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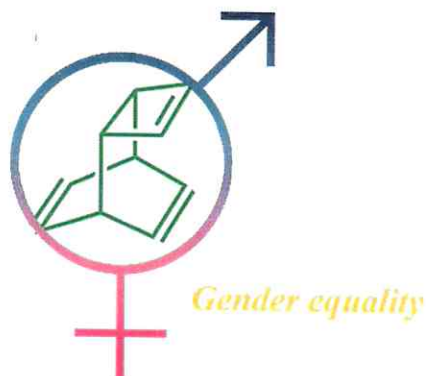
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The Gender Equality Strategy and the Gender Equality Plan

2023 - 2025

**„C. D. Nenitzescu” Institute of Organic and Supramolecular Chemistry of the
Romanian Academy**



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Abbreviations and definitions

GE	Gender Equality
GEP	Gender Equality plan
ICOS	„C. D. Nenitzescu” Institute of Organic and Supramolecular Chemistry
HR	Human Resources
D	Director
DD	Deputy Director
SS	Scientific Secretary
SC	Scientific Council
Sex	Either of the two major forms of individuals that occur in many species and that are distinguished respectively as female or male especially on the basis of their reproductive organs and structures (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/)
Gender	The behavioural, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/)
Sex vs. Gender	A clear delineation between sex and gender is typically prescribed, with sex as the preferred term for biological forms, and gender limited to its meanings involving behavioural, cultural, and psychological traits. In this dichotomy, the terms male and female relate only to biological forms (sex), while the terms masculine/masculinity, feminine/femininity, woman/girl, and man/boy relate only to psychological and sociocultural traits (gender) (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/)

Introduction

„C. D. Nenitzescu” Institute of Organic and Supramolecular Chemistry (ICOS) developed the Gender Equality (GE) strategy for 2023 - 2025 in accordance with the provisions of the European Charter for researchers and the Code of Conduct for the recruitment of researchers¹, 2015 - 2019, in agreement with the European Gender Equality Strategy 2020 - 2025² and with the Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans³.

In the spirit of European requirements, ICOS developed the GE plan (GEP) for 2023 - 2025, as a continuous improvement process, containing objectives and key actions that ensures the equality of opportunity for all ICOS personnel and promotes the principles of equality, diversity, inclusiveness and non-discrimination within the institute. The objectives of the GEP are implemented based on targeted measures in order to ensure an equal and inclusive workspace where gender-based violence, sex discrimination and structural inequality between women and men are inexistent. As such, the GEP is a set of commitments engaged by the whole organization, that promotes a culture of respect and inclusions and combats gender discrimination. Our aim is to identify possible problems, their causes and possible solutions, to detail a set of steps to achieve the desire outcome and indicators to monitor progress. Therefore, the GEP will include implementing awarness actions that could takle gender imbalances.

I. Requirements and policies review

Within ICOS, a working group was established, in order to develop the GE strategy and GE plan, following a literature review on the existing policies, requirements and recommandations. As such, the typical steps in the lifecycle of a GEP include:

- Review phase: consisting of gender-disaggregated data and a review of practices in order to identify gender inequalities and their causes.
- Planning phase: objectives of the GEP and the corresponding actions
- Implementation phase – the activities are implemented, awareness training that support the GEP
- Monitoring and evaluation phase the progress and the objectives are regularly assessed; enable adjustments and improvements to interventions.

¹ https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/policy_library/ttf_goal_2_results_v1.0.pdf

² https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en

³ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffcb06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1>

Using concrete measures and targets, the gender equality plan addresses several areas:

- *Work-life balance and organisational culture;*
- *Gender balance in leadership and decision-making;*
- *Gender equality in recruitment and career progression;*
- *Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content;*
- *Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.*

The main resources used in the literature review are listed in the Annex.

II. Data collection and analysis

Firstly, in order to develop the GE plan, an assessment of the gender equality *status quo* within ICOS was performed, taking into consideration several indicators. Our goal was to identify areas of strength and weaknesses that allows us to target actions and priorities within GEP. Therefore, for this step, gender-disaggregated relevant data was collected (according to human resources office data).

The indicators are as follows:

- Numbers of women and men in research and administrative decision-making positions such as management team, scientific committee, leaders of ICOS research groups and of administrative service;
- Staff numbers by sex/gender at all positions including research staff experienced *vs* early stage – researchers, including auxiliary research staff, and administrative/support services;
- Numbers of staff by sex/gender applying for/taking parental leave.

