



**‘NORMALIZING’ AND ENGENDERING WOMEN IN ENGINEERING
AND TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH,
OR,**

**Eliminating the Leaky Pipeline: Sustaining-‘Normalizing’-
Engendering Women's Careers as Academics, Researchers and
Professionals in Engineering, Computers and the Sciences**

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My presentation will discuss:

1. The obstacles that female students face as they attempt to access higher education and achieve success.
2. Innovative strategies that facilitate academic achievement
3. More importantly, **teacher-training to learn innovative, practical and successful strategies** that can be implemented at their institutions that will enable them to help women students overcome obstacles on their path towards a college degree.
4. The necessity of promoting institutional policies that support retention efforts,
5. Unique needs of female students regarding financial aid and recruitment;
6. Developing corporate and community partnerships and
7. Strategies for creating a campus atmosphere that promotes engagement and success

Focusing on the factors that contribute to Greek women's non-engagement and under-representation in engineering and technology, and in particular the technological gender gap or digital divide in the knowledge economy, this presentation will examine the 'gendered' educational institutions in Greece while providing an overview of the gender distribution in the Greek academia.

Undeniably, the overall participation of women in engineering, science and technology is low. Women still comprise a minority in the Greek academia, and especially in the higher academic hierarchies. The 'genderedness' of educational institutions in Greece, traditional perspectives, the glass ceiling, the leaky pipeline, the life/work balance or rather imbalance, the lack of affordable child care facilities, among other things, have contributed to the declining interest of women for engineering and technology study programs. Irrefutably education is the place to start, given that socially inclusive educational systems and equity policies are key variables to responding to global change, however it is not enough. Promoting new pedagogical applications as well as recruiting or recognizing the largely untapped pool of talent

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amongst women, although essential, is not sufficient. What is vital is *retention*. Retaining, women in their careers in engineering, in science and technology, and in R&D, in addition to increasing their participation in leadership— from decision-making to execution phases— is urgent in the light of demographic pressures, aging populations and the low levels of immigration tolerance around Europe. Retention requires the establishment of nurturing inclusive workplace cultures, supportive and socially inclusive working environments, the application of best practices, sustainable diversity efforts and ‘sensitivity’ training to raise awareness. Enhancing conditions for research and innovation in Europe calls for inclusive organizational cultures that allow women to function at their full potential for the benefit of their organization/institution, thereby reproducing female participation. As the German Minister for Education and Research, Annette Schavan recently pointed out to the Members of the European Parliament, the tasks at hand include: “launching a European flagship of innovation”, “success through research”, “renewing the European research area (ERA)” and dialogue on the establishment of a European Institute of Technology (EIT).

SHORT BIO

Irene Kamberidou is a member of the Gender Expert Action Group of the EC DG Information Society and Media in Brussels, where she participated as an expert in the *Consultation Workshops on Gender and Technology* in 2004 and 2005 and in the *Women in Science* seminar in 2006. Dr. Kamberidou is a Lecturer of Sociology at the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens. She obtained her BA and MA at Emmanuel College and Boston College, respectively, Boston, Massachusetts, USA and her PhD from the Sociology Department of Panteios University of Social and Political Sciences in Athens, Greece. ikamper@phed.uoa.gr, renakamp@hotmail.com