

ENGIE - promoting gender balance in the area of earth science and engineering

The overall gender pattern in geosciences, especially in the mineral exploration and extraction sectors is definitely imbalanced. It is characterised, more or less, by men and stable male stereotypes in almost all parts of the business clusters, in society and professional communities as well as in education and research. However, studies confirm that diverse teams are more creative and innovative. Participation of women in raw materials related industries is therefore necessary and may be considered as an element of business strategy.

The Raw Materials Community of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT RawMaterials) supports the implementation of a project which aims to turn the interest of 13-18 years old girls to study geosciences and related engineering disciplines, and expectedly will improve the gender balance in these fields. The project 'ENGIE – Encouraging Girls to Study Geosciences and Engineering' will focus on secondary school female students as career decisions are made generally in this period of life. It will start in January 2020 and last for three years.

During the implementation of the project, an awareness-raising strategy will be developed and an international stakeholder collaboration network will be established for the realisation of a set of concrete actions. These actions include family science events, outdoor programmes, school science clubs, mine visits, mentoring programmes, international student conferences, publication and awarding opportunities, summer courses to science teachers and production of educational materials.

ENGIE will be implemented by the cooperation of 26 institutions. The partnership involves 3 universities (University of Miskolc, Luleå University of Technology and University of Zagreb) 2 research centres (Italian National Research Council and La Palma Research Centre) and a European-level professional organisation (European Federation of Geologists). 20 national member associations of EFG will also take part in the project implementation as Linked Third Parties. By their contribution, the project activities will be extended to more than 20 European countries.