

INSTITUTE OF OPTICAL MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES
“ACAD. J. MALINOWSKI”
BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

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GENDER EQUALITY PLAN (GEP)

IOMT - BAS (2021 - 2024)

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

This plan aims at promoting the process of achieving gender equality in the field of research at Institute of Optical Materials and Technologies (IOMT) - BAS, following the strategy for structural change, published on 2017-09-07 by the European Institute for Gender Equality /EIGE/.¹

Globally, the Plan aims at ensuring compliance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,² and in particular with Goal 5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”.

The plan also meets objectives of the European Union and the policies related to gender equality, identified as a priority in the European Commission's 2020-2025 Strategy.³

Bulgaria, as a member of the EU and the UN, through its legislation guarantees full gender equality in all spheres of social and political life.

2. WHAT THE STRUCTURAL INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES ARE AND WHY THEY ARE NEEDED

Research organizations in the European Research Area /ERA/ are invited to make institutional changes that are in line with the strategy aimed at removing barriers to gender equality, changes in human resources management, funding and decision-making in research programs.¹

The main objectives of these changes are to increase the representation of women and to preserve their scientific careers at all levels, as well as to support the integration of gender issues into the content of research and innovation.

- Overcoming the structural reproduction of inequalities;
- Bias and discrimination based on sex;
- Overcoming the so-called horizontal segregation - women are more likely to be found in fields like social sciences and humanities, men are more inclined to study, teach and/or research topics related to engineering or technology;
- Overcoming the so-called vertical segregation - the highest positions in the hierarchy are held by men;
- Unconscious or implicit gender bias.

3. PARTICIPANTS AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The cooperation of all IOMT staff is important for the development and implementation of the Gender Equality Plan. The direct or indirect participation of everyone will create a sense of understanding and belonging to all processes in the Gender Equality Plan.

The current Gender Equality Plan needs to be strongly supported by a dedicated structure within the IOMT. This structure will be more effective if it is composed of more than one person, do not working in isolation and being well-networked, publicly supported by top-level executives.

4. THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN AS A TOOL FOR STRUCTURAL CHANGE

4.1. Analysis – evaluation of data, processes and practices

Women in research organizations

According to the latest European Commission “She figures” handbook (“She figures: Gender in research and innovation: statistics and indicators”), in 2012 only 33 % of European researchers were women. Throughout the years, “She figures” has also provided evidence that women have been historically under-represented as top-level executives. These findings are utterly disappointing as, in 2012, the percentage of female European PhD graduates amounted to 47%. The share of women in management positions in academic institutions has increased from 18% in 2007 to 21% in 2013. According to EIGE, the number of women researchers has grown faster than the number of men, but progress has been slow - the share of women who have reached the highest positions in their scientific careers is only 20%.

In IOMT, the percentage of women working at the institute is 54. This percentage is higher than the European average. Out of a total of 6 professors at the institute, 4 are women, or 66% of the professors. The detailed analysis of the employees of IOMT shows that women in the research and scientific staff are over 50%.

4.2. Planning – areas and aims

Areas:

1. Work-life balance (balance between work life and personal life) and organizational culture (parental leave policy, flexible work schedule);
2. Balance between genders in the management and in the decision-making process (initiation of gender quotas regarding the inclusion of persons in evaluation committees or decision-making boards);
3. Gender equality in the recruitment of human resources and in the provision of career development opportunities for staff members (training to avoid unconscious bias on the part of employees related to human resources management, in the hiring processes, fair evaluation of employees);

<https://op.europa.eu/bg/publication-detail/-/publication/55e3c365-943f-11e7-b92d-01aa75ed71a1/language-bg/format-PDF/source-233702581>

4. Encouragement of the analysis and adaptation of institutional practices in order to make institutional changes. Increasing the sensitivity of the commitment in IOMT to the topic.
5. Creating commitment in IOMT and sustainable support for equality.

