



# EUGLOH

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**Integrating gender studies into university curriculum:  
the case of the Faculty of Agriculture**

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# University of Novi Sad



# Faculty of Agriculture, Novi Sad



# Project: *AgriGen*



## **GENDER STUDIES IN RURAL AREAS AND AGRICULTURE – *AgriGen***

Duration of the project: 01.02.2022 – 31.01.2025



# AgriGen TEAM

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# AgriGen Project



## Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Module programme:

- module *AgriGen*, No 101047646

→ Final year students of Agricultural Economics, elective course

→ Multidisciplinary module:

Sociology, Agricultural Economics, Linguistics



Previous study programs at the Faculty of Agriculture generally did not provide students with an opportunity to deal with gender issues.

**Through this Module, students are enabled to develop their knowledge, understanding and critical reflection on gender structures.**

## The main aims of the module

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- ❖ to introduce students to **the role and importance of the gender paradigm** in the processes of rural and agrarian development;
- ❖ to introduce students to the notion of **gender inequality and discrimination**;
- ❖ to develop **critical thinking**;
- ❖ to understand the importance of recognizing **gender as a social group** with similar or common positions, interests, values...
- ❖ to encourage active engagement in **developmental activities** in their rural communities.



# Background

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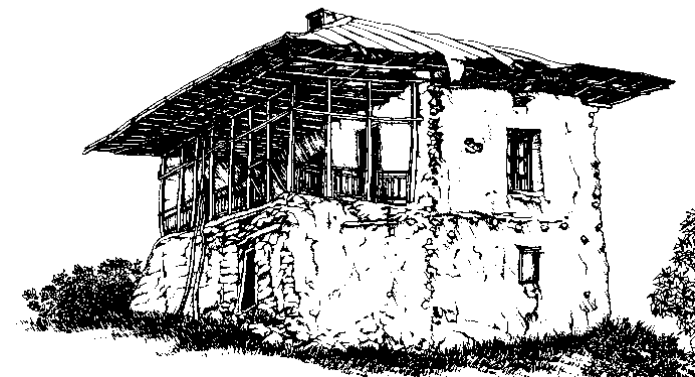
❖ Serbian villages traditionally had **patriarchal gender roles and identities**, which implied that women are inferior to men.

gender regimes  
and gender identities  
are influenced by

→ socio-economic positions of women and men

→ their working status and stability

→ generational and national affiliation



# I Social constructions of gender

- **Gender** is a social and cultural construct
- **Gender** is socially assigned – refers to the psychological, social and cultural differences between men and women.

Gender is a very important factor in **determining life opportunities** and their **roles in social institutions** (from family to the state level).

In this sense, gender creates **privileged or unprivileged starting positions** in one's life.



❖ Transmitting and learning gender roles takes place through both **primary and secondary socialization**, and through different **socialization agents**.

## II Contributions and challenges of feminist theories

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- **The first wave of feminism** during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries marks the period of the first mass gathering of women who sought change in gender relations to power. The first wave was aimed at gaining the right to vote, the right to education and professional work.
- **The second wave** emerged in 1960s, arising from the realization that the exercised rights did not lead to a complete change in the gender relations of power. The aim of the second wave was not only the division of power in the existing society, but also its radical change.
- **The third wave** is related to feminist thought and movement that emerged in 1980s. Thematically, in addition to sexuality and the balance between professional career and parenting, the third wave is increasingly addressing topics such as race and class relations, the role of the media, emerging technologies and popular culture.



### III Gender stereotypes and stigmatization

❖ Gender stereotypes are an integral part of every culture and every civilization, and there are numerous stigmatizations in this regard.

In Serbian patriarchal villages there were numerous stereotypes related to women's role and their behavior, and any deviation from these stereotypes was subject to collective stigmatisation and rejection.



❖ The position of women in a traditional villages was tied to **their work role** and **role of mother**.



## IV Gender and Language

❖ **Language** as a variable system determined by social, political, economic, cultural and other extra-linguistic factors.

Therefore, language can be seen as an indicator of the social status of certain social groups or phenomena, including gender equality.



❖ It is necessary to **raise awareness of gender stereotypes and discrimination in language** in both public and private spheres, including all levels of education and as well as the media.

➤ Examples from English:

– *woman doctor/lady doctor*, but also *male nurse*

modifiers diminish a person's prestige, drawing attention to their sex

– '*lady*', '*madam*', '*mistress*'

initially has neutral connotations, but gradually acquires negative connotations (particularly pertaining to sexual behaviour).

## V Gender in transition and transition of gender

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- ❖ The position of women in **Serbian traditional culture** was extremely **inferior** to men, full of negative stereotypes and with assigned social roles that women should adhere to.
- ❖ Changes occurred **in the period after World War II**, with the increase in education and the acquisition of legal, political and economic independence.
- ❖ In **post-communist Serbian society**, gender structures are once again changing. A woman loses the self-respect gained in socialism in the period of wars and transition when she loses her economic independence.

**Social transition** largely affects the **transition of gender** and creation of new and different gender constructs and/or the revival of old ones.

## VI Family Gender Regime

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The family has a **great influence** in creating, transferring and realizing gender roles.

In the traditional, patriarchal Serbian villages, a **woman's social position was entirely determined by her position in the family**, since the family was the only sphere of her activity, influence and self-actualization.

The Serbian contemporary rural family (although largely “resembling” urban families and households) still has (partly) **preserved traditional features** (multi-generational household, relics of the role of family leader) that helps them in facing the risks of transition.

## VII Gender identities in agriculture

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- ❖ **Active participation of women in agricultural labour** on family farms has always been implied, but has **never been clearly recognized and valued**.
- ❖ Working on family farm is specific as it implies **interaction of work and life**.
- ❖ Women are **rarely the owners of land and/or houses and the owners of agricultural holdings**, which makes it even more difficult for them to access financial resources for the development of entrepreneurship.
- ❖ In the conditions of the continuous crisis of villages and agriculture in Serbian society, the idea of **diversification of farm income** is revived, and **women's rural entrepreneurship** is seen as a way to realize that idea.



## VIII Gender and Education

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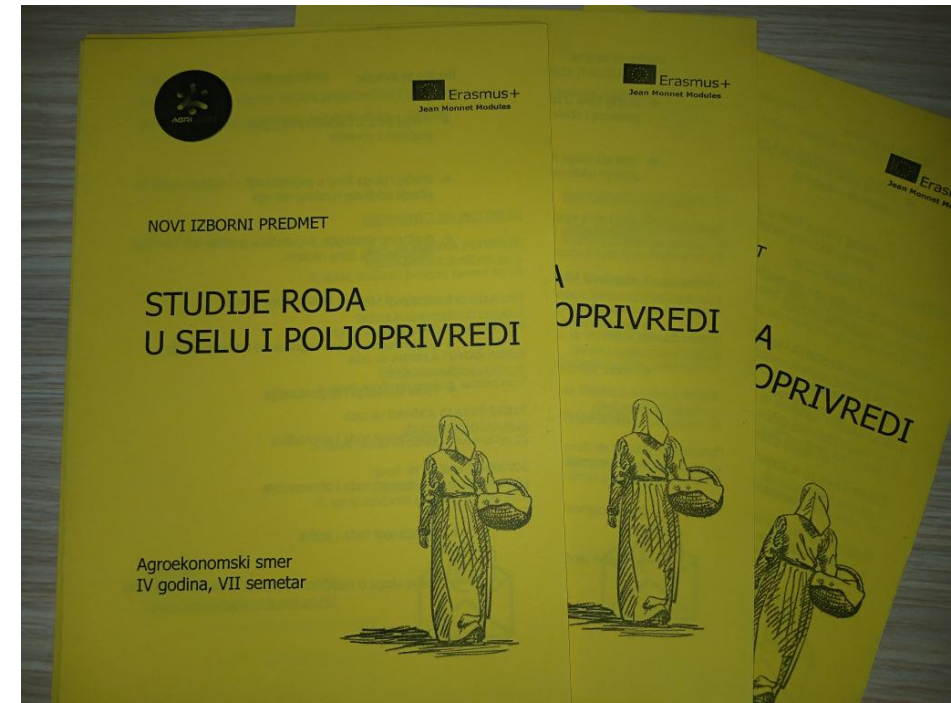
- ❖ According to the latest census, **nearly a third of the female rural population are not educated**, and more than half of them have no qualifications. In addition, rural women are a group with the highest proportion of computer illiterate women.

**Education becomes one of the most important means of their social mobility, and through personal engagement women can create their future, which is *no longer predetermined as in a patriarchal society.***

# FUTURE PLANS FOR AgriGen Team

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- ❖ publishing a course book in 2024
- ❖ organizing workshops and round tables
- ❖ applying for further projects aimed at raising awareness of gender issues and inequalities in rural areas
- ❖ active engagement in developmental activities in rural communities



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**Thank you for your attention!**



**AgriGen Team**  
**University of Novi Sad**  
**Faculty of Agriculture**  
**<http://agrigenuns.polj.uns.ac.rs/>**

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**Thank you!**

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