



*Improving the gender diversity  
in materials research institutes  
FP7 - Science in Society (2009-2010)*



*Theano: Wife and Successor leader  
of Phythagoras school  
6<sup>th</sup> century BC*



**Supporting action for the DIVERSITY project**

***“Women in European Materials Science Research  
Institutions”***

***19-20 May 2011, DIVANI Corfu Palace Hotel, Corfu Island,  
Greece***

**Organizer: Ch.E. Lekka<sup>(1)</sup>**

**Local Organizing committee:**

**G.B. Bokas<sup>(1)</sup>, M. A. Gialampouki<sup>(1)</sup> and G.A. Evangelakis<sup>(2)</sup>**

<sup>(1)</sup>Department of Materials Science & Engineering, University of Ioannina, Ioannina 45110 Greece

<sup>(2)</sup>Department of Physics, University of Ioannina, Ioannina 45110 Greece

*With the auspices of the University of Ioannina*

# PROGRAMME

## Wednesday 19 March 2011

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17:30	Reception
18:00 – 18:15	Opening ceremony: Christina Lekka, UoI, Greece
18:15 – 19:00	<i>Mariana Calin</i> , IFW, Dresden “More women on scientific boards – why does it matter?”
19:00 – 19:30	Discussion

## Friday 20 March 2011

Morning session: Chairman: *G.A. Evangelakis, University of Ioannina*

- 9:30 – 10:30      *Ulrike Wolff, IFW, Dresden, Germany*  
*“Objectives and outcoming results of the Women In Nano project“*
- 10:30 – 10:45      Discussion
- 10:45 – 11:00      Coffee break
- 11:00 – 12:00      *Dagmar Caganova, Jana Stefankova, Jana Sujanova*  
*SUT, Trnava, Slovakia*  
*“Gender diversity from the Slovak and Greek perspective“*
- 12:00 – 12:30      Morning session concluding discussion
- 12:30 – 16:30      Lunch break

Afternoon session: Chairman: *Mariana Calin, IFW, Dresden*

- 17:00 – 18:00      *Paola Rizzi, UT, Torino, Italy*  
*“Material science institutions in Italy: the role of women “*
- 18:00 – 18:15      Discussion
- 18:15 – 18:30      Coffee break
- 18:30 – 19:30      *Christina Lekka, Uoi, Ioannina, Greece*  
*“Career chances of Women in Science in Greece:  
Past and future“*
- 19:30 – 20:00      Discussion-Closure
- 21:00                  Workshop dinner

## **Report on the: “European women in materials research institutions”**

**19-20 May 2011, DIVANI Corfu Palace Hotel, Corfu Island Greece**

On 19-20 May the DIVERISTY Workshop on “European women in materials research institutions” took place in Corfu Island, Greece.

The organizer, **Dr. Ch. Lekka**, welcomed the participants and made an introduction on the scope, targets and spirit of the DIVERSITY project. Among the Workshop participants were four partners from the DIVERSITY consortium: Prof. M. Calin IFW Germany, Assoc. Prof. D. Caganova SUT Slovakia, Dr. P. Rizzi UT Italy and representatives from the host institution like Prof. G.A. Evangelakis (academic decision maker).

**Prof. M. Calin** from the Institute for Complex Materials, Leibniz-Institute IFW Dresden, presented the first invited talk entitled “More women on scientific boards – why does it matter?”. She discussed the European-level policy for gender equality in science, starting with the Treaty of Amsterdam, 1997 before proceeding in the European gender dependent Scissors-like diagrams that exhibit significant deviations in the topmost positions of different institutions. She presented the possible reasons for the limited representation of women in high level academic positions and the ways the European policy tried to raise awareness with Support Actions and projects in order to enhance female scientists’ networks, organizing workshops etc. In addition, she pointed out the key areas females should focus on: A) Research and productivity, B) Recognition in the scientific field and C) Grants and contracts. From her personal point of view the female research “productivity” would increase if women become more socialized rather than working hard invisibly. Finally, she addressed the importance of the question “Why gender diversity?” explaining the main reasons: a) democracy and social justice, b) demographic trends, c) human resources and integration and d) economical benefits. Therefore the scope and aim of the DIVERISTY project is crucial for raising awareness towards the improvement of gender diversity in Materials Research Institutes.

