

ENC GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

ENC attaches great importance to the creation of equal opportunities for all its member staff (research and non). Gender equality is a fundamental value that benefits research and development by improving its quality and relevance, attracting and retaining more talents and ensuring that everyone can fully realize their potential. Since its inception in 2016, ENC has always focused on creating a stimulating and welcoming environment for everybody in the organization. ENC cares for its people and wishes to offer a safe environment where everybody is treated equally and with respect. Everybody, regardless of gender, gender identity, nationality, ethnic background, religious or political convictions, age and position should be able to flourish and develop. In all, ENC wishes to build a culture where people feel they can bring their whole selves to work.

Within the framework of equality, ENC has prioritized on the topic of **gender equality**. Below is an overview of the various initiatives that are currently standard practice at ENC or are intended to be implemented soon.

Life-work balance and ENC's culture

The ENC policy wishes to strengthen an organizational culture that recognizes the importance of a solid balance between work and private life.

Current initiatives:

- People can work from home (if the job allows it) up to 5 days a week (in non-covid circumstances)
- ENC offers flexible working hours, aligned with school timing for children and traffic
- ENC aims to avoid organizing meetings outside the normal working hours
- ENC motivates the staff members to allow 'time to de-connect' for all team members. People should feel comfortable with not checking e-mails 24/7. ENC advises its manager to inform the team that they do not expect immediate response to their e-mails sent beyond the normal working hours. (Situations like 'submitting a paper before a deadline or a grant' can be exceptions to this rule).

Gender balance in leadership and decision making

- ENC has currently one female manager and will continue its efforts to maintain this number of female group leaders.

Gender balance in recruitment and career progression

Recruitment

ENC wishes to be an attractive employer, therefore, the whole recruitment process is always subject to the following leading principles:

- All ads consist of a clear description of the job purpose, key responsibilities, desired qualifications, skills and knowledge, relevant experience and other aspects that are needed to be able to fulfill the position successfully
- The job description and the required profile of the candidates are written in a gender-neutral and inviting language.
- We strive for gender balance in all selection panels
- We engage in active scouting and contacting potential female candidates for vacant administrative or research positions
- The shortlist of candidates for leading positions is gender balanced. If not, the procedure is put on hold until this balance is achieved
- During the selection process both the 'potential' of the candidate and the past performance (publications, research grants) are considered
- The overall and basic requirement during the recruitment process remains the professional skills and acquired knowledge.

Career progression

- ENC is implementing mentoring programs for starting staff members.
- ENC offers individual coaching sessions and workshops for all staff in various positions.
- Salary scales are gender neutral and totally transparent.
- ENC wishes to increase the visibility of women by ensuring gender balance in the ENC public events, conferences, ENC news. In the framework of the dissemination activities and other public events, ENC assures a 50/50 gender balance for invited speakers on the shortlist.

Evaluation and promotion

- When evaluating or assessing the performance of its staff members, ENC takes maternity, paternity, and parental leave periods into consideration
- We strive for gender balance in evaluation and assessment meetings.

Current state of affairs

Job Level	F	M	TOTAL
A: Top management, middle management, policy and advisory functions	1	1	2
B: Administrative support functions	1	1	2
C: Researchers	2	1	3

Awareness-raising on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers.

As from 2024, ENC continues to encourage the awareness of gender dimension in its projects. This topic is already incorporated into the ENC internship program. The basic introduction to the GEP will be provided at the beginning of each internship or recruitment by the appointed member of the ENC. It will also raise awareness on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers.

Integration of the gender dimension into research projects

ENC's projects are based on principles of social inclusion, citizens participation, and respect for cultural and ethnic diversity, both due to these values being important EU priorities, as well as due to their inherent necessity when dealing with the topics of our projects. As can be seen in terms of staff members, ENC inherently pays particular attention to the gender balance. This is clear, as mentioned above, both in terms of internal employment with gender balance, while equally being the case with respect to the direct beneficiaries of the projects (young women in Kyrgyzstan, representatives of media outlets in Europe, or citizens, students and educators in Turkey) all of which will be fully gender balanced in selection procedures in line with standards of inclusiveness.

The ENC ensures both equal and meaningful opportunities for participation for people of all genders based in different countries in the planning, design and implementation of its projects, while also having a progressive hiring policy with regards to people with disabilities. The ENC will also keep ensuring that gender balance is pursued at every step of the implementation of the projects by setting up a gender and inclusiveness council, which will meet with regular intervals throughout the project's implementation phase.

The gender dimension is considered a cross cutting part of all ENC's project activities and will be pursued in continuation of the entirety of the projects, which will fully align with the EU Gender Equality Strategy (2020-2025).

ENC is also committed to deliver gender inclusive results, deliverables and outcomes by both making sure that gender, as well as minority groups, are sampled at representative levels in all consultations of the project. The content of our deliverables, communication and dissemination materials (incl. training materials, promotional materials, the content of the web sites, etc.) are checked for gender neutral language before finalizing and will be received with this purpose by the gender and inclusiveness council.

Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual and gender related harassment

ENC will uphold a zero-tolerance policy for discriminatory behavior such as harassment and bullying of anyone, regardless of gender, gender identity, nationality, ethnic background, age, religious and political beliefs, and position in the organization. This means that all forms of (sexual) harassment and microaggressions will never be tolerated.

On the same line, ENC's commitment in providing a safe, positive, welcoming, and inclusive workplace will be described in the document to be signed by everybody entering the organization, irrespective of his or her position.

Monitoring and data gathering

As part of its equal opportunity policy, ENC thoroughly monitors its gender situation to ensure that possible gender bias or other forms of bias can be rapidly detected. This is the subject of regular reporting (once a year), e.g. for the Periodic report for various EU-funded projects. Of the total number of ENC staff members, 50% were women and 50% men in 2023, compared to 25% and 75% in 2021. ENC will continue its efforts to maintain this level of 50% within the coming years.

ENC's statement on gender balance is fully supported and endorsed by ENC's management who is convinced that diversity in all its forms and at all levels in the organization will help in creating a welcoming, safe, and supportive working environment.

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Managing Director, Samuel Doveri Vesterbye

