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HELENA
Higher Education Leading to
ENgineering And scientific careers



Deliverable D6.1
Comparison of case studies and student perceptions





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Executive Summary

This report will present a synthesis of the results from the research project HELENA, Higher Education Leading to ENgineering And scientific careers 1 . The project is funded by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Program (FP7), DG Research - Science in Society. It is coordinated by Siauliai University (Lithuania) and partners from Austria (Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt), France (Ecole Normale Supérieure de Cachan and Egalité des Chances dans les Etudes et la Profession d'Ingénieur en Europe), Serbia (Mihailo Pupin Institute), Spain (Fundación Tecnalia Research & Innovation) and United Kingdom (Loughborough University) are involved. This deliverable summarizes the main conclusions of the HELENA project. Tecnalia Research & Innovation has been the responsible of this report.

The research done in HELENA project aims to explore the students' perception and personal reasons for study choice of E&T, the influence of the cultural or social context in their decision, identifying which are the subtle processes and mechanisms operating in E&T education that contribute to sustaining gender inequality, and to analyse the success of "innovative" degree courses in comparison with the "traditional" ones in attracting more female engineering students.

WP6 takes as a basis the research work undertaken along the HELENA project within the previous work packages, mainly WP4 and WP5, to define specific indicators for measuring the attractiveness towards girls of E&T study programmes and to explore new possibilities in high education. We can understand WP6 as a summary of the main conclusions of the HELENA project providing recommendations for European Policy makers and Educational actors related with E&T education which will enable the Higher Education Institutions to evaluate the effectiveness of their educational policies and study programmes in attracting more female students to engineering disciplines.

Deliverable D6.1 will provide a synthetic review of current E&T education and the cultural context of E&T in Europe, a brief explanation about how the HELENA hypotheses (that greater interdisciplinary course content can encourage a more equal gender balance in E&T courses in Higher Education) have been supported and the main conclusions of the analysis of female and male students' perception of E&T in general and of interdisciplinary E&T fields in particular and whether this differs for students of traditional and innovative courses. Finally, this report will identify some interesting preliminary conclusions after exploring the impact of other factors on career choice and gender in engineering by partner country.



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