The conclusions of the internal review were then analysed and approved at management level (D, SD, SS, SC), and then communicated to the entire institute staff. The Director committed to the development and implementation of the GEP 2023 - 2025, within „C. D. Nenitzescu” Institute of Organic and Supramolecular Chemistry.

II.1. The aforementioned indicators were analyzed, allowing a *quantitative analysis*, summarized in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Number of women and men in leadership positions, research staff, auxiliary research staff, administrative and support services.

ICOS positions	Details	Women	Men
Leadership positions	ICOS management	2	2
	ICOS scientific committee	5	8
	Leader of Research Groups	2	5
	Leader of ICOS administrative service	1	0
Research staff	Total research staff		
	Experienced researchers: CSI, CSII and CS III positions	19	11
	Early-stage researchers: CS and ACS	9	11
Other research positions	Auxiliary staff (technicians and other categories)	15	11
Administrative positions	Administrative and support services	4	2

The analysis of the data illustrated that

- Pertaining leadership positions: at management level the gender distribution is equally represented with 2 women and 2 men, reflecting good existing practices in the research institute. Regarding other leadership positions, such as scientific committee and leadership of research groups, overall the number of male is slightly increased than that of women. The gender distribution for the research scientists displays a higher number of women: 47 women vs 35 men.
- Among all research level the percentages are as follows: regarding the experienced research staff there are 63 % women employees and 36 % male employees; at early-stage research level the percentages are: 45 % women employees and 55 % male employees. The number of women vs men in experienced research positions is slightly increased, as proof of an objective competence-based advancement procedure, devoid of factors of discrimination based on gender.
- Related to the auxiliary stage 57 % of the research staff are women employees and 42 % are male employees.
- At administrative and support services the number of women exceeds that of men.
- The gender imbalance in staff distribution is rather explained by the scientific profile of the institute, as in Romania most chemistry graduates are female, and, therefore is not a result of the ICOS policy.

As part of data collection and analysis, during 15.11.2023 – 30.11.2023, at ICOS it was conducted a survey based on several indicators. A total number of 81 forms were received, of which 1 was incomplete, thus removed from analysis. The findings of this initial analysis allows us to identify the areas of intervention to be addressed in GEP. The collected data was analysed for every indicator as follows.

- ***Number of years needed for women and men to make career advancements***

Regarding the research staff, the order of career advancement is as follows: ACS→ CS→ CSIII→ CSII→ CSI. According to the survey, in order to make career advancement it is required, in average, 4 years and 9 months for the first stage (ACS→ CS), 5 years and 8 months for the second stage (CS→ CSIII), 4 years and 2 months for the third stage (CSIII→ CSII) and 5 years and 6 months for the fourth stage (CSII→ CSI). There were 40 % women and 20 % men succeeding in advancement in research positions.

- ***Numbers of staff by sex/gender applying for/taking parental leave, for how long and how many returned after taking the leave***

According to the survey 12.5 % of the respondents requested maternity/paternity leave. It is noteworthy that only women applied for this type of service. As such, there were no cases in which the men-employees asked for paternity leave. 10 persons answered this question with answers ranging between 12 and 24 months. The fact that all answers were in this range is indicative of the fact that the parents are confident in the security of their jobs and to take a long parental leave.

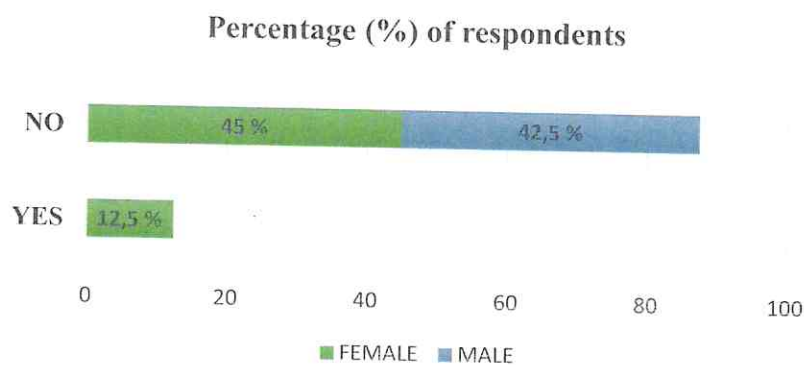


Figure 1. Percentage of respondents requesting maternity leave in ICOS

- ***Opinions on the work-life balance in the research institute***

The survey also questioned the ICOS employees regarding the work-life balance. The results, presented in figure 2, showed that a high percentage of employees, 83,75 % reported a balanced ratio, 16,25 % claimed that professional life prevailed while there was no case in which the personal life was predominant.

