



Policy and Citizens' Observatory

POLICY AND CITIZENS' OBSERVATORY: MIGRATION, DIGITALISATION, CLIMATE

# GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2022-2025



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**This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) defines the key areas of intervention, the objectives, and the measures of ‘Policy and Citizens’ Observatory: migration, digitalization, climate’ (Observatory) for the period 2022/25 in regards to gender equality, sexual orientation and non-discrimination. The primary objective of the plan is to ensure that the Observatory is a safe place for everyone, and functions in a manner that respects equality and diversity, and is free of any form of discrimination.**

## **About the organisation**

**‘Policy and Citizens’ Observatory: migration, digitalisation, climate’** is a think tank addressing the challenges, crises and innovations of the 21st century in the dual perspective of policies and citizens. It focuses on three major spheres – digitalization, migration, and climate.

The Observatory is a think tank for research and policy on the major challenges, risks, crises and innovations – political, social, technological, cultural:

- E-democracy, e-government, Internet and social media;
- Green pact, climate and environmental activism and policies;
- Migration & mobility and refugee studies, migration & diaspora and development; minorities and integration, solidarity movements;
- (Post)democracy, populism, radicalization, youth extremism;
- Civic activism, mobilizations, citizenship, human rights;
- Urban studies – smart cities, public space, culture.

A key goal for Policy and Citizens’ Observatory is the work on youth issues, as well as the active involvement of young people in its activities. The organisation aims to develop activities in support of the development of democracy, including digital and new forms of civic participation, of the public environment and civil society and of human rights and intercultural dialogue through research, educational, expert, consulting, publishing, civic and other activities.

The Observatory is committed to the organisation of information and educational campaigns, forums and other forms of activity for the major social, technological, health, cultural and other challenges of the 21st century, as well as for the promotion of democratic and solidarity values. The Observatory aims at encouraging and developing cooperation with representatives of culture, art, participatory art as well as cooperation with national institutions, international organisations and associations with similar goals and subject of activity.

## **'Policy and Citizens' Observatory: migration, digitalisation, climate' Vision of Gender Equality**

Policy and Citizens' Observatory: migration, digitalization, climate is committed to promoting and improving gender equality at all career levels within the organisation. Gender equality aims to prevent discrimination in part by balancing the proportion of the different genders at the workplace, and also maintaining a respectful work relationship to each other without conscious or unconscious gender bias. An essential way to achieve these aims is to ensure a fair and unbiased recruiting process for new researchers. For our researchers, it is important to guarantee equality in their rights, responsibilities and opportunities, as well as to provide support for professional and career development. Thus, it is important to raise awareness within the organisation for gender equality, discrimination and unconscious biases. It is also essential to achieve a fair balance between career and personal life outside the workplace by recognizing the diverse life situations, possibilities and needs for all individuals without stereotypical presumptions.

### ***What does gender equality mean to us at our organisation?***

The 'Policy and Citizens Observatory: digitalization, migration, climate' is dedicated to providing support to all staff members, regardless of gender, nationality, religion, disability, age, cultural background or sexual identity. To do so, it is necessary to create conditions for safeguarding careers. We are aware of the fact that an ongoing improvement of framework conditions is vital for recruiting and keeping excellent staff members. By improving equality of opportunities at the Observatory, we also increase our appeal as a scientific organisation. According to the goals of the 'Policy and Citizens Observatory: digitalization, migration, climate', we actively contribute to creating conditions that allow for career paths to be followed without any gender-related obstacles.

### ***Why do we draw up a gender equality plan?***

An essential tool for the implementation of gender equality measures is to draw up a gender equality plan. The purpose of this plan is to allow us to document our work, and to contribute to equality of opportunities in professional advancement.

### ***For how long is this plan valid? When can it be adjusted?***

The present Gender Equality Plan 2022 is valid for four years, until the end of 2025.

### ***The goals of gender equality***

The same opportunities are generally available to all members and applicants, regardless of gender, nationality, religion, disability, age, cultural background or sexual identity. We can only expect diversity, if equal opportunities are ensured. Diversity is an essential component to allow for our cutting-edge research to be developed further. We strive to raise awareness of this across all divisions and levels of hierarchy at the Institute.

## Our work is based on the following legal guidelines:

- Key National legal guidelines:

The legal guarantees for equality and equal treatment of women and men are contained in the current Bulgarian legislation - the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Labour Code, the Social Security Code, the Law on Protection against Discrimination, the Law on Equality of Women and Men, the Law on Social Assistance, the Law on Promotion of Employment, the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence, the Law on Civil Servant and a number of other special and sectoral laws.

- Key EU legal guidelines :

The so-called Recast Directive (2006/54/EC) on equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in employment and occupation has brought together some older directives. This directive requires the implementation of the prohibition of direct and indirect sex discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment in pay, (access to) employment and in occupational social security schemes.

A prohibition of direct and indirect sex discrimination applies to statutory social security schemes (Directive 79/7/EEC) and to self-employment (Directive 2010/41/EU).

Sex discrimination is also prohibited in access to and the supply of goods and services (Directive 2004/113/EC).

In addition, some directives apply to specific groups, such as the Pregnancy Directive (92/85/EEC), the Parental Leave Directive (2010/18/EU) or the Part-time Work Directive (97/81/EC). The great majority of part-time workers in the EU being women; the requirement of equal treatment of part-timers and full-timers is also relevant for them.

The Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) prohibits discrimination on the ground of racial or ethnic origin in a broad range of fields, including employment, social protection and social advantages, education, and goods and services available to the public, including housing.

The Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC), however, is limited to the field of employment and occupation but covers the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation. The adoption of the Racial Equality Directive and the Employment Equality Directive initiated a movement throughout Europe, in EU Member States and beyond, towards the adoption of national non-discrimination legislations transposing the provisions of the directives. In many Member States, this movement implied quite profound changes to the existing legislative framework, through the amendment of existing legislation or the adoption of new unprecedented laws and regulations to specifically regulate the prohibition of discrimination in accordance with the directives' requirements.

## **Gender Equality Plan**

The following Gender Equality Plan has been prepared after a thorough analysis on the topic of gender equality. The GEP is a public document published on the official website of Policy and Citizens' Observatory: migration, digitalization, climate' (<https://www.pol-obs.com/>). It is prepared by the Administrative board of the organisation, communicated within the members and signed by the president of 'Policy and Citizens' Observatory: migration, digitalization, climate'. This plan is effective for the years 2022-2025 and it defines the framework and the measures that will be followed at our organisation.

All members of the nonprofit organisation 'Policy and Citizens' Observatory: migration, digitalization, climate' are committed to the consistent implementation of this Gender Equality Plan. Setting clear goals and a map of actions and measures to achieve them in the GEP is a strategic objective for the proper management and the organisation as well as its successful development.

The organization is committed to the conduction of sex/ gender data collection and monitoring and the preparation of annual reports based on a number of set indicators. The evaluation of the progress is seen by the organisation as a highly important method for the identification of the results.

The members of 'Policy and Citizens' Observatory: migration, digitalization, climate' are all committed to expand their knowledge in gender equality as well as in areas such as: Gender balance in leadership and decision-making, Gender equality in recruitment and career progression and Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content. Therefore, the team is willing to take part in various forms of training actions on gender equality, more particularly in self-training online training, training with experts on specific topics, etc.

A successful implementation of this plan can only be achieved if all researchers commit to it. We therefore invite you to join us in promoting and maintaining the ultimate goal of equality.

### **Plan of Actions**

The strategic objective of Policy and Citizens' Observatory regarding gender equality assurance is to provide a non-discriminatory, gender-equal and accessible environment in which different team members with diverse backgrounds and duties receive equal treatment and are free to participate without discrimination in all types of activities. Policy and Citizens' Observatory aims to maintain a good, safe and fair environment for work.

This strategic objective will be realised through intensive work in the following seven key areas of intervention:

#### **Key Area 1: Gender Equality Environment**

Objective: Promoting gender equality in organisational and individual cultures, processes, and practises.

Measure 1.1. Promoting gender competence enhancement initiatives and activities at all Policy and Citizens' Observatory levels.

Measure 1.2. Appointing staff members responsible for monitoring that all organisation's processes and procedures respect gender equality.

Measure 1.3. Policy and Citizens' Observatory is dedicated to identifying and eliminating practices and structures that generate or sustain inequality and discrimination.

## **Key Area 2: Recruitment Policies and Procedures**

Objective: Ensuring gender equality in recruitment and career development.

Measure 2.1. To assure a fair and unbiased recruitment process, the gender equality officer should be informed about the recruitment process before the membership offer is published; most ideally during the writing of the membership offer.

Measure 2.2. To improve job announcements equally attractive for women and men.

Measure 2.3 To ensure that all organisation' staff has equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for personal development and career advancement on the basis of academic and/or professional qualifications.

Measure 2.4. Proactively identify and contact potential female candidates for leading positions. E.g. by searching female expert profile databases, websites, and personal contacts.

Measure 2.5. Increasing the percentage of female applicants and the offer acceptance rate. Review internal and external vacancy advertisement tools (e.g. advertisement platforms concerning reach and accessibility, language use, etc.) and improve them to reach more women.

Measure 2.6. Promote transparency of recruitment practises internally and externally

Measure 2.7. Career Development and Training: Information and training events regarding career development are offered at our organisation for all female employees (in scientific and non-scientific sectors).

## **Key Area 3: Gender Equality at Work Integration**

Objective: Promoting integration of work with personal life.

Measure 3.1 Creating a section on describing social benefits and measurements improving work-life balance (e.g. family-friendly workplace).

Measure 3.2. Providing measures for supporting Policy and Citizens' Observatory members of any gender for childcare, care for family members with special needs or for elder family members, etc.

Measure 3.3. Alternating telework at MPL enables employees to better reconcile work and family life. Telework in this context refers to any type of work performed based on IT or communication technology that is periodically performed from a workplace outside the Organisation. It is granted for one year at a time. There is no entitlement to telework.

#### **Key Area 4: Gender Equality in Research**

Objective: Promoting gender equality in research processes.

Measure 4.1. Identify national/international groups with experience on gendered research, in the field of the organisation research topic.

Measure 4.2. Promote exchange with experienced groups in gendered research.

Measure 4.3 We want to make underrepresented groups more visible. Therefore, women should also appear as speakers at future events.

#### **Key Area 5: Gender Equality in Education and Training**

Objective: Promoting gender equality in education processes.

Measure 5.1. Engaging in training and offering training tools at all levels of education on gender variables.

Measure 5.2. Organising Gender Bias (and other biases) awareness-raising initiatives.

#### **Key Area 6: Data collection and monitoring**

Objective: Identify how to select the most relevant indicators, how to collect and analyse the data, including resources to do so

Measure 6.1. Systematic collection, analysis, and reporting of gender-disaggregated data (both qualitative and quantitative) on the main organisation processes, structures, and results.

Measure 6.2. Improve long and short-term planning for gender statistics development.

Measure 6.3 Analyse data regarding Policy and Citizens' Observatory research – publications, patents, funding allocation, etc. – disaggregated by gender.

Measure 6.4 Create an archive for storing the database and the accompanying materials.

#### **Key Area 7: Public Visibility of Gender Equality Plan**

Objective: Ensure public visibility of the plan

Measure 7.1 This document will be published on the official website of Policy and Citizens Observatory, signed by the top management, and actively communicated within the organisation.

## **Evaluation Procedure of the GEP**

In creating this plan, the measures were constructed in a manner that allows efficient and continuous evaluation. This was done by specifying target groups, the timeline for implementation, and responsible individuals. The successful implementation of the plan depends upon the proper involvement of all members of the organisation. In order to conduct a reliable evaluation and monitoring of the process of the GEP implementation a specialised working group with members from the organisation will be set up. The working group will also have as a task to expand its knowledge base on gender issues with the goal to share it among the other members throughout different means such as: share gender-related materials, documents, articles and other information on projects that have strong gender components; Produce articles on gender equality issues in commemoration of national/international days (e.g., International Women's Day, 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, etc.), and circulate on the Observatory's social media and website.