On Friday 20 May, the first invited speaker was **Dr Ulrike Wolff** from the Institute for Metallic Materials, Leibniz-Institute IFW Dresden. She presented an invited talk entitled “Objectives and out coming results of the *Women in Nano* project” showing the role and the deliveries of this European project. Some of the major project’s actions were: a) Asking young people about their opinion about what scientists are doing the whole day, b) organizing easy for young people experiments, c) raising awareness, d) establishing models, e) organized exchange student visits, etc. This project raised awareness of the problems that female scientists face especially in the area of nanotechnology like underrepresentation, difficulties to combine family with career and strong competition in a male dominated environment. In addition, it helped many young female scientists providing successful women role models in life and science and supported their scientific career through meetings and networking.

The next talk was given by **Assoc. Prof. Dagmar Caganova** from the Faculty of Materials Science and Technology STU, Institute of Industrial Engineering Management and Quality, Division of Academic Activities, Trnava, Slovakia, who delivered an invited talk on “Gender diversity from the Slovak and Greek perspective”. She presented the situation of women scientists in Slovakia and the possible reasons of their underrepresentation in high level

academic positions. The comparison between the Slovakian and the Greek statistical data concerning the female undergraduate or PhD students reaching up full Professors level (Scissors diagrams) revealed strong similarities between the two countries despite the great differences in their history, geography and culture. In addition, she showed how the DIVERSITY project improved the awareness of the female scientists situation and the effect that it had in her Institution: a) one women became vice-dean in the new composition of the scientific board, b) how the project created the environment for her promotion and c) in future employments the gender issues will be taken under consideration.

**Dr Paola Rizzi** from the Department of Chemistry I.F.M., University of Torino, Italy gave an invited talk entitled “Material science institutions in Italy: the role of women”. In her speech she presented the situation in Italy since 1899 and showed the historical evolution of statistical data concerning women scientists and how politics and media affect the way of Italian people thinking. In particular, around the fifties it was more obvious for men to study informatics rather than humanities (similar situation in other countries like Greece and Slovakia), while the recruitment problems in the Italian universities around 1980 were addressed in a political way with the undercover idea of letting the female scientists in the lower level positions forgetting the two Italian female Nobel winners. Nevertheless, although the media promote the outfit rather than the spirit and education of Italian women, actions are supported by the government like participation of fathers in family life. Moreover, activities like the protest against "Bunga-bunga" are happening, demonstrating that there are people interested in changing the role models proposed by the media.

Finally, **Assist. Prof. Ch.E. Lekka** from the Department of Materials Science and Engineering, University of Ioannina Greece made a presentation entitled “Career chances of Women in Science in Greece: Past and future”. Starting from the 5<sup>th</sup> century, Theano a prominent teacher on physics, medicine, and child psychology was the first Greek female scientist who is assumed the leadership of the Pythagorean School upon the death of her husband Pythagoras, while a lot of other Greek female scientists existed until the Byzantium era. On the contrary, nowadays the situation is similar to other European countries, although the statistical data promote the university undergraduate female compared to male, this is reversed as far as the high level positions concerns. Interestingly in the University of Ioannina this is true not only in the Material Science and Physics Department but also in the Philosophy and History where although the number of female professors is higher men again dominate the highest level positions.

After every presentation discussions between the auditors were taken place. The main outcomes may be summarized as follows:

- a) Although the European countries exhibit some differences concerning culture and mentality of their people, the outcome as far as the statistical data and the Scissors diagram agree that after the PhD the female scientists dominate the lower level academic and decision making positions.

- b) Support the female scientists who are willing to reach the high level positions (invited talks, participation in networking and academic boards).
- c) Re – educate the children hoping that the new generation will have a different way of thinking. Try to change the mentality of people.
- d) Support the female scientists who have children with kindergartens and raise the aware of their husbands the importance of assistance.

