



2025 Report - AMIRES GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2025-2027

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1. Executive summary

According to the latest report from the European Institute for Gender Equality, full gender equality remains at least 50 years away.¹ While progress has been made, persistent gaps demonstrate the continued need for systematic action. AMIRES' Gender Equality Plan (GEP) was created in 2022 to promote gender equality both internally and externally, and we closely monitor a set of gender-related indicators across all Horizon Europe projects we support: from proposal design to project closure. Each year, we publish a report summarizing our findings and progress.

Overall, AMIRES is progressing well toward the objectives defined in its GEP. Internally, 46% of all speakers, moderators, and panellists at AMIRES-organised events in 2025 were women, close to our 50% target. Achieving this has been particularly challenging in highly specialised fields such as quantum technologies and deep tech, where the representation of female experts remains limited, though steadily increasing. Additional internal achievements include:

- a) No gender-biased language or visual materials identified in AMIRES' public communication.
- b) Confirmation of no pay gaps among AMIRES employees.
- c) Regular meetings between the Gender Equality Board, now renamed the Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board, and AMIRES management.
- d) AMIRES internal trainings on gender related aspects.

Under our external strategy, the share of women² coordinating ongoing Horizon Europe projects in our portfolio increased from 19% in early assessments to 24% today, though still below our 30% target. For comparison, 31% of Horizon Europe project coordinators EU-wide are women, according to the 2025 European Commission report.³ Among other leadership roles in AMIRES-supported projects, women represent 29% of Work Package leaders (target: 40%) and 22% of advisory board members (target: 30%). We also encountered cases where advisory boards included no women at all; a situation we actively work to prevent by recommending qualified female experts from our network.

This year, we expanded our monitoring to include gender balance within project teams. While our ability to influence recruitment is limited, preliminary findings show that women represent on average 34% of the overall project workforce and 31% of researchers.

For project proposals where AMIRES supported the preparation in 2025, the gender distribution was more favourable: 27% female coordinators, 31% female WP leaders, and 35% female advisors, particularly encouraging in deep-tech contexts, reflecting AMIRES' commitment to involving women in expert roles. In these proposals, women accounted for 28% of total staff and 38% of the researchers.

Awareness of inclusive language and gender-neutral imagery remains strong within the AMIRES team, and we received only on 7% of the proposals negative evaluator feedback on gender aspects in submitted proposals. Another milestone was the continued growth of the "In Her Shoes" podcast, which highlights women in science and technology and provides visible role models. We explored the possibility of introducing a "kids' corner" at two AMIRES events to better support parents with family responsibilities. However, there was insufficient interest from speakers and attendees, so the initiative was not implemented. We will continue to test similar measures in the future.

In the upcoming reports, we will include non-binary categories in our analysis of coordinators, WP leaders and external advisors.

¹ [New EU data shows women need to work 15½ months to earn what men make in a year | European Institute for Gender Equality](#)

² In this report, the terms "women" and "female" are used interchangeably for simplicity, while acknowledging that they do not carry the same meaning and should not be considered identical in all contexts.

³ [Fostering gender equality: Key figures from Horizon Europe, EU 2025.](#)

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AMIRES' GEP delivers measurable progress toward SDGs 5, 8, 9, and 10 by increasing women's participation in decision-making, integrating gender dimensions into research content, and fostering fair, family-friendly working conditions.

After several years of systematic data collection, we reaffirm that monitoring is a powerful driver of progress. Although quotas alone cannot resolve gender inequality, they are a necessary starting point. AMIRES continues to identify opportunities for improvement, particularly avoiding zero female representation in leadership roles in ongoing projects and maintaining balanced representation in our events. We remain committed to testing new actions and advancing toward the goals defined in the AMIRES Gender Equality Plan and the broader objective of achieving gender equality.

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2. Introduction

The Gender Equality Index (GEI) evaluates progress across six core domains: work, money, knowledge, time, power, and health. According to the GEI, the European Union (EU) reached 63.4 points in 2025, while Czechia scored 53.2 points.⁴ The 2025 edition introduced a revised methodology and therefore a new baseline. To ensure comparability over the time, past values have been recalculated using the updated methodology, producing a single, internally consistent time series⁵.

Complementing this broad societal overview, the She Figures 2024 report⁶ (published in 2025) provides a detailed assessment of gender equality in research and innovation. Its overall Index scores range between 60 and 88, with 100 representing total gender equality, across six key dimensions: pipeline segregation, research sectors, career progression, decision-making, research participation, and the integration of a gender dimension in research and innovation content (GDRIC). Both sources point to incremental improvements in recent years, yet underline that substantial gaps persist, particularly in leadership roles, STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), and in the integration of gender perspectives into research content.

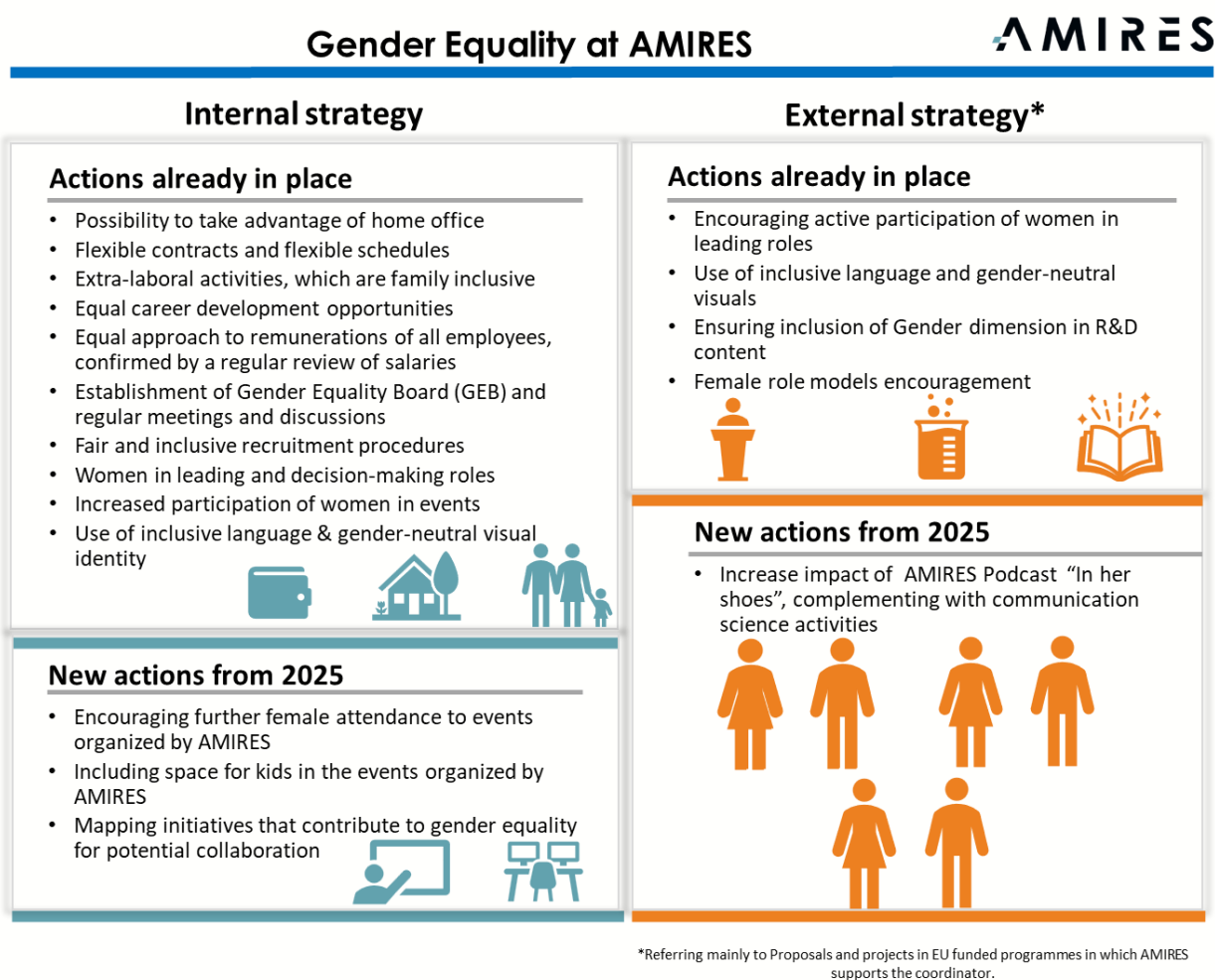


Figure 1. Internal and external strategy in AMIRÉS Gender Equality Plan (GEP) 2025-2027.

⁴ Being 100 points, full equality between women and men, according to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). [Gender Equality Index | European Institute for Gender Equality](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index)

⁵ <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-equality-index-2025-sharper-data-changing-world>

⁶ [Gender equality in research and innovation not progressing fast enough, according to new She Figures report - European Commission](https://ec.europa.eu/eige/en/gender-equality-in-research-and-innovation-not-progressing-fast-enough-according-to-new-she-figures-report)

These findings are consistent with wider EU policy priorities. Gender equality continues to be a central objective of the European Research Area (ERA), with the [2025–2027 ERA Policy Agenda](#) placing renewed emphasis on strengthening gender equality and inclusion, intersectionality, and improved monitoring of institutional practices. At the same time, the European Commission's gender equality strategy for 2025–2030⁷ highlights persistent structural barriers and reinforces the role of Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) as a key eligibility requirement and driver of organisational change in the Horizon Europe programme. These initiatives collectively aim to create a more inclusive, fair, and competitive European R&I system.

In this context, AMIRES published its first [Gender Equality Plan \(GEP\)](#) in 2022, establishing a clear internal and external strategy with defined actions, indicators, and targets that contribute to advancing gender equality both within the organisation and across the projects it supports (see Figure 1). An updated and strengthened version of the GEP was published in early 2025,⁸ reflecting lessons learned from previous monitoring cycles as well as evolving EU expectations for Horizon Europe beneficiaries. This annual report reviews progress toward these targets, identifies areas where further action is required, and adapts measures accordingly to ensure continued alignment with best practices and with the broader EU policy framework supporting gender equality.

3. AMIRES internal actions

AMIRES continued implementing actions promoting Gender equality as indicated in Figure 1. AMIRES provides flexibility of work contracts, which accommodate to employees' specific family or personal needs. During 2025, 15% of the employees at AMIRES work part-time, being half of this (8%) on parental leave 8%, and 85% full-time. Employees can come back from maternity/parental leave as soon as their situation allows them and in the percentage of time it fits them best. In relation to the recruitment of new employees, it has always been done based on merit and compatibility with the role and company culture, regardless of age, nationality or gender. Currently, 76% of all employees at AMIRES are female, and AMIRES' leading roles, i.e. 100% of programme managers, are taken by women and the average age is 34. AMIRES employees are nationals of 11 countries (Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia, Spain, France, Mexico, Germany, Estonia, Romania, Brazil, Italy).

The actions implemented as part of the GEP 2025 has produced the following results:

3.1. Action 1: Salary review

The management of AMIRES performs periodic reviews of salaries (at least 2 times a year) to monitor any potential salary inequalities between men and women (both genders should be protected equally)⁹ and employees with the same position. In addition, salaries of new hires are based on this analysis. During 2025, no gender pay gap was identified.

3.2. Action 2: Encouraging the active participation of women in events

AMIRES plays an exemplary role in the European innovation ecosystem, especially in the STEM fields among four programmes in which projects in AMIRES portfolio fall in: DeepTech¹⁰, Health, Biotech and Energy and Sustainability (from December 2025 with Quantum programme initiated). AMIRES actively welcomes and encourages the presence of excellent female professionals in events and workshops. In 2025, AMIRES organized four events, three of them in Prague ([AI in Healthcare and life sciences](#), [Rethinking Electronics Workshop](#), [Metal matters on additive manufacturing of metals](#)) and a technology side session on diamond technology in Copenhagen at the [European Quantum Tech Conference -EQTC](#). From these events, an average of 46% of the speakers and moderators were female, with the lowest share of female speakers being 28% at the Deep Tech related event and the highest 64% at the ENESUS-related AMIRES goal was to avoid no female representation and getting closer to achieve the internal target of 50% women speakers and moderators.

⁷ [Gender Equality Strategy 2026-2030 | European Commission](#)

⁸ [AMI ABIMI GEP-Report 2024-and-2025-GEP_250404.pdf](#)

⁹ Employees haven't indicated identification with other genders. Therefore, other genders were not further considered in this report.

¹⁰ During 2025 Quantum related projects are included in the DeepTech programme.

The GEDIB helps mapping existing platforms that list women and gender minorities in specific domains, which serve as a valuable source of female experts for conferences and events. A great example for the DeepTech programme is atom*innen (Figure 2), an interactive platform that provides a central, international contact point for women and gender minorities in quantum science: <https://atominnen.at/empower/women-in-quantum-physics>. An initial identified list of these platforms or networks is listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Networks/platforms listing women and gender minorities in specific domains

Programme Area	Platform / Network	Description & Focus	Region / Scope
Energy & Sustainability (ENESUS)	CEER Women in Energy Initiative	Promotes gender equality in the energy sector; leadership development, visibility, mentoring; part of CEER Strategy 2026–2029.	Europe
	WiSEu Women in Solar+ Europe	Supports women in solar energy, storage, EV charging, grid infrastructure; leadership & career growth.	Europe
	WONY Women in Energy	Supports women leaders in the energy sector; mentoring & networking.	Europe
	Lights on Women – FSR	Women in energy, climate & sustainability; visibility & training.	Europe
	Women in Energy Expert Platform (GWNET)	Global platform empowering women in sustainable energy; expert directory.	Global (HQ Vienna)
Health, Biotech & MedTech	Women in Biotech – LithuaniaBIO	Platform for women in biotech & life sciences; annual events & leadership.	Europe (Lithuania)
	Women in Biotech – BIA	Mentoring, events, leadership programmes for women in biotech.	UK/EU
	Women TechEU	Supports women founders in deeptech incl. biotech/medtech.	Europe
	EU R&I on Women’s Health	EU platform showcasing women’s health research and priorities.	Europe
DeepTech (Quantum/Engineering Cross-Tech)	Women TechEU	Supports women-led deeptech startups.	Europe
	Lights on Women	Energy/climate + engineering aligned leadership.	Europe
	Women in STEM Network	Cross-STEM training & networking.	Global

Name	Institution	Field	Position
Adèle Hilico	Laboratoire de Physique des lasers, Villetaneuse, France	Quantum Sensing and Metrology	Associate Professor
Aida Mashaal	Niels Bohr Institute, Copenhagen, Denmark	Quantum Optics	PHD student
Alessandra Todisco	University of Naples Federico II, Italy	Quantum Information, Quantum Matter, Quantum Sensing & Metrology	Master student

Figure 2. The atom*innen's list of women in quantum physics (133+)- showing institute, field and position.

Even though the proportion of female attendees cannot be fully influenced by the organiser (in our events this year, consider a rough estimation based on assumptions, it ranged between 19% and 50%), AMIRÈS tested new measures aimed at encouraging higher female participation. One of these actions involved exploring the introduction of a kids' corner to support parents with small children who often face barriers to attending due to family commitments. During registration, attendees were asked whether they would be interested in this option; however, the level of interest was unexpectedly low.

In Europe, family support features (e.g., onsite childcare, kids' corners) are still rarely advertised at scientific and R&I conferences, though there are notable exceptions at very large congresses. For example, the European Congress of Radiology explicitly offers free childcare onsite for participants' children ([documented for ECR 2026](#)), indicating that such arrangements are feasible at scale and are at least mentioned by leading organisers. In [2025](#), ECR gathered over 20,500 participants in Vienna, underlining the scale at which these measures can be promoted more easily.

Possible reasons for our low uptake include the specialised scope and modest size of AMIRÈS events compared with very large international congresses where childcare needs are more visible and the travel patterns of participants (many international attendees may not plan to bring families, while local attendees often have established childcare arrangements). We will therefore re-test interest in selected events and continue to pilot proportionate, needs-based options (e.g., pre-event interest polls, sign-posted quiet/family spaces, and caregiver-friendly scheduling).

During 2025, AMIRÈS also attended several events focusing on gender in science and technology to increase AMIRÈS expertise, share experiences, and actively participate in greater societal discussions. [Women in Tech Summit 2025](#) is a three-day event in June, in which parallel stages were active with topics around several Technology fields addressed to Women in Europe, workshops and other side activities. Another important participation was in September in the [Women In PV](#) workshop part of the EU PVSEC 2025 (European Photovoltaic Solar Energy Conference and Exhibition), a workshop focused on Inclusive Leadership, led by Carmen Madrid from the WiSEu Network (Women in Solar -Europe network). [DEI Forum 2025](#) in October, focused on advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion, and which also counted with a space dedicated for kid's attendees. Learnings from these events are and/or will be shared with AMIRÈS colleagues and collaborations sought (see action 5). Further active participation of AMIRÈS' is explored.

Moreover, AMIRÈS demonstrates proactive engagement on social media platforms, consistently sharing pertinent content in a monthly basis, exemplified by the [International day of Women](#), [International Day of Women and Girls in Science](#) and [Gender Dimension guidance for Horizon proposals](#) among others.

3.3. Action 3: Use of an inclusive language¹¹ and gender-neutral visual identity

The Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board (GEDIB)—previously known as the Gender Equality Board (GEB)—organised an internal seminar dedicated to gender equality, diversity, and inclusion in May 2025. The purpose of this session was to refresh knowledge among existing team members and introduce these principles to new colleagues. The seminar also covered practical guidance on inclusive language and the use of gender-neutral visuals, ensuring that all team members are familiar with AMIRES' communication standards.

In addition to awareness-raising activities, the GEDIB systematically reviews all written and visual materials produced by AMIRES to ensure alignment with these principles. This includes, but is not limited to, the AMIRES website, social media content, publications, presentations, promotional materials, videos, and internal reports. Through this continuous review process, AMIRES maintains a consistent commitment to bias-free, inclusive communication across all external and internal outputs. So far, colleagues had maintained their awareness on the use of inclusive language and neutral visual materials, as described in section 4 from the external strategy. These efforts will be continued.

3.4. Action 4: Regular Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board meetings and discussions

The GEDIB meets monthly to communicate actions and new ideas to be considered, as well as monitor the progress of the Gender related topics within the company. The GEDIB and AMIRES management meet at least every 6 months and during these meetings the status of the GEP and other topics related to gender equality are discussed. Meetings and communication between GEDIB and management have proven very productive and fruitful in the past and will continue to be organised.

3.5. Action 5: Mapping initiatives in gender, diversity and Inclusion (GDI)

To increase the reach and impact of AMIRES' gender-related activities, the Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board (GEDIB) is working to establish collaborations with organisations in Czechia that specialise in gender equality, diversity, and inclusion. Potential partners include the Centre for Gender and Science at the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Czechitas, FemmePalette, and D&I Shapers, among others. At this stage, GEDIB is mapping relevant organisations and their initiatives, and initial exploratory conversations have begun with some of them, while others will be approached in the next phase.

In parallel, GEDIB is mapping ongoing gender, diversity, and inclusion initiatives within the organisations participating in AMIRES-supported projects. Examples include [Diversity in Graphene | Graphene Flagship](#), [WIQD - Women in Quantum Development](#), [Delft Women in Science](#), [Diversity in Graphene](#), [Women in PV/WisEU Network](#), [WiTAR Women in Telecommunications and Research](#).

The goal of this dual mapping effort is to identify opportunities for synergy, explore potential partnerships, and contribute content or co-organised activities with the relevant actors—particularly within STEM fields in Czechia and Slovakia. Through these efforts, AMIRES aims to build a stronger ecosystem of collaboration, visibility, and impact for gender equality, diversity, and inclusion across its internal operations and the projects it supports.

4. AMIRES external strategy and commitment beyond the organisation

In addition to its internal strategy, AMIRES actively promotes gender equality across its wider ecosystem, including its partners and clients. These efforts are particularly relevant during the proposal preparation and project implementation phases, where AMIRES plays a key advisory and coordination role.

All AMIRES proposals and projects are organised into one of three programme areas:

1. **Energy & Sustainability (ENESUS)** – focusing on energy systems, sustainability, and climate related innovation.
2. **Health & Biotech** – centred on biotechnology, medical technologies, and innovation in the health sector.

¹¹ Examples using instead of *First Man studies*, use *First in Human studies*, *businessperson* instead of *businesswoman* or *businessman*. Other examples: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/151780/GNL_Guidelines_EN.pdf

3. **DeepTech** – covering advanced technological domains such as engineering, advanced materials, and quantum-related research.

As previously noted, three of these programme areas are led by women, demonstrating AMIRES' commitment to balanced leadership and the promotion of gender equality within its organisational structure. Through these internal leadership examples and its external-facing activities, AMIRES contributes to more inclusive practices within the broader innovation ecosystem.

4.1. Action 5: Encouraging active participation of women in leading roles

AMIRES encourages and supports its partners in integrating gender-equality measures both during the proposal design phase and throughout the implementation of funded projects¹². When partner organisations lack established gender-equality practices, AMIRES provides examples of good practice and actively motivates them to develop, expand, and formalise their efforts in this area.

As part of this approach, AMIRES promotes women's participation in key leadership roles within projects—specifically as Work Package leaders, and external advisory board members. This proactive support is reflected in the improved representation of women¹³ in leadership roles in the project proposals prepared in 2025, where increases were observed across WP leader, and advisory roles.

These outcomes demonstrate the positive influence of AMIRES' actions during the proposal preparation phase and highlight the value of early engagement in shaping more gender-balanced project structures. The targets and corresponding results for these activities are summarised in Table 3 in section 5.1.

4.1.1. EU Project Proposals Analysis

In 2025, 27% of the EU project proposals supported by AMIRES were coordinated by women (Figure 3), a decrease from 35% in 2024. Notably, all female coordinators in 2025 came from the DeepTech programme, a field traditionally characterised by low female representation. It is important to highlight that coordinators are typically the ones who first approach AMIRES for support, which may partially explain the absence of women coordinators in the Health and ENESUS proposals this year: no women coordinators from these domains sought AMIRES' involvement in 2025.

Women continued to hold other leadership roles within proposals. On average, 31% of Work Package Leaders (WPLs) were women, with representation ranging from 20% to 71%, and with no proposal showing zero female WP leaders. In advisory roles—scientific, external, or ethics boards—women accounted for 35% of the proposed experts, surpassing the 30% GEP target. Individual proposals ranged from 0% to 67% female advisers. Although avoiding zero female representation in advisory roles remains a target still in progress, the situation improved: only 7% of proposals had no female advisers, compared with 13% in 2024.

Against the GEP targets, outcomes were mixed. The target for female coordinators (30%) was close to being met (27%). The target for female advisers (30%) was exceeded (35%). However, the target for female WP leaders (40%) was not achieved (31%).

Regarding planned project teams, proposals projected 28% women in the overall workforce and 38% women among researchers, both lower than in 2024 (34% and 50% respectively).

The relationship between coordinator gender and broader team composition also shifted. In previous reports, proposals led by women tended to have higher proportions of female WP leaders and advisers. In 2025, this pattern continued only for advisory roles: proposals with female coordinators included on average 58% women advisers, compared with 29% for male coordinators. For WP leadership, however, proposals led by women showed 26% female WP leaders, compared with 33% when coordinators were men. This may be influenced by the fact that all female coordinators were in DeepTech, where female representation is generally lower at all

¹² This report includes both unweighted (project-average) and weighted (overall) proportions, which can differ depending on project size. The weighted proportions are the ones presented at the final table.

¹³ Until now, reporting across AMIRES projects has followed a binary gender classification ("women" and "men"), reflecting the structure of the data collected in previous years. Starting in 2026, and in line with evolving EU project reporting requirements, AMIRES will include a **non-binary** category in its data collection and monitoring processes to ensure more inclusive and accurate representation.

levels. Nonetheless, progress was made within this challenging field, and importantly, no DeepTech proposal led by a woman had zero female representation in leadership roles.

4.1.2. EU-Funded Projects Analysis

In 2025, AMIRES managed or supported dissemination and communication in dozens of EU-funded projects, of which 21% were from Horizon 2020 and 79% from Horizon Europe (HE).¹⁴ Among these, 24% of projects were coordinated by women, a slight increase compared to previous years (19% in 2021–2022 and 23% in 2023). By programme, the share of women coordinators was 25% in ENESUS,¹⁵ 37% in DeepTech¹⁶ and 38% Health.¹⁷ (Figure 4).

Across ongoing projects, female representation in other leadership roles remained uneven. On average, 30% of Work Package Leaders (weighted value: 32%) were women, with programme-level shares of 32% in ENESUS, 41% in Health, and 27% in DeepTech. Despite AMIRES' aim to avoid zero female WP leaders, 6% of projects still had no women in this role, while the highest representation reached 63%.

Advisory roles showed a different pattern: women represented 22% on average, but 30% when considering weighted values, thus achieving the GEP target of 30%. Individual projects ranged from 0% to 75% female advisors, with the highest values found in Health-related projects.

Although the 2025 targets for female coordinators (30%) and female WP leaders (40%) were not reached, the target for female advisory board members (30%) was achieved when applying weighted values.

Regarding team composition, 34% of personnel involved in the projects were women (up from 32% in 2024), and 31% of researchers were women (up from 27% in 2024), representing a modest but positive increase.

According to the latest European Commission data,¹⁸ the share of women project coordinators in Horizon Europe is 31% (up from 24% in Horizon 2020), and the programme involves more than 76,000 women researchers, accounting for 38% of all researchers. Advisory and expert groups under Horizon Europe currently show a majority of female members (51.4%). AMIRES' project and proposal portfolio aligns with these EU-level trends in 2024 and 2025, with the exception of the proportion of women in advisory roles, which remains comparatively lower in AMIRES-managed projects.

Earlier analyses showed that in proposals coordinated by women, female WP leaders and advisors averaged 49% and 39%, respectively. In contrast, in proposals coordinated by men, these averages were significantly lower (24% female WP leaders and 16% female advisors). Team composition followed a similar pattern: proposals with a woman coordinator included on average 40% women in the workforce and 34% women researchers, compared with 35% and 29%, respectively, in proposals with male coordinators.

As part of AMIRES' ongoing efforts to support working parents, meeting scheduling practices are monitored. In a sample week in 2025 with a high density of meetings, 90% were scheduled between 9:00 and 16:00, aligning with the recommended family-friendly timeframe.

Based on these results, AMIRES will continue efforts to strengthen female representation in projects, with a particular focus on avoiding zero female representation in leadership roles. The established GEP targets remain valid and are to be achieved by 2027:

- 30% women coordinators
- 40% women WP leaders
- 30% women advisors

AMIRES will continue monitoring the gender composition of project teams—including researchers—across both proposal submissions and projects under implementation.

¹⁴ Important to note that gender related aspects are obligatory in HE, such as the need of a Gender Equality Plan for public institutions.

¹⁵ 6% of all the coordinators

¹⁶ 9% of all the coordinators

¹⁷ 9% of all the coordinators.

¹⁸ [Fostering gender equality - Publications Office of the EU](#). In this report, they consider the whole programme of Horizon Europe. The Horizon Europe projects from AMIRES are mainly belonging to PILAR I (one segment of the Horizon Europe programme, which comprises approx. 25% of the total of funded projects according to the [Horizon Dashboard](#)).

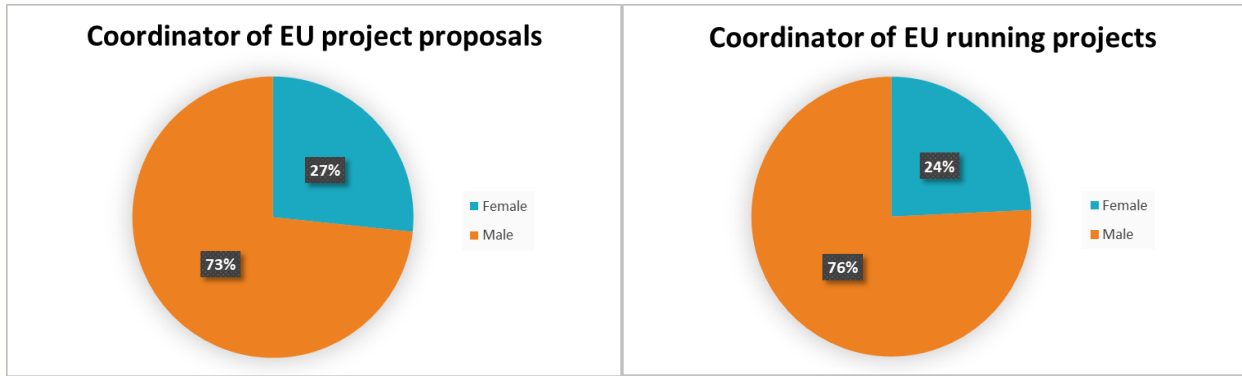


Figure 3. Percentage of female coordinators in EU proposals in 2025 (in which AMIRES supports the coordinators in the proposal preparation) (left) and in on-going projects (AMIRES acting as project manager and/or communication and dissemination manager) (right).

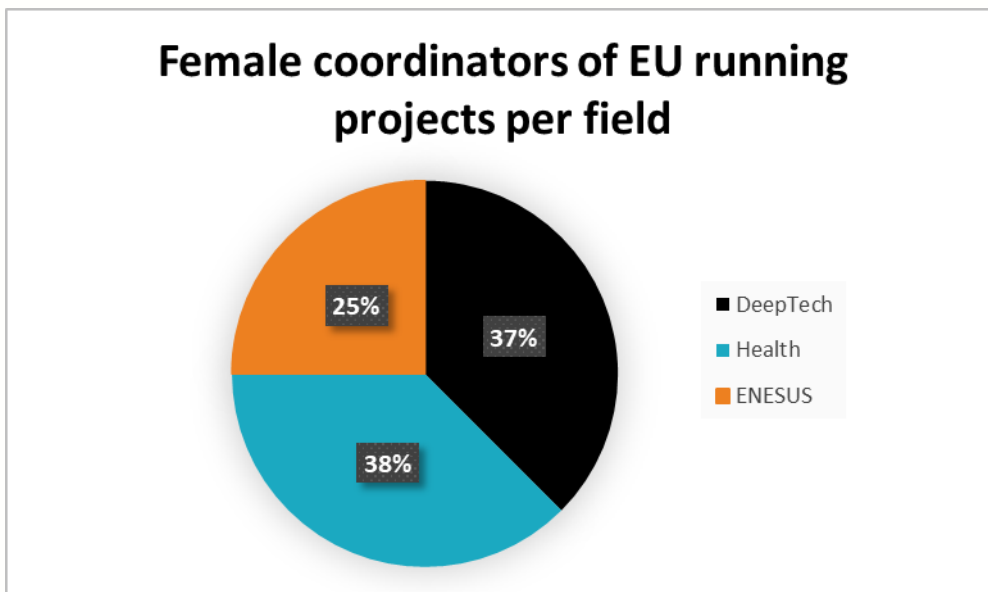


Figure 4. AMIRES Programme (ENESUS, Health, and DeepTech) shares in the total number of projects) with a female coordinator in 2025. Proposals not shown as all female coordinators were within the DeepTech programme.

4.1.3. Dissemination of Female Role Models

AMIRES firmly believes that while the world needs science, science also needs women. With this conviction, and to actively contribute to strengthening women’s visibility in STEM at all stages of life, AMIRES launched in 2023 a dedicated initiative: the podcast *In Her Shoes*¹⁹ presented by Jana Mwangi, senior project manager in AMIRES. Through in-depth conversations with remarkable female scientists, the podcast explores the professional journeys, personal experiences, and challenges faced by women in science. Its mission is to inspire, empower, and challenge structural barriers by showcasing individuals who have broken through societal, professional, and personal limitations. By amplifying these voices, AMIRES aims to provide tangible role models and contribute to dismantling the metaphorical “glass ceiling” that continues to hinder women’s progression in STEM.

In 2025, five episodes were released, showcasing the expertise of Erika Györvary, Delphine Bourdon, Vincenzina Barbera, Cecilia Sahlgren, and Susana Pinheiro.

During 2023–2024, five episodes were published, featuring experts Anna Lena Schall-Giesecke, Alina Muraviskaya, Nerea Zabala Unzalu, Clara I. Osorio Tamayo, In Shoes of Ioanna Zergioti. All episodes have accumulated 746 downloads, reflecting the level of listener engagement with the content. Additional candidates for future episodes have already been identified. To further enhance the visibility and impact of the podcast,

¹⁹ Also available in other platforms [“In Her Shoes”](#)

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AMIRES plans to launch complementary actions, such as extracting short thematic clips, sharing them across multiple communication channels, and amplifying their reach among key actors identified in Action 5 (see section 3.5). In addition, AMIRES has prepared a dedicated podcast landing page (<https://www.amires.eu/in-her-shoes-podcast/>) summarising the key messages of each episode, integrated a dedicated slide into the AMIRES general presentation to support promotion in meetings and events, and developed promotional flyers that can be distributed at conferences and networking activities. The visibility of existing content will also be reinforced through the resharing of video clips from previously published episodes, ensuring continued audience engagement and extended outreach.



Figure 5. AMIRES podcast “In her shoes” aims to spotlight remarkable female scientists and innovators, hosted by Jana Mwangi.

Table 2. Overview of “In her shoes” podcast episodes.

Episode	Topics
	<p>In this episode, you step into the shoes of Dr. Erika Györvary, a multilingual scientist-turned-innovator who transitioned from nanotechnology research into business development and strategic technology leadership. As Lead of European Affairs at CSEM, she plays a pivotal role in shaping innovation and international collaboration, while also serving on multiple global advisory boards.</p> <p>Erika reflects on the professional identity that defines her most, the family roots that shaped her journey, and her two decades at CSEM. She shares insights into projects spanning from pregnancy monitoring to organ-on-chip systems, and her views on the future of MedTech.</p> <p>Erika Györvary podcast link.</p>
	<p>In this episode, you take a walk in the shoes of Dr. Delphine Bourdon-Drouhault, a passionate leader driving France's decarbonisation effort at the Commissariat à l'Énergie Atomique et aux Énergies Alternatives (CEA).</p> <p>Delphine discusses her work on the EU-funded ZIMBA project—advancing sustainable energy innovation—and shares her candid reflections on navigating a male-dominated field. Together, we explore authentic leadership, the importance of diverse perspectives, and the role of resilience in transforming STEM environments.</p> <p>Delphine Bourdon podcast link.</p>
	<p>In this episode, you take a walk in the shoes of Prof. Vincenzina Barbera, Professor of Chemistry and Environmental Chemistry at Politecnico di Milano. She recounts her scientific journey and introduces her work on projects such as ECOTRON, which aims to revolutionise electronics through recyclable and flexible materials.</p> <p>Prof. Barbera highlights why circular thinking is essential for building a sustainable technological future.</p> <p>Vincenzina Barbera podcast link.</p>

Episode	Topics
 <p>IN HER SHOES PODCAST EPISODE 9</p> <p>"Never Noticed Bias Or Let It Disturb My Journey - Until I Started Leading Other Scientists"</p> <p>WITH PROF. CECILIA SAHLGREN Professor of Cell Biology, decoding cell communication</p> <p>AMIRÈS NAP4DIVE</p>	<p>In this episode, Prof. Cecilia Sahlgren explores how her curiosity led her to cell communication and Notch signalling, once asking, “Can we repair a broken heart with Notch?” Now Professor at Åbo Akademi University and TU/e, she studies how cells make decisions and how microenvironments shape tissues, with implications for cancer and cardiovascular disease.</p> <p>She also leads the EU-funded NAP4DIVE project, developing non-animal models for nanoparticle delivery across the blood–brain barrier, and reflects on diversity, leadership, and inequality in academia, leading with empathy and awareness.</p> <p>Cecilia Sahlgren podcast link.</p>
 <p>IN HER SHOES PODCAST EPISODE 10</p> <p>I Wanted to Stay a Happy Engineer Forever But Keeping My Team Thriving Meant Becoming Something More</p> <p>WITH PROF. SUSANA ISABEL PINHEIRO CARDOSO DE FREITAS Professor, Engineer & Educator, empowering the next generation</p> <p>AMIRÈS MULTISPIN.AI AI/ML Professor Research Project</p>	<p>In this episode, Prof. Susana Freitas—nanoelectronics and magnetic sensors expert, recognised among the 100 Women in Science—shares the experiences that shaped her scientific path and leadership values. She reflects on growing up in a curiosity-driven environment, building a high-impact career while raising five children, and her belief in purpose-driven leadership.</p> <p>She also discusses gender dynamics in tech and her work in initiatives like MultispiAI, highlighting how she fosters resilience, trust, and motivation within her team.</p> <p>Susana Freitas podcast link.</p>

A complementary initiative launched in 2025 expands AMIRÈS’ science communication efforts: the creation and publication of short popular-science articles on AMIRÈS’ and project-related social media channels. These aim to make complex scientific developments more accessible to a wider audience while also providing dedicated content aligned with women in science. These new series linked to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), starting with SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) through an article on perovskite solar cells and, planned for publication in early 2026. Future articles in the series will address additional SDGs, each highlighting relevant scientific and technological advances in an engaging and accessible format.

4.2. Action 6: Use of an inclusive language and gender-neutral visuals

The GEDIB reviews the gender, communication, and dissemination sections of all proposals fully supported by AMIRES, ensuring the use of inclusive, bias-free language and providing targeted recommendations where needed. In addition, AMIRES actively promotes, and, in projects where it acts as the dissemination and communication manager, systematically ensures, the use of inclusive language and gender-neutral visuals in all communication outputs. This applies to all project materials, including websites, deliverables, promotional content, presentations, videos, and social media posts.

During 2024–2025, an internal assessment showed that 70% of AMIRES project managers reported always using gender-neutral language and imagery, 15% often, 6% sometimes, 9% rarely, and 0% never. While this represents steady progress, AMIRES' objective is that all colleagues consistently apply gender-neutral and inclusive communication principles whenever referring to people. The reasons for variability are diverse: in some projects AMIRES does not hold the communication or dissemination role; in others, communication relies heavily on real photos from consortium partners — which often feature predominantly male teams. Additionally, in highly technical or theoretical projects, visual material may focus on equipment, diagrams, or abstract concepts rather than people, making the gender-neutral visuals unapplicable.

Nonetheless, AMIRES remains committed to strengthening this practice across all programmes and will continue to provide guidance, internal training, and quality checks to ensure inclusive communication remains a standard element of all projects under its coordination or communication leadership.

4.3. Action 7: Gender Dimension in R&D

The GEDIB reviews, at minimum, the gender and communication & dissemination sections of all proposals fully supported by AMIRES, as well as the gender dimension section when required by the call text. In addition, the GEDIB monitors gender-related aspects in all ongoing projects.

Among the proposals submitted with full AMIRES support in 2025, 28% received positive evaluator comments on the Evaluation Summary Report or ESR on gender aspects (including gender dimension), an improvement compared with 23.5% in 2021–2022. Only 7% received negative comments (e.g., noting insufficient expertise on gender aspects in R&I). The remaining proposals have either not yet been evaluated, received neutral comments (e.g., “the gender dimension is sufficiently considered”), did not require gender assessment, or had no comments on gender. Overall, the target of ensuring that 95% of fully supported proposals do not receive negative gender-related comments was almost achieved.

Across running projects, 24% incorporate the gender dimension in their R&D activities. For the remainder, the gender dimension is either not relevant to the specific research fields or not required by the call. It should be noted that under Horizon 2020, gender dimension was not an obligatory criterion, although consideration of this dimension continues to be assessed by GEDIB.

Unexpectedly, 12% of projects received comments on gender dimension during EU reviews (for example, feedback noting that a smart T-shirt prototype was produced only in a male size). These cases will be analysed to identify the root causes and propose actions to the respective consortia.

In 2025, AMIRES published a guide for addressing the [gender dimension](#) in EU proposals, providing practical examples and recommendations for proposal preparation teams.

As part of the continuation of efforts initiated in 2025, AMIRES introduced in early 2026 a new requirement for posters presented at the “[Bioprinting of Living Cells](#)” event: the inclusion of the gender dimension. This measure reflects the ongoing implementation of the gender-responsive communication guidance developed in 2025 and will be reported in full in the 2026 annual GEP update.

5. Conclusions

AMIRES remains committed to contributing meaningfully to the advancement of gender equality within the European Research and Innovation ecosystem. Through the measures implemented under its Gender Equality Plan (GEP), AMIRES supports the European Union's broader objectives of fostering a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive society.

While several targets were intentionally ambitious, particularly within the external strategy, where progress depends partly on factors beyond AMIRES' direct control, the organisation acknowledges that some objectives were not fully achieved in 2025. Nonetheless, AMIRES reaffirms its commitment to pursuing these goals throughout the 2025–2027 implementation period, ensuring steady progress towards long-term systemic change.

Looking ahead, the next phase of implementation will focus on targeted, actionable steps. AMIRES management, together with the Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board (GEDIB), will strengthen oversight of gender-related aspects across organisational and project activities, with particular emphasis on:

- Refining and adapting GEP actions where gaps or limited progress have been identified;
- Developing targeted measures through structured internal exchanges (e.g. seminars and knowledge-sharing sessions among AMIRES colleagues);
- Enhancing internal procedures and monitoring mechanisms to ensure continuous alignment with Horizon Europe requirements and evolving EU policy priorities;
- Increasing the integration of gender considerations into scientific content and leadership structures across projects, including more systematic monitoring and follow-up;
- Actively encouraging more balanced consortia composition, including improved gender representation in leadership roles.
- Ensuring balanced representation among speakers and moderators in AMIRES-organised events, promoting gender equality and diversity in visibility and expert representation.

In parallel, GEDIB will intensify its engagement in external initiatives, events, and knowledge networks, ensuring that relevant insights, good practices, and lessons learned are systematically captured and translated into internal improvements. The podcast series featuring female role models, *"In Her Shoes"*, will be further expanded and promoted to increase visibility and impact.

AMIRES is committed to providing a positive, supportive, and equitable working environment for all employees, irrespective of nationality, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or other personal characteristics. The GEP will continue to function as a living document, subject to regular review and refinement based on monitoring results, emerging best practices, and legislative developments.

As a key forward-looking step, the scope of the GEP will be progressively expanded to explicitly address diversity and inclusion beyond gender, ensuring a more comprehensive, intersectional, and future-oriented approach.

5.1. Table 3. Action Plan and status of Gender Equality activities at AMIRES

Challenge identified		Initial targets	Timeline	Responsible	2025-2027 targets	2025 report
Internal strategy	Pay gap	Fair salaries and no pay gap	Monitored bi-annually	Management	No gaps	No gaps
	Underrepresentation of women at STEM events	40% of female speakers and/or moderators at events organised by AMIRES	Monitored bi-annually	GEB	50% of female speakers and/or moderators	46% of female speakers and/or moderators
	Gender-bias in the language used to talk about AMIRES projects, research and innovation content	Use of inclusive language and gender-neutral visual identity	Continuous monitoring	GEB	Keep avoiding Gender-bias in the language	No bias identified
	Keeping Gender on the agenda	Regular GEB meetings and discussions (at least bi-annually)	Monitored bi-annually	Management GEB	Same activities as in 2024; active participation of GEB in key events on GDI ²⁰	GEB meets monthly and communication channels set up. GEB meets with Management bi-annually

²⁰ Gender, diversity and inclusiveness

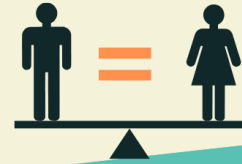
Challenge identified		Initial targets	Timeline	Responsible	2025-2027 targets		2025 report	
External strategy	Under representation of female leading roles	Avoid null representation of women in leading and adviser roles	Monitored bi-annually	GEB	Keep avoiding null female representation		Null female representation avoided	
		Leading role	Monitored bi-annually	GEB	RP	Prop.	RP	Prop.
		Coordinators			30%	30%	24%	27%
		WP leaders			40%	40%	32%	31%
		Advisers			30%	30%	30%	35%
	Gender-bias in the language or images used in projects and proposals, research and innovation content	Use of inclusive language and gender-neutral visuals in all texts and materials produced by AMIRES	Continuous monitoring	GEB	100% colleagues always consider it		70% colleagues always consider it	
					0% colleagues never consider it		0% colleagues never consider it	
	Lack of consideration of the Gender dimension in R&D content	Less than 5% of proposals with negative comments on gender section in the ESR	Monitored bi-annually	Management	No negative comments		7% proposals with negative comments	
		Project dimension considered accordingly					24% of RP consider gender dimension in R&D activities (mainly health related projects)	

* The rest do not as this is not relevant to the requirements of the grant.

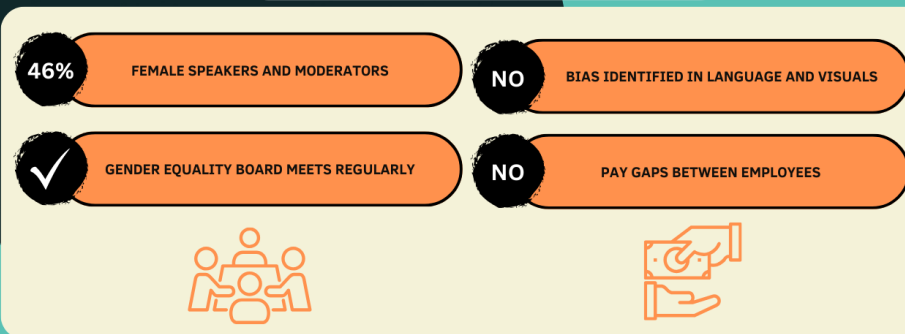
AMIRÈS

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN REPORT

2025

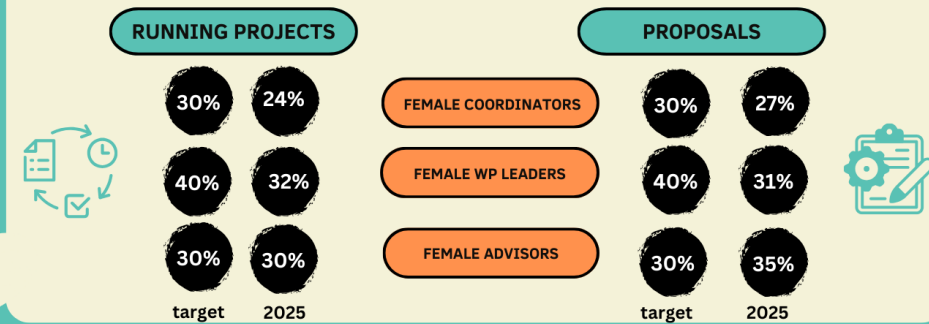


INTERNAL STRATEGY

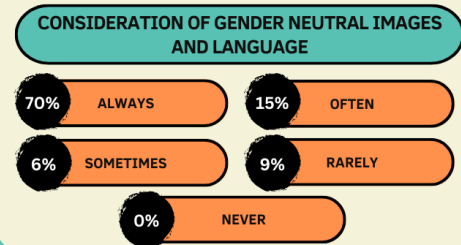


EXTERNAL STRATEGY

FEMALE REPRESENTATION



GENDER BIAS



GENDER DIMENSION

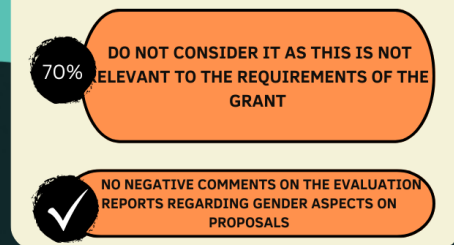


Figure 6. Infographic of 2025 results regarding AMIRÈS GEP.

*Gender bias-the consideration of gender-neutral images and language of AMIRÈS' project managers.

6. ANNEX I: AMIRES Gender Equality Board

At the end of the year, the board modified its name to Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board, for short (GEDIB)

6.1. Role and responsibilities

- Propose activities and actions to promote and improve gender equality in research, development and innovation projects.
- Monitor the actions and targets contained in the Gender Equality Plan with the specified timelines (internal and external strategies).
- Meet with AMIRES management to discuss topics related to Gender Equality, revise the action plan and adapt the GEP.
- Report the results to AMIRES employees every six months and publicly every year (after approval of AMIRES management).

6.2. Members

- The members should be AMIRES employees
- The members can be added or revoked at any time by AMIRES management
- GEB, now GEDIB, members (as of December 2025):
 - Jana Mwangi
 - Anastasia Grozdanova
 - Marina de Souza Faria
 - Betina Debastiani Benato
 - Amelia Domínguez
 - Mariana Pacheco Blanco