Aims:

1. Raising awareness about the overall policy aimed at gender equality, forming a collective commitment leading to zero tolerance for inequalities, repression or gender-based violence.
2. Gender equality concerning the recruitment of human resources and in the provision of career opportunities for staff, gender balance in management and decision-making, as well as in research.
3. Ensuring an effective mechanism for monitoring and reporting the obtained results regarding the policies and practices applied in the institute, related to gender equality. Monitoring and reporting the specific integration measures.

4.3. Implementation – activities

Area 1. Work-life balance and organizational culture (parental leave policies, flexible work schedule).

Measures/Activities	Participants	Deadlines	Indicators
1.1. Collection and dissemination of information at international and national level related to raising the level of work-life balance	PIO DCO SIO Management	2023	Measures to support the balance at the IOMT level Organized initiatives
1.2. Implementing and developing schedules for flexible working hours/telecommuting	PIO SIO MEO Management	2021-2024	Consultations with those interested in changes in schedules and work programs

Area 2. Gender balance in management and decision-making (introduction of gender quotas regarding the inclusion of persons in evaluation committees or decision-making bodies).

Measures/ Activities	Participants	Deadlines	Indicators
2.1. Providing appropriate support for equality by the management of the Institute.	MEO PIO DCO SIO Management	2021-2024	Organizing actions providing support Scope - different levels of government, units, groups Evidence to support IP
2.2. Gathering and promoting good practices in similar European and National organizations related to equality	PIO DCO	2021-2022	A set of good practices Organized initiatives Degree of coverage of the groups
2.3. Analysis of the criteria and official documents of the Institute for hiring research staff	MEO PIO DCO SIO	2022-2024	Performed analysis Number of documents

Area 3. Gender equality in the recruitment of human resources and in the provision of career development opportunities for staff members (training to avoid unconscious bias on the part of employees related to human resources management, in the hiring processes, fair evaluation of employees).

Measures/Activities	Participants	Deadlines	Indicators
3.1. Stimulating a better gender balance at the Institute	PIO DCO SIO Management	Constant	Organised initiatives Identification of imbalanced areas Number of participants
3.2. Analysis of the criteria and official documents of the Institute for hiring employees	PIO MEO SIO Management	2021-2024	Number of analyzes Number of documents

Area 4. Promoting the analysis and adaptation of institutional practices in order to make institutional changes. Awareness-raising efforts aimed at generating and stimulating sensitivity to issues related to gender (in-)equality.

Measures/ Activities	Participants	Deadlines	Indicators
4.1. Increase awareness at all levels of the results and indicators	PIO DCO SIO Management	Constant	Conduct awareness initiatives about monitoring data Number of participants/groups
4.2. Choice of approach. Analysis of the availability of internal expert capacity. Assessment of the need for the use of external capacity on gender issues.	PIO SIO MEO Management	2021-2024	Data results of Human Resources Survey results on the opinion of target groups

Area 5. Raising engagement at IOMT and creating sustainable support regarding equality.

Measures/ Activities	Participants	Deadlines	Indicators
5.1. Providing appropriate equality support by the management and all units horizontally and vertically.	ET	2021-2024	Organized activities Coverage of different levels and units Evidence of support
5.2. Research of the departments of the Institute for the presence of hidden problems related to gender equality	ET	2023	Studied issues Scope of the study
5.3. Gathering and promotion of good practices from related European institutes	PIO DCO SIO MEO Management	2021-2022	Organized initiatives Set of practices

Abbreviations:

GEP –Gender Equality Plan

ET – Equality team

DCO – Distribution and Communication Officer

SIO – Sustainability and Integration Officer

MEO – Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

PIO – Plan Implementation Officer

¹ <https://op.europa.eu/bg/publication-detail/-/publication/55e3c365-943f-11e7-b92d-01aa75ed71a1/language-bg/format-PDF/source-233702581>

² <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_bg

The Gender Equality Plan was approved by the IOMT Scientific Council at a meeting held on 26th November 2021 (Protocol № 43 / 26.11.2021)