



Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

September 2022 (Version 1)

PREPARED BY THE EFIS CENTRE GENDER EQUALITY WORKING GROUP



Introduction

EFIS Centre is a small organisation which is committed to promoting inclusion and equality among all its employees and partners by taking actions at different level. Our team members bring their individual talents, skills, knowledge, perspectives and backgrounds and all together shape our organisational identity. We proactively work to ensure and increase diversity, equal opportunities and inclusion for everyone. We, at EFIS, wholeheartedly recognise the importance of both equity and equality in research and the work environment, in order for this diversity to expand and thrive in all aspects of our activity.

Given the social complexity of today challenges, we recognise that gender always intersects with other social categories of exclusion (e.g., age, ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class), thus we support an intersectional approach to the GEP strategy. Our main goal is to create a welcoming work environment for everyone in our organisation by providing equal opportunities for everyone regardless of gender, ethnicity or origin, gender identity or expression, social background, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or other beliefs.

To ensure we meet this goal, we have set up a Gender Equality Working Group to support the implementation of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion plan. Moreover, the whole organisation is actively engaged in promoting an equal working environment by participating in periodic trainings and awareness-raising activities. Our Gender Equality Plan (GEP) was developed by our Gender Equality Working Group, and approved by EFIS management. It is publicly accessible via our website.

Strategic Goals

When it comes to professional development, visibility and recognition are important aspects of the working dynamics. Thus, we aim to acknowledgement our employees' contribution and involve the whole team in all relevant company conversations and decisions. These actions seek to inspire a more horizontal approach to the organisational structure. Thus, we try to be an inclusive, diverse, caring and sustainable organisation that encourage a more autonomous, cooperative and flexible work environment where every member feels safe, recognised and valued.

Focus Areas

The Gender Equality Working Group has coordinated the output of this plan, which focuses on four strategic areas – aligned with the European Commission's recommendations – addressing gender or diversity sensitive areas in the context of our organisational activity. These strategic points have been discussed and agreed in cooperation with all employees.

- **Recruitment and organisational culture.** We continuously aim to promote an equal and diverse organisational culture by implementing policies to ensure an inclusive working environment. Our recruitment and selection process are highly transparent and provides equal opportunities for everyone regardless their gender, sexual orientation, background, or any other personal aspects that go beyond the professional competencies and skills.
- **Flexible working arrangements.** At EFIS Centre, we value flexible working time arrangements and every employee is encouraged to adapt their working schedule to their personal life responsibilities. This is reflected in our Internal Procedures manual. At EFIS, we support and encourage our employees to find a balance between their parental and working responsibilities, giving maximum flexibility and adaptability to each particular family situation, including remote work conditions.



- **Employment law and employee safeguards.** The human resource practices, working conditions and benefits of all employees are based on Belgian labour laws and respects all aspects of equality. This includes policies for maternity, paternity or parental leave as well as prevention and addressing discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment. CESI, an external service for health and safety at work, monitors the well-being of our employees. In line with Belgian law, CESI monitors five areas of well-being at work: health, safety, psychosocial risks, ergonomics and occupational hygiene.
- **Leadership and decision-making process.** Gender equality throughout an organisation begins with gender equality in the leadership positions where the most power and influence lie. EFIS centre operates in a horizontal manner for decision-making. However, we undertake regular reviews of decision-making procedures to identify possible gender biases in process and outcomes. Furthermore, to ensure gender balance in leadership positions, we carry out awareness-raising activities to effectively mainstream the gender perspective.
- **Collaboration with external organisations.** Our work implies regular collaboration with external organisations which allows to project our values beyond our team. For us it is of foremost importance to treat with utmost respect all parties involved and to join forces with other organisations to promote fair, conscious and sustainable activities while inspiring mutually our efforts toward a more gender balanced and diverse European culture.
- **Communication.** As part of our communication, our goal is to portray EFIS Centre with a gender equality and diversity perspective in mind, by using inclusive language in our social media strategies messages and statements. To do so, we provide tools to foster non-gender biased words to everyone involved in the communication at EFIS.

Training Actions

At EFIS Centre, we highly value knowledge development, thus we created the EFIS Academy – to provide internal trainings and professional development to all our employees. Part of our curriculum is the promotion of gender equality practices and training among the whole team. Our gender equality trainings provide relevant knowledge, skills and values that allow them to contribute to the effective implementation of the gender-mainstreaming strategy in our organisation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Periodic reviews of the plan are required at least once a year with the aim to ensure our gender equality actions are reflected in our all activities and promote gender equality in the context of our research landscape. To do so, we have developed a set of indicators that enable us to measure progress in different aspects of our activity, such as:

- Share of women/men and nationality of staff by discipline
- Share of women/men staff by function
- Number of hours of training attended by women and men
- Share of women/man and nationality during recruitment process
- Number of projects led by women and men
- Number of proposals led by women and men
- Size of projects (in €) led by women and men
- Size of proposals (in €) led by women and men
- Number and type of actions developed for promoting equality and inclusion



To ensure the proper analysis of this data, we have established a **monitoring mechanism** to track compliance with the gender perspective in our projects, communication, policies and organisational culture. The monitoring will be done by the Gender Equality Working group on an annual basis. The monitoring will also include a track of training actions dedicated to promoting and raising awareness by ensuring a diverse and shared organisational vision. In case any corrections are required, the Gender Equality working Group will implement appropriate actions to align with our gender equality values and practices.

Resource Allocation

Our Gender Equality Working group is coordinated by the central office, represented by our Operations and Finance Manager (Christine Neve, neve@efiscentre.eu), that closely monitors and follows up on all necessary measures. She is supported by a GEP team composed of three team members including at least one woman and one man. EFIS Management annually allocates necessary funds to promote, implement and monitor this plan. This plan will be continuously monitored by the Gender Equality Working Group and will be updated if needed.

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