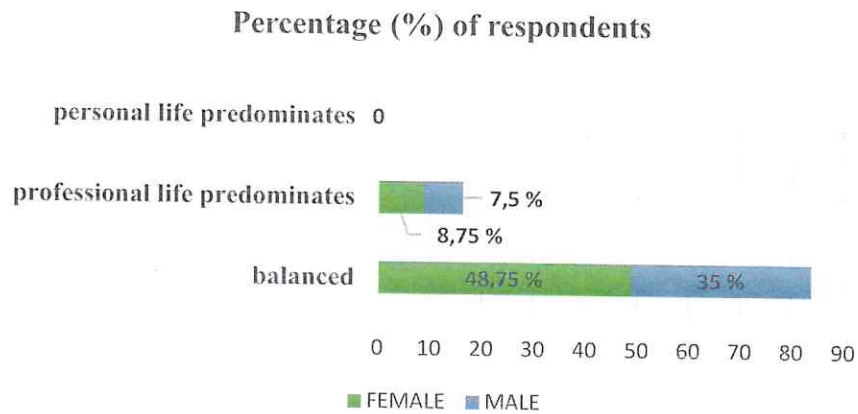


Figure 2. Work-life balance survey percentages.

- ***Integration of the gender dimension into research content***

The survey question regarding the gender dimension into research showed that the majority of respondents- 87.5 % said that there is a balanced ratio between men and women, 7.5 % said that women predominate, while 3.75 % said that men predominate. The results are presented in Figure 3.

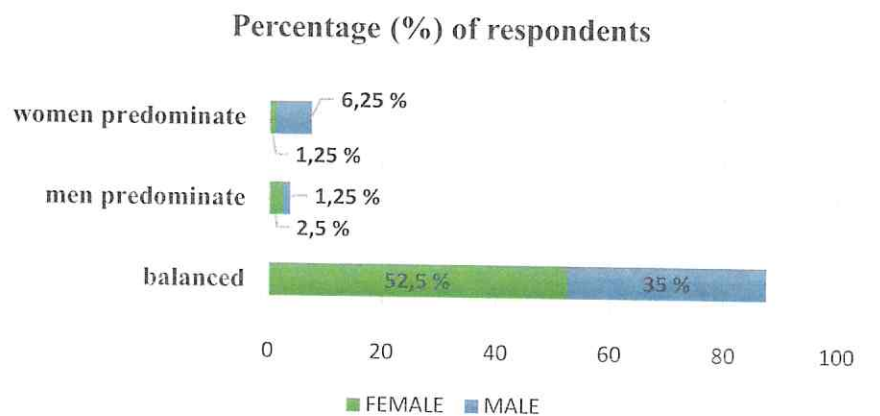


Figure 3. Results of the survey regarding the gender dimension into research

- ***Perception of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment in institute***

As part of data collection and analysis, the issue of sexual harassment in institute was surveyed. The result are presented in figure 4; the majority of respondents (85 %) stated that there is no sexual harassment in ICOS, while 15 % noted that they have no opinion regarding this issue.

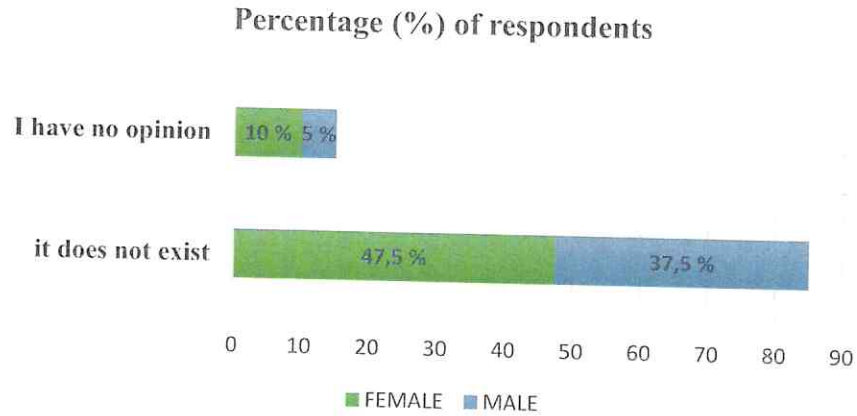


Figure 4. Results regarding the issue of gender-based discrimination according to the survey

- ***Perception (opinion) regarding inclusiveness and discrimination at the ICOS***

The final issue adressed in the survey regards the opinion of the respondents on the inclusiveness and discrimination within the institute. In this regard, a high percentage of the employees, 72,5 %, stated that there is no discrimination in the workplace/there is inclusiveness, while 27,5 % stated they are not aware of of such issues. The results are represented in Figure 5.

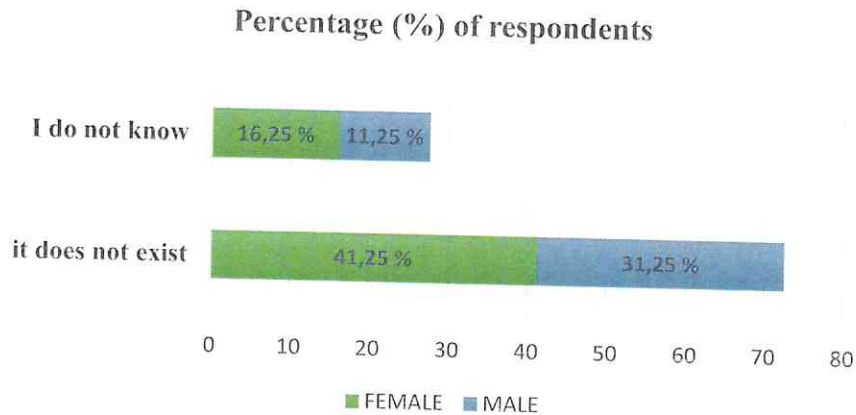


Figure 5. Results regarding the issue of gender-based inclusion and discrimination according to the survey

II.2. Following these surveys, a *qualitative analysis* of data was performed. The important conclusions of the internal analysis regarding gender-equality status within ICOS are:

- Among the employee in ICOS (research and administrative) there are 57 % women and 44 % male. At management level/leadership positions, only small imbalances in gender distribution are observed (regarding leaders of research groups and scientific committee).
- ICOS's policies ensure equal pay for equal work for all employees, in accordance to the existing policies on salary system. Also, when it comes to the process of recruiting or career advancement, the main criteria is represented by the scientific performance, regardless of gender.
- The number of women advancing in research career exceeds that of men. At the same time, most of female respondents reported a balance between work and family life. 11 women requested parental leave between 1996 - 2023, and all returned at ICOS after that period.
- According to the survey, the institute is regarded as a safe workplace. Within ICOS no stereotypes or biases regarding gender have been identified, no gender-based discrimination, in which one gender would be systematically favored, and no gender-based violence. Also, there were no respondents reporting sexual harassment.
- Pertaining the research area, the institute is viewed as inclusive, as there was no gender imbalance regarding the ability to attract funding for research grants, and the participation in scientific activities (conferences, seminars, workshops) doesn't have barriers for women and men, indicative of the fact that the gender-dimension is well integrated in research.

Summarizing the results of the present internal analysis, we can conclude that within ICOS:

- There are areas in which the number of women surpasses the number of men. At the same time, in others, the situation is converse. As such, we can conclude that there is a good gender balance at the institute's level and gender discrimination is very low.
- ICOS will maintain its existing policies and procedures that focus on equal opportunities and non-discriminating policy.
- we will continue to communicate gender-relevant actions and measures. According to the EU policies we need to develop a gender strategy and a GEP for 2023 - 2025, detailing actions, targets, and responsible persons (GE officer and GE delegates),

III. GE strategy and GEP

Based on the internal review and on the existing national and European policies and requirements, „C. D. Nenitzescu” Institute of Organic and Supramolecular (ICOS) management committed to develop the institute strategy for gender equality for 2023 - 2025, and the corresponding GEP. As such, within ICOS, a dedicated working group was assembled to develop the GE strategy and the GEP 2023 - 2025, while the function of GE officer will be created, alongside one GE delegate in each department, aiming to implement and monitor the GE strategy. The GE officer and delegates will set up, implement, monitor and evaluate the GEP, will provide support and tools to all participants in the- GEP implementation, will be involved in awareness-raising regarding the gender equality with ICOS and will assess the progress towards gender equality.

III.1 GE strategy

The GE Strategy comprises several areas of intervention and objectives for 2023 - 2025:

Areas of intervention	Objectives
1. Work-life balance and organisational culture	Promoting inclusive work-life balance policies and practices.
2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making positions	Promoting gender equality in leadership and decision-making positions.
3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	Reviewing selection procedures and remedying any biases in which gender would be systematically favored; ensuring both women and men have equal chances to develop their careers.
4. Integration of the gender dimension into research content	Promoting a gender perspective in research process and activity
5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment	Awareness-raising regarding the issue of equality and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity

III.2 GE Plan

The GE Plan at ICOS comprises, alongside the areas of intervention and objectives mentioned in GE strategy, the key actions, target audience, timeline, responsible persons, and indicators to measure progress.

Action/Measure

1. Supporting a balanced ratio between professional and personal life of ICOS staff.
2. Appointing GE delegates (GE officer and departments delegates), to ensure that workplace procedures and practices are in compliance with gender equality policies.
3. Ensuring equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities for all employees in the process of recruitment or career advancement. In this regard, the main criteria is represented by the scientific competence and performance, regardless of gender.
4. Promoting a gender perspective in research process and activity by means of awareness campaigns that promote diversity and inclusiveness and encourages prevention of discrimination.
5. Supporting information and education about GE policies by means of electronic tools, such as website or platform that also allows the reporting of sexual harassment or discrimination.

Target

All ICOS employees (researchers, technical and administrative staff)

Timeline

2023 - 2025

Indicators

Gender equality policies and procedures

Dedicated research institute electronic tools (website/platform) communicating informations related to GE policies.

Responsible

D, HR, GE officer

IV. Monitoring and evaluation of the GEP

The implementation of the GEP at „C. D. Nenitzescu” Institute of Organic and Supramolecular Chemistry and the progress towards the GE objectives are assessed through periodic meetings and monitored by the GE officer. The GE officer will be responsible for data collection and analysis, and will submit annual finding reports that will be further discussed with the research institute management. The conclusions regarding the implementation of the GEP and recommendations resulted from these meetings will also provide insights that will enable improvements on the GEP for the following year. Our target is to maintain the current situation. Nevertheless, if imbalances occur, remedial measures will be pursued.

Annual monitoring of the gender equality perception within ICOS, will be achieved by means of anonymous surveys. The review of progress reports will also include qualitative and quantitative data, that will ensure the tracking of the implementation of key actions.

Following its review by the research institute management (Board of Directors, GD, HoDs, SC), the periodic (annual) GE progress report is published on the research institute website.

Annex (in alphabetic order)

Council of Europe Gender Equality Commission,

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/gec1>

EU FESTA - Gender Issues in Recruitment, Appointment and Promotion Processes – Recommendations for a Gender Sensitive Application of Excellence Criteria,

https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/festa_gender_issues_recruitment_appointment_promotion.pdf

EU Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025,

https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en

EUA - Universities' Strategies and Approaches towards Diversity, Equity and Inclusion,

<https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/universities-39-strategies-and-approaches-towards-diversity-equity-and-inclusion.pdf>

EUCEN - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in European Higher Education Institutions,

https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/web_diversity%20equity%20and%20inclusion%20in%20european%20higher%20education%20institutions.pdf

European charter & code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers,

https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/ttf_goal_2_results_v1.0.pdf

European Institute for Gender Equality,

<https://eige.europa.eu/>

GARCIA – Mapping organizational work-life policies and practices,

https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/garcia_report_mapping_org_work-life_policies_practices.pdf

Guidelines for using gender-sensitive language in communication, research and administration,

https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/reutlingen_university_guidelines_for_using_gender-sensitive_language.pdf

Horizon Europe General Annexes,

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2021-2022/wp-13-general-annexes_horizon-2021-2022_en.pdf

Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffcb06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1>

LERU - Equality, diversity and inclusion at universities: the power of a systemic approach,
<https://www.leru.org/publications/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-at-universities>

Science Europe - Practical Guide TO Improving Gender Equality in Research Organisations,
https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/se_gender_practical-guide.pdf

Student evaluations of teaching (mostly) do not measure teaching effectiveness,
https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/science_open_research_student_eval_teaching_effectiveness.pdf