



CYENS
CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

2022-2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

Gender equality is a fundamental value of the CYENS Centre of Excellence and the European Union. Gender equality benefits research and innovation (R&I) by improving the quality and relevance of R&I to society, attracting, and retaining more diverse talent, and ensuring that everyone can maximize their potential in the workplace.

Gender equality in CYENS – Centre of Excellence means employees of all genders have access to the same rewards, opportunities and resources, including: equal pay and benefits for comparable roles with similar responsibilities, equal opportunities for promotions and career progression.

Gender equality is essential for the Centres' economic prosperity. CYENS – Centre of Excellence supports that gender equality is a human right and everyone should benefit from gender equality.

The GEP below is a set of commitments and actions that aim to promote gender equality in the Centre through institutional and cultural change.

2. STRUCTURE AND MAIN ACTIVITIES IN CYENS

CYENS Centre of Excellence as an organisation has established a committee for Diversity under the Human Resources Department in 2020 showing its commitment to creating all necessary conditions that will encourage and respect diversity, while ensuring dignity both in the workplace and in society. The mission of this committee is to promote the integration, diversity and equality and to eliminate all forms of discrimination at the Centre. The vision is to create a fair, safe and pleasant environment, where all employees, staff members and interns within and beyond their multiple identities, will feel supported, both in their professional and personal development. It is expected that the Committee will act as the liaising entity of the Centre regarding all institutional matters that fall under the DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) scope and play a strong role in the creation and development of the necessary DEI processes and mechanisms that will address these principles.

The environment of the Centre where researchers, non-research staff members and interns from many different backgrounds work together requires diversity to be one of the core principles of the organization.

CYENS acknowledges that any form of harassment including sexual harassment is based on the abuse of power and gender discrimination, therefore CYENS takes a zero-tolerance approach towards the issue, specifically acknowledging that sexual harassment impedes the implementation of equality in employment.

Furthermore, CYENS is fully committed to maintaining a well-functioning working and learning environment in which the dignity of each individual is fully protected and the personality of each and every one - employee, researcher, colleague and candidate is respected. Within this framework, the following principles apply:

- All employees and researchers have an obligation to comply with CYENS diversity and anti-discrimination policies
- Those who apply for work or admission to CYENS have the right to be treated with full dignity and respect
- Harassment/sexual harassment/bullying/mobbing will not be tolerated and will be severely punished

3. THE CYENS GENDER EQUALITY PLAN (GEP)

The CYENS GEP, described below, is a formal document approved by the Centres Governing Body (Board of Directors) and disseminated within the organisation. It demonstrates the Centre's commitment to gender equality, sets clear goals, outlines specific measures and adopts specific policies to achieve them.

1. Promoting and maintaining CYENS culture with equal opportunities for all

KEY AREAS	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	RESPONSIBLE BODY	GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) (ILO & UN)
1.1. Institutional Culture	Measure, acknowledge and raise awareness of any existing gender inequalities and sexism within CYENS	Further mapping of any existing issues and collecting gender- disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data from all CYENS Researchers and Administrative staff	Human Resource (HR)	10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status 10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality
		Analysing these data in an established Gender Report and suggesting measures for improvement	Gender Equality Committee	
		Disseminating of data analysis results among internal stakeholders and CYENS decision-makers	HR	

	Improve commitment to equality within the organisation	Aligning policies in the GEP with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the EU Legislation	Gender Equality Committee	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
		Based on the outputs derived from mapping, designing any necessary adaptations to CYENS rules and regulations and CYENS Strategic Plan in order to implement the GEP	Gender Equality Committee	
		Systematic monitoring of the implementation of the GEP measures and actions	Gender Equality Committee	
		Promoting the dissemination of CYENS best practices regarding gender equality within and outside the Centre	HR, assisted by Gender Equality Committee	
		Allocating funds from the Centre's budget for the implementation and sustainability of the GEP actions and measures and for the reinforcement of the Gender Equality Committee, which is responsible for monitoring the implementation	Finance and Accounting	
		Developing and implementing of a gender-sensitive language policy with non-sexist and inclusive language in all official documents and means of communication of the Centre (e.g., emails, social media, letters, press, documents etc.)	HR, assisted by Gender Equality Committee	
		Promoting excellence by aligning core CYENS activities with gender equality	EC, assisted by HR	

	Facilitate and maintain work-life balance for staff and students	Examining staff perceptions on their work-life balance and wellbeing in relation to their workplace through surveys in order to address the current issues and promote actions to tackle them	HR, assisted by Gender Equality Committee	10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality
		Developing and providing support for services that improve the quality of life and work, such as childcare (afternoon activities, summer school and extension of the nursery and kindergarten's working hours to accommodate parents), family members with disabilities, elderly family members, etc.	EC, assisted by HR	
		Developing regulations and policies to facilitate work, personal and family life balance (flexible working arrangements, remote learning, work from home)	HR	
		Ensuring that companies which provide outsourcing services to CYENS (such as cleaning and security services) comply with the Centres GEP policy	HR	
		Authorising researchers' and non-research personnel arrangements regarding attendance at workshops, seminars based on special circumstances of parenthood and pregnancy	HR	
		Collecting and submitting of anonymous, statistical data categorised by gender to the HR	HR	

2. Incorporating principles and practices of equal opportunities in recruitment, career development, promotions

KEY AREAS	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	RESPONSIBLE BODY	GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) (ILO & UN)
2.1. Recruitment	Implement procedures that address gender representation in appointment and recruitment	Promoting transparency and gender sensitivity throughout all phases of the recruitment and appointment procedures	HR	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
		Ensuring that non-sexist and inclusive language is used in all job advertisements (according to the CYENS GE policy) to attract a diverse group of applicants	HR	5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels and decision-making in political, economic and public life

		Ensuring that the Centre’s regulations and processes relating to applicant evaluation and recruitment do not involve