



GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2022-2024

National Hellenic Research Foundation

Introduction

The **National Hellenic Research Foundation (NHRF)** has fully complied with the European Commission policies which are linked to the development of human resources and it has undertaken an active role in supporting them. In its capacity as a Euraxess Services Centre¹, since 2003, NHRF has a specialized helpdesk that in direct collaboration with the internal HR office provides all researchers (both internal and external) with customized information and assistance regarding their career development. Through constant communication with its researchers, NHRF collects their views and needs so as to take the appropriate actions to their benefit.

Following a person-centered HR policy to meet, in the best possible way, the needs and expectations of the researchers and other support staff, NHRF provides access to a wide range of information and support services in legal, administrative, and practical issues. Furthermore, on June, 2008, the Board of Directors of the NHRF, expressed its support of the general principles and requirements laid out in the Commission Recommendation by signing a declaration of commitment to the Principles of the *European Charter for Researchers* and the *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*.

Among NHRF's core values equality holds a prominent position, as in the internal operation of research institutions, equality is not just a demand for social justice, but also constitutes a perspective of development and competitiveness. When it comes to gender equality, especially, it has been widely proven that by overcoming the barriers that gender discrimination raises, research institutions can make a valued contribution to unleash the creative forces of research and innovation ecosystems and boost production and knowledge transfer.

The NHRF's career policy reflects its commitment to ensuring equality and promoting diversity. Furthermore, the inclusive culture of NHRF is reflected on all employees, job candidates, contractors, stakeholders, partners and visitors; equal opportunity is provided for everyone, but it mainly concerns the underrepresented groups due to their beliefs, disabilities, age, gender or sexual orientation.

Development of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

In line with Horizon Europe's gender equality policy, NHRF hereby presents a **three-year Gender Equality Plan (GEP)** having been developed after a long-running and thorough internal audit. The NHRF GEP has been considered as opportunity for self-assessment and improvement of the gender mainstreaming at NHRF, besides the eligibility criterion set by Horizon.

The NHRF's GEP includes objectives and specific actions to be taken as well as key performance indicators to be monitored mostly on annual basis.

Methodology

For the development of the GEP, many factors and procedures had to be defined and taken into consideration as these are incorporated into the phases below:

- **Audit phase:** This phase included the collection of sex-disaggregated and/or gender-disaggregated data and a review of practices to identify possible gender inequalities and their

¹ Greek Euraxess Network is one of the earliest members of the Pan-European EURAXESS network.

causes. The audit phase included review of relevant national and regional laws, regulations, or funding requirements.

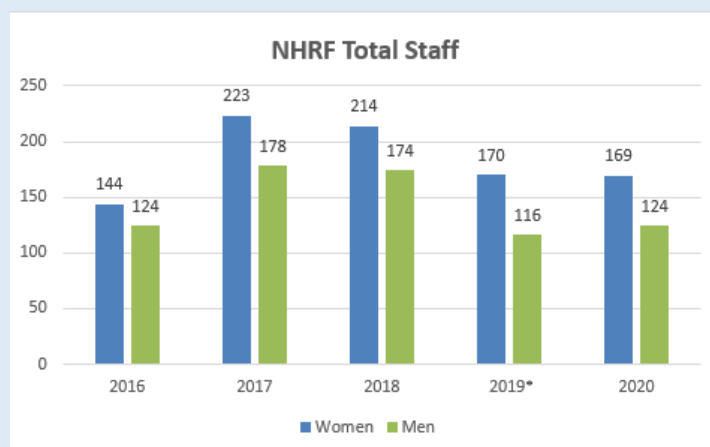
- **Planning phase:** During this phase, we set the objectives for the GEP alongside a roadmap of actions and measures. This phase also included allocating resources and responsibilities for the delivery of the GEP and agreeing on timelines for its implementation.

- **Implementation phase:** a roadmap of activities will be carried out including setting up working groups to develop and implement new policies and procedures. This phase includes awareness-raising and training efforts to achieve wide engagement regarding the GEP across NHRF, as well as give visibility to the public.

- **Monitoring/evaluation phase:** the delivery of the GEP and its progress will be annually assessed by a specialized committee; ongoing review of findings and progress will provide space for learning and feedback to enable adjustments and improvements to interventions.

Current situation

As shown in the graphs below, NHRF throughout recent years (2016-2020), has achieved high percentages of gender equality at all levels of staff (research, scientific, administrative, and auxiliary).



(Graph 1: NHRF Total Staff) ²

Based on the above data, NHRF has set as a key priority **to maintain the good percentages of gender mainstreaming within or further enhance in areas where the gender mainstreaming is not balanced enough**. The primary priorities that NHRF has already adopted towards this direction could be summarized as follows:

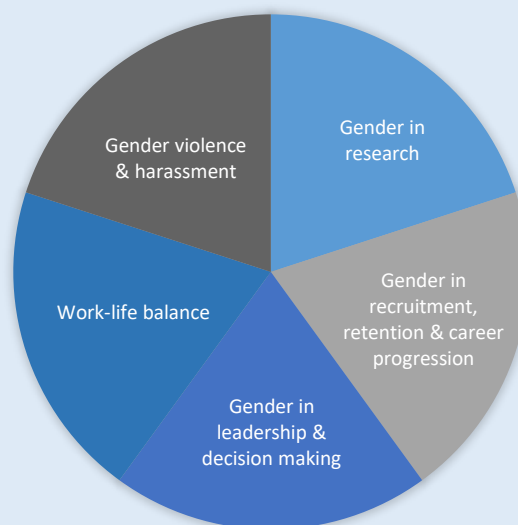
- **Focus on advancement & excellence regardless of gender.**
- **Keep work-life balance for all employees.**
- **Redefine outdated human resources policies.**
- **Close the leadership gap by encouraging women to participate in decision-making procedures.**
- **Revaluate common biases and create an open-minded environment.**
- **Provide mentorship for everyone.**

² In 2019, the National Documentation Center was split off from NHRF, so the number of total staff has been reduced.

Key priority areas & objectives

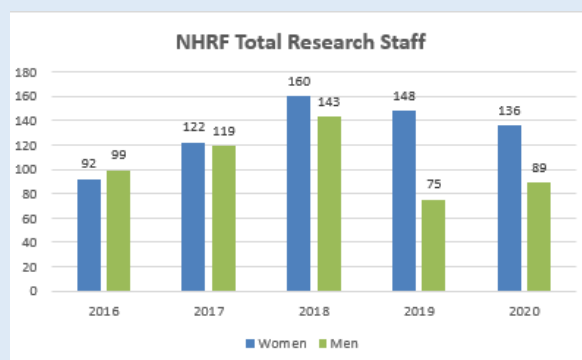
As the aim of the NHRF's GEP is to define its priorities and interventions towards gender equality as well as to tackle any inequalities that may exist within, the current GEP extends over **five (5) equivalent priority areas** as described in the following pages.

In each one of these areas, corresponding **objectives and actions** to be taken are presented, while certain key performance indicators (KPIs), either **quantitative or qualitative**, have been set to be monitored annually^{3,4} in order for the NHRF to be ensuring that GEP's objectives are successfully met.



Gender in research

It is well known that academic stereotypes affect mainly female researchers. Women in specific scientific areas (e.g., STEM⁵) are less likely to be hired, may be paid less, or given more administrative tasks in comparison to men. At NHRF, we are alert about this tendency and for that reason, we pay extra attention to be keeping a well-balanced gender staff ratio among our researchers and research support personnel; in particular, female researchers make up the majority of the NHRF research staff as shown in the data of the past five years (Graph 2).



(Graph 2: NHRF Total Research Staff)

Gender in recruitment, retention & career progression

With regards to NHRF's recruiting strategy, this fully complies with the Greek legislation governing the recruitment process, employment relations and salaries applied to all research centers of the public sector in Greece. When it comes to recruitment, retention and career progression, it is widely known that women face difficulties in getting hired or promoted while female researchers, especially, are less likely to win grants, be invited to conferences, form professional collaborations or be asked to review papers although such activities are critical to their career progression. Within this context, NHRF has already set in place good practices to make sure that recruitment, retention and career progression of female employees are routed on equal terms comparing to male ones.

³ Except for two (2) KPIs which will be monitored every three years (p. 7, Key Priority Area 1).

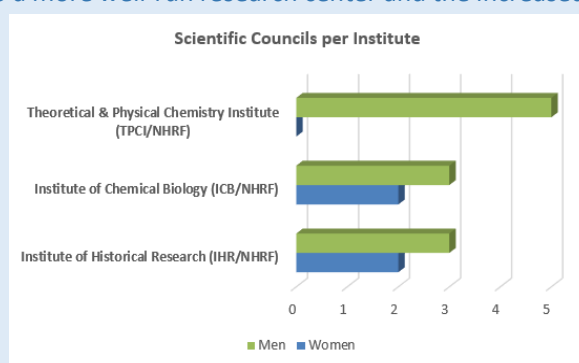
⁴ The KPIs will always be normalized in relation to the gender balance of the available staff.

⁵ Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

Gender in leadership & decision making

Enhancing the female presence in leadership and decision-making procedures through women's participation in the management boards raises debate around the world, with some countries even adopting legislation to enforce their presence. Studies have shown that the inclusion of women in senior levels of management has a direct and positive impact, as they broaden an institution's knowledge and raise its public profile.

Although the election of the NHRF Board Members flows from a judging committee of the Ministry of Development & Investment in Greece, NHRF always works as a lever for encouraging its female senior staff to put up for nomination for the Board. At NHRF, we have seen that the inclusion of women in the decision-making process leads to a more well-run research center and the increased visibility of them at senior level plays a crucial role, while these women are seen as role models empowering others at all stages of their career path. Nevertheless, at NHRF today, there are three (3) elected women in the Board of Directors consisting of eight (8) members in total. In addition, since each Institute of the NHRF has its own Scientific Council, women are still underrepresented in these councils, as reflected in *Graph 3* which indicates a challenge for NHRF.



(Graph 3: Institutes' Scientific Councils - gender ratio)

Work-life balance

Within the scope of its good-employer policy, NHRF offers employees a number of measures to help balance their professional and personal/family life such as flexible working hours and remote working whenever possible and/or needed. What is more, as one of the lessons learned during Covid-19 pandemic has been the transition of employees back on-site, NHRF has developed a flexible policy so that this kind of transition be as smooth as possible.

Gender violence & harassment

Institutional policies on sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence should codify: a) the expected behavior of employees, b) how staff can report incidents of gender-based violence, c) how any such incidents will be investigated and sanctions applied and d) the information and support provided to victims or witnesses.

By virtue of the law 4808/2021, NHRF is currently developing a holistic policy to tackle harassment and violence related to gender at the workplace, so the whole organization can be mobilized to establish a culture of zero tolerance towards sexual harassment and violence.

A special committee will be assigned to the monitoring and appropriate implementation of the policy consisting of:

1. The research representative to the Board of Directors (BoD) / deputy research representative
2. The non-research representative to the BoD / deputy non-research representative
3. A representative of the NHRF staff association

4. The Administrative Director
5. An Executive of the Human Resources Office as the contact point.

The committee in charge will have the right to call NHRF staff or management members for their viewpoint and it may propose to the BoD a sworn administrative examination to be carried out either by a committee member or any other authorized person by law.

Key priority area 1: Gender in Research

Objective(s)	Actions	Timetable			KPIs
		2022	2023	2024	
Maintain gender balance among NHRF research staff	Incorporate gender dimension into every research activity (applications for funding, consortium composition etc.)	√	√	√	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender balance within each Institute <input type="checkbox"/> The average size of grants for male or female Principal Investigators. <input type="checkbox"/> Gender balance in leading roles within the context of funded projects <input type="checkbox"/> Gender balance in peer-reviewed publications (by the two Institutes of Natural Sciences) as well as in publications (by the Institute of Historical Research)* <input type="checkbox"/> Gender balance of the speakers at events and conferences** <input type="checkbox"/> Gender balance in spin-offs' founders <small>*Gender balance in peer-reviewed publications and historic publications will be monitored/evaluated every three years. ** Gender balance in events and conferences will be monitored/evaluated every three years.</small>
	Conduct a qualitative survey of the reasons affecting researchers' productivity and implement the mechanisms resulting from this survey		√	√	
	Raise awareness through events regarding the benefits of a balanced gender representation in R&D	√	√	√	
	Boost gender representation in entrepreneurship (i.e. female founders of spin-offs)	√	√	√	

Key priority area 2: Gender in recruitment, retention and career progression

Objective(s)	Actions	Timetable			KPIs
		2022	2023	2024	
I. Make all phases of recruitment gender sensitive	Reflect diversity in the job descriptions and interview panels	√	√	√	<input type="checkbox"/> Balanced gender representation while in interview process (at least one woman and one man)* <input type="checkbox"/> Gender balance across all staff categories and retention rate per gender. <input type="checkbox"/> Gender balance of researchers who progress to a higher level <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluating any possible complaints regarding biased role appointments or poor career progression *whenever it is possible given that the first and foremost condition for participating in the interview panels is the relevant scientific expertise
	Support balanced gender representation in job applications through attractive employment packages		√	√	
II. Further support of equal retention and career progression	Develop career progression paths in all staff levels		√	√	
	Evaluate performance fairly within Institutes	√	√	√	
	Assist female researchers in their network building at both national and international level	√	√	√	
	Unbiased appointment of senior roles within the departments	√	√	√	
	In-depth study of gender-related parameters affecting staff retention and career progression and design of improving measures			√	

Key priority area 3: Gender in leadership and decision making

Objective(s)	Actions	Timetable			KPIs
		2022	2023	2024	
Enhance female participation in the Scientific Councils, the Board of Directors, advisory boards, committees as well as high managerial roles	Support women to put up for nomination for such governance bodies	√	√	√	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender balance among the candidacies for councils, committees etc.
	Consult with the Directors of the NHRF's Institutes about encouraging women to participate in the Institutes' scientific councils & committees	√	√	√	
	Monitor gender balance in key leading and decision-making positions	√	√	√	
	Organize events for raising awareness about diversity and inclusion in such roles.	√	√	√	

Key priority area 4: Work-life balance

Objective(s)	Actions	Timetable			KPIs
		2022	2023	2024	
I. Strengthen the balance between work and family for caregivers	Deconstruct gendered notions of care through gender-neutral language	√	√	√	<input type="checkbox"/> Balanced number of parental leaves (or other benefits) between the two genders.
	Adjust the parental leave schemes to employees' needs	√	√	√	
	Urge the male employees to take parental leaves as well	√	√	√	
	Ensure that the legislation of parental leaves is well-communicated and applied	√	√	√	
	Provide the mothers who get back to work shortly after childbirth with flexible work schedules for a three-month period		√	√	
II. Restore productivity after a long absence.	Provide the staff with an induction phase after a long absence due to parental or other reasons (i.e. health recovery)	√	√	√	
	Upgrade digital tools for remote working and connectivity.	√	√	√	

Key priority area 5: Gender violence and harassment

Objective(s)	Actions	Timetable			KPIs
		2022	2023	2024	
Eliminate incidents of gender violence or sexual harassment	Designation of a contact point for: accepting complaints in-person, raising awareness and handling any complaints (both anonymous and eponymous) recorded by a centralized system.	√	√	√	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequency of reporting cases of gender-based harassment or violence. <input type="checkbox"/> Consult with the committee assigned if such cases arise.
	Establishment of a specialized and independent committee for undertaking the investigation of harassment cases.	√	√	√	
	Information about the rights and the obligations of both the NHRF staff and NHRF as employer at the extent of their responsibility.	√	√	√	
	Estimate of potential dangers (risk factors) of violence and harassment at workplace.	√	√	√	
	Protection of the occupation and support of employees that are victims of domestic violence	√	√	√	