

Gender Equality Plan

1. Introduction

"Horizon Europe sets gender equality as a crosscutting principle and aims to eliminate gender inequality and intersecting socio-economic inequalities throughout research and innovation systems, including by addressing unconscious bias and systemic structural barriers"

(European Union, 2021).

Starting in 2022, the European Commission expects a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) as a criterion for public bodies, research organisations and higher education establishments to be eligible for funding under the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2021-2027.

IECE endorses this initiative and embraces its aims.

2. Gender Equality Policy at the Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy - IECE

The Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy 's Equal Opportunity Concept

The Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy (IECE) is pursuing an active equal opportunities policy and of its statutory obligations under the national Law on Science.

IECE has gradually developed its services and advisory structures for the advancement of gender equality to a high standard. It has established support services for various career stages and accepted gender equality as a constant challenge for the entire institution.

Also, IECE has a joint equal opportunity concept for both research and education, as well as administrative staff. The concept contains an analysis of the current situation, from which the goals and measures for equal opportunities for men and women are derived and which are to be implemented over the next five years when this important document will be reviewed and updated.

3. Mandatory GEP Content Areas under Horizon Europe

Compliance with the Horizon Europe GEP criteria for eligibility involves four mandatory requirements:

1. The GEP must be a formal document published on the institution's website, signed by the top management and actively communicated within the institution.
2. A GEP must have dedicated resources and expertise in gender equality to implement the plan.
3. The organisation must provide sex/ gender disaggregated data and monitoring on personnel and students with annual reporting based on indicators.
4. The GEP must include training and awareness-raising actions on gender equality.

Public document

IECE's current Equal Opportunity Concept was adopted by the Management Board in 2024 for the duration of five years. The document guides policies and practice across the Institute and sets several objectives for the period 2024-2028. These include:

- Creating a culture of respect in all areas of Institute's activities;
- Creating equal opportunities for men and women in research fields;
- Enhancing the family-friendliness for work at the Institute;
- Working towards equal representation of men and women in the Institute's scientific, management, steering and governance committees;
- Where women are currently under-represented, increasing the share of women in research and administrative positions significantly;
- The Equal Opportunity Concept is available in Macedonian and English.

Dedicated resources

The Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy introduced the position of Deputy Director, in charge of gender equality in the Institute, which included monitoring of the implementation of the Equal Opportunity Concept and the Gender Equality Plan, in both research and administrative units.

Training

The Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy has a range of formats to offer gender equality training and awareness-raising activities for staff and students. These workshops and training activities include topics like:

- Women and leadership
- Women and power
- Strategic career planning
- Women and sustainable behavior
- Work-life balance
- Women and wellbeing
- Developing management and leadership skills
- Developing ideas into funded project applications

Data collection and monitoring

Each year, the Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy prepares its Management Report including data on all positions of staff categories by gender. These reports – published and analysed as management dashboards in the Institute 's data warehouse – constitute the first stage of an annual cycle of gender monitoring.

4. Recommended GEP content areas

Information about the Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy's work in the thematic areas recommended by Horizon Europe can be found here:

Work-life balance and organisational culture

Family-friendly working conditions for students and staff

The Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy has established several services to support persons with care responsibilities while working. This includes counselling, mentoring, training and awareness-raising.

Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Recruitment of researchers

In line with its statutory obligations, the Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy has formulated procedures to ensure equal opportunities for men and

women in the recruitment of researchers. This includes gender equality as an overriding quality criterion in selection procedures, the representation of women on selection committees and the guaranteed participation and rights. The Institute's Executive Board monitors that gender-equitable quality standards are consistently applied in all selection procedures at the Institute.

Research career development

The Institute is dedicated to offer support for career development and progression of women across all career stages focusing on women in research and training / lecturing positions.

For this objective, a support programme of mentorships has been created and deployed to provide female early-career researchers and lecturers with better access to financial and social assistance that helps them reach their academic goals. This programme is designed in a flexible manner to aid early-career researchers at a critical juncture in their careers.

Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

The Institute established an internal anti-discrimination guideline for the prevention of harassment, discrimination, bullying and stalking: respecting boundaries.

This version of the Gender Equality Plan was passed by the Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy's Management Board and will be regularly updated.

