the equal distribution within families is in fact a myth. The allocation processes within families and the differences with regard to the level and pattern of consumption are not taken into account. A thorough analysis of gender and income also contains the degree to which men and women have access to financial means and carry responsibilities within the family.

Scientific relevance:

Belgium has very good poverty indicators and has been a trend setter in Europe in this field. This leading position can be continued. The difficulty of studying gender differences on the basis of the current indicators is not a problem that is specific to Belgium. However, tax systems and social security are very specific, so the methods behind the indicators that are developed must be made transparent enough. In this manner both methodology and results become useful and relevant for researchers in other countries.

Belgium also has very good income data at its disposal. Up until now these have been inadequately analysed from a gender perspective. The existence of information in which individual data is coupled with data on a household level offers unique possibilities for alternative analyses.

Situation in the framework of the authorities:

Directorate-general Statistics Belgium commits itself to constantly optimize and open up its statistical data. The analysis of gender differences in income data is a part of this process. The

Institute for the equality of women and men would like to see a gender-aware analysis of income data. It wants to help circulate the results and see to the continuity of the analyses. The project at hand can also be fit in with the gender mainstreaming bill<sup>1</sup>, which was adopted in the second reading by the council of ministers on May 5, 2006. In this bill the different public services were charged with establishing gender specific statistics and gender indicators. The availability of indicators on gender differences will also be of direct use in the policy preparation of other public services and policy cells.

## 5. Tasks to be accomplished

### a. by the research team:

The project is based on a thorough analysis on an individual level of the current income situation of men and women for the different sources of information. For this purpose coded data are used. A working method must be developed as well as indicators. Making this method available and putting together a database with data on gender and income will ensure the calculation of the indicators in the future and also stimulate further research on this subject.

- The study and inventory<sup>2</sup> of best practices in other countries and making contacts with foreign experts for the exchange of expertise
- The analysis of the income differences between men and women on an individual level for the different data sources
  - Clarify the best way to incorporate family related benefits in the analyses
  - Clarify the best way to incorporate taxation in the analyses
  - Study the relationship between the income differences between men and women and the characteristics of the household
  - Study the relationship between the income differences between men and women and individual characteristics
  - Compare differences in income from paid work with differences in income from social security
- Calculate the current income inequality in families
  - Calculate an indicator that reflects the income inequality within the families
  - Make a classification of the households depending on the degree and the direction of the inequality
  - Clarify the best way to incorporate family related allowances in the analyses
  - Clarify the best way to incorporate taxation in the analyses
- Make simulations for the expected incomes of men and women (in typical cases) in case of a family break-up in the short term (situation after the break-up) and the long term (after reaching pension age). Develop different alimony payment type cases.
- Analyze differences in degree and pattern of consumption based on the household budget survey.
- Examine how allocation processes in families can best be polled, taking into account the limitations imposed by Eurostat, especially regarding the length of the questionnaires.
- Set up a database on 'Gender and income' based on a selection of relevant data in view of further research (this database will be accessible to scientists)

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<sup>1</sup> The bill to change the law of March 6 1996 aimed at monitoring the application of the resolution of the Beijing world conference on women which took place from September 4 through 14 in 1995 and to integrate the gender dimension into the federal policy as a whole.

<sup>2</sup> An example of a good study is 'Gender and benefits. Working Paper Series No. 30', Equal Opportunities Commission, UK .

and public servants on the conditions laid out by ADSEI, particularly the confidentiality provision. Only coded data is made available).

- Develop a simple update method for the database

▪ Give feedback to the ADSEI and IEWM teams

- Provide the necessary training for the follow-up of the project, i.e. the calculation of indicators and keeping the database up to date

b. By the public institution:

1. *As a preliminary to the scientific work*

ADSEI:

- Provide the most recent fiscal data, the EU-SILC2004, the structure of earnings survey and the household budget survey. The access to these data always depends on a confidentiality contract between ADSEI and the researcher. Only coded data is given, never any identifiable information.
- Explain the data files.

IEWM:

- explain the gender issue.

2. *During the realization of the project*

ADSEI & IEWM:

Give support and guidance in case of any questions or problems.

## **6. Final product to be delivered:**

a. By the research team:

A report containing the commissioned results and indicators and an extensive methodological appendix. A gender and income database. A training for the ADSEI and IEWM staff members.

b. For the public institution

Gender aware income data, procedures for the calculation of indicators, allowing for an easy recalculation for new data

## **7. Valorisation of the end product**

a. For the public institution: integration of the end product into its own way of working

ADSEI:

- Publish the results on the website;
- 'Gender and income' database accessible to researchers if the necessary conditions are fulfilled (confidentiality contract between ADSEI and researchers and coded data only).

IEWM:

- The availability of more correct data on income differences between men and women will allow the IEWM to formulate better policy recommendations;
- Put the results on the website and in the biannual publication 'Women and Men in Belgium'.

b. for the 'public': access conditions and modalities for scientific users and for the general public

Results available to policy cells, scientists and the general public. Availability of the database for further research (subject to a confidentiality contract between ADSEI and researchers and coded data only).

## 8. Timing, planning and allocated budget

### a. timing of the activities:

1 September 2007 - 31 August 2009

### b. planning of the activities<sup>3</sup>:

#### 1. For the scientific team

- inventory and analysis of best practices in other countries (1 month)
- analysis of income differences on an individual level for the different sources of information and development of indicators (8 months)
- analysis of income differences in families and development of indicators (8 months)
- analysis of differences in degree and pattern of consumption (4 months)
- development of a method for studying allocation processes (4 months)
- simulations of expected incomes (8 months)
- contacts with experts, international exchange with regard to methodology and indicators (2 months)
- intermediate and final reports (5 months)
- making the database operational (5 months)
- feedback to ADSEI en IEWM and training (3 months)

#### 2. For the public authority

- provide data (coded only) and further explanation (at the start of the project)
- guidance and support (during the project depending on the need)

## 9. Special conditions

### a. Suggestion for the composition of the support committee:

FPS Social Security (FOD Sociale Zekerheid), FPS Employment, Labour and Sociale Dialogue (FOD Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid, Sociaal overleg), Office for the fight against poverty, social insecurity and social exclusion (Steunpunt tot bestrijding van armoede, bestaansonzekerheid en sociale uitsluiting), Equal Opportunities Council, Learning to Venture NPO (Leren Ondernemen vzw), Flora NPO, Council of Dutch Speaking Women (Nederlandstalige Vrouwenraad), and academic experts  
ADSEI representation: Els Bauwens or Geneviève Geenens  
IEWM representation: Hildegard Van Hove and Geraldine Reymanants

### b. Clause of confidentiality and intellectual property:

ADSEI can only provide data on individual level if the conditions of art. 17 of the law of 2006/03/22 are met, especially:

**Art. 15.** *Without prejudice to the rules that govern the communication of data to institutions to which the statistical secret is applicable under a provision of the law, following the approval of the Board of*

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<sup>3</sup> The concrete splitting of tasks between the two researchers is left to the teams who are issuing a submission form. The tasks and timing in this section are reproduced for one researcher, given the fact that tasks and timing partly overlap.

*Supervision on Statistics and on approval of a confidentiality contract by this board, the National institute for Statistics is bound to provide coded study data to:*

- 1° the federal public services or the institutions of general interest under the government's authority, control or administrative supervision, with the exception of the tax administrations;*
- 2° the ministerial departments of the communities and regions, the institutions of general interest under the authority, control or administrative supervision of the communities, regions or the Brussels institutions detailed in article 60 of the special law of January 12, 1989 , with the exception of the tax administrations;*
- 3° the provincial or communal councils, with the exception of the tax administrations;*
- 4° natural and legal persons aiming to conduct scientific research, who have filed a request to that end, together with a description of the research project according to the prevailing scientific standards containing a sufficiently detailed enumeration of the data to be consulted, a description of the method of analysis and an estimate of the required time.*

*The study data provided under a confidentiality contract may not be passed on to others or be used for other statistical ends than those described in the confidentiality contract.*

*The Board of Supervision on Statistics only allows the communication of these coded scientific data when the communication is an essential part of the statistical objectives described in the confidentiality contract.*

*The characteristics that make it possible to identify the informant are removed and encoded beforehand, so the person(s) in charge of the research can not connect the obtained data to the informant.*