

# **GENDER EQUALITY PLAN**

## **2022-2026**

FOUNDATION FOR MANAGEMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH

## OVERARCHING GOAL & OBJECTIVES OF THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

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The aim of the Gender Equality Plan of the Foundation for Management and Industrial Research (hereinafter *Foundation MIR*) is to ensure equal opportunities, treatment and rights of all researchers and employees, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, nationality, age and other individual characteristics. Foundation MIR adheres to the principles of gender equality in all activities, without compromising on competence and quality. The Foundation will strive for equal distribution of the influence of women and men on research, development and other program areas, for equal working conditions and equal participation in different professional groups, councils and other working bodies.

Foundation MIR is guided by the principle that diversity in the research sector creates added value for the society, and gender equality helps to make better use of the most important social capital - people. The Foundation is committed to promoting equality and preventing discrimination in all its activities, recognizing and eliminating all factors that contribute to inequality.

The responsibility of promoting gender equality and implementing the plan is shared by all of the departments of the Foundation MIR. This plan contains the goals and measures to be taken in the period 2022-2026. The electronic version of the Gender Equality Plan is available on the website of the Foundation MIR - <https://mir.org.mk/en/our-work/>.

Proceeding from the activities and possibilities of the Foundation MIR for improving the state of gender equality, the six main objectives for the time period 2022-2026 are as follows:

- Institutionalization and Capacity Building for Gender Equality
- Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
- Work-life balance and gender-sensitive organizational culture
- Mainstreaming gender in research & programme activities
- Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
- Sexual Harassment Prevention Mechanisms and Gender-Neutral Communication

### 1. INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

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Based on existing research and successful examples of institutionalizing gender equality across the European academic sector, the suggested action is to appoint a Gender Equality Committee with a main responsibility of ensuring that the goal of an equal workplace is achieved and that the work to promote gender equality is given sufficient resources. An annual follow-up of implemented measures should be reported based on indicators and collected sex-desegregated data across the research and programming activities. Emphasis should be placed on conducting regular training for staff and decision makers in the field of gender equality.

The Gender Equality Committee has the following duties and responsibilities:

- Coordinating and facilitating the implementation of the actions in the Gender Equality Plan, dedicating resources for gender mainstreaming implementation.
- Undertaking systematic (privacy preserving) data collection regarding gender equality.
- Designing a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of progress via indicators.
- Coordinating and implementing the training and capacity building program.

For ensuring a better understanding of gender equality among the employees as well as among the members of the panels and committees of the Foundation MIR, we will:

- Improve our competences regarding gender equality, incl. by participating in training courses.
- Organize regular trainings for all staff involved in recruitment processes as well as other related trainings, such as gender-sensitive budgeting for procurement and finance department, whenever applicable.
- Integrate the aspects of gender into the training courses we organise, if applicable.
- Assemble existing and compile new need-based information materials on gender equality, incl. materials on the importance of considering unconscious bias and on integrating the gender dimension in research.
- Share our experiences, good practices, and developments regarding gender equality within our organisation, incl. in in-house seminars, workshops, etc.

## 2. GENDER EQUALITY IN RECRUITMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION

The Personnel Policy of the Foundation defines all relevant employment aspects, including recruitment, and staff orientation policies. The policy emphasizes the Foundation's firm belief in equal employment opportunity to each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant condition. This policy applies to recruitment and advertising; hiring and job assignment; promotion, demotion and transfer; layoff or termination; rates of pay and benefits; selection for training; and the provision of any other human resources service.

For better gender mainstreaming of the employment opportunities, following, additional measures are foreseen:

- Institutionalize a systematic gender segregated data collection regarding recruitment.
- Aim for gender balance in all recruitment committees.
- Put a non-discrimination clause in all job advertisements.
- Announce job vacancies with a reference to the position, and not to personal characteristics (candidates are not required to provide information on marital, family status or other personal characteristics, etc.).
- Establish a mentoring program for junior women researchers.

Improved gender parity in regards to career progression will be achieved through the following measures:

- Institutionalize a systematic gender segregated data collection regarding career progression.
- Critically assess the collected sex-disaggregated data, procedures, process and practices in order to identify gender inequalities and gender bias.
- Aim for gender balance in all promotion committees, make the promotion processes and the criteria more transparent.
- Analyze gender wage gap at all research and administrative levels.

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- Establish returner schemes for staff to support a smooth transition after parental leave or other care-related career breaks (please see the next section on Work-Life Balance and Gender-sensitive organizational culture).

### 3. WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND GENDER-SENSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

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Foundation MIR is dedicated to promoting healthy balance between work and personal life. Whenever possible, work meetings and commitments take place at working hours (bearing in mind exceptional cases) and online meetings are encouraged.

For advancing work-life balance following measures are planned:

- Implement measures that ensure the harmonization of work and private life, easier realisation of rights and obligations related to motherhood, childcare, family obligations.
- Organize workshops on fatherhood and promote the effective use of paternal leaves.
- Set-up rules for distance-working and disseminate them.
- Provide training and re-orientation opportunities and externally recruited counselling support for women after maternity leave.
- Whenever possible, provide staff optional flexible work hour options and implement ICT-based systems to enhance flexibility.
- Conduct exit surveys including questions on work-life balance, analyse the work experience of employees leaving the Foundation and propose changes across relevant workplace-related procedures.
- Organize experience sharing workshops about work-life balance, and/or interview experts with successful careers, especially those with families.
- Set a directive on working and communication hours, restraining administrative e-mailing and meetings to be set after work hours, on weekends or on short notice.

Measures for integrating gender dimension in the Foundation's organizational culture include:

- In strategic documents (e.g., reports, plans, regulations) equality between women and men is expressly mentioned as a corporate value.
- Promote the use of inclusive language at official/institutional communication and reports.
- Training/awareness raising of Foundation's decision-making bodies to gender issues.
- Systematically collect and publicise information disaggregated by sex.
- Include, among the regular training options of Foundation's staff, training for the promotion of gender equality, on gender stereotypes, inclusive language, work-personal life balance, and sexual and moral harassment.

### 4. MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN RESEARCH AND PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

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While Foundation's staff involves gender experts and performs gender studies, the integration of gender dimension and gender diverse perspectives into research remains a matter of personal discretion as there are no institutional measures for gender mainstreaming in research, or other programme activities of the Foundation. Therefore, following measures are planned:

- Promote training on research funding skills and balanced composition of research teams.
- Establish clear guidelines to ensure gender parity at conference panels and other events.

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- Promote training programmes on how to include gender perspective within research project and on its economic, social and innovation value.
- Plan, organize and/or provide organizational and logistical support to activities such as trainings, seminars, conferences, mentoring sessions for women researchers, addressing issues such as applying to external research funding, research management, mentoring possibilities, etc.
- Plan, organize and/or provide organizational and logistical support to activities such as trainings, seminars, conferences, mentoring sessions addressing the gender dimension of research.
- Disseminate good practices of research projects that incorporate a gender perspective.

## 5. GENDER BALANCE IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

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Foundation MIR is dedicated to advancing gender parity in decision-making and leadership by developing a policy and support mechanisms for acknowledging the benefits of gender diversity at all levels of management and decision-making bodies. To achieve these, following measures are foreseen:

- Ensure that all decision-making bodies and committees have gender parity.
- Develop gender-equality and gender sensitivity guidelines for decision-making processes.
- Engage in awareness-raising activities regarding implicit biases and the use of gendered language in leadership definitions and communications.
- Offer leadership training programs and other support mechanisms such as coaching for women in management positions, and periodically offer leadership training for all staff interested in assuming leadership positions.

## 6. SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND GENDER-NEUTRAL COMMUNICATION

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Foundation MIR is committed to creating an organizational environment based on respect and integrity of those working or collaborating with the foundation. It makes sure that challenges related to sexism and sexual harassment are properly dealt with and any discrimination in this regard is being avoided.

Measures for preventing sexual harassment include:

- Training employees in matters related to sexual harassment.
- Create specific mechanisms for filing complaints in case of discrimination, moral harassment, sexual harassment and other violence in the work environment.
- Envisage measures, procedures and activities for prevention of the sexual abuse, discrimination or harassment.

One of the key activities of the Foundation MIR is communication with the society at large, including sharing information with researchers and R&D institutions as well as promoting research among youngsters and grown-ups. Gender equality will also be promoted through communication activities. Foundation MIR will remain gender-aware in all channels of communication and will:

- Monitor our use of language and refrain from reproducing gender stereotypes.
- Monitor the representation of men and women in illustrative materials.
- Proceed from the principles of gender diversity when writing press releases, news, profile articles, etc.
- Try to ensure gender balance among the speakers at public events, if at all possible.
- Emphasise the need to underline the aspects of gender in various materials and statistics: the data, wherever possible, will be disaggregated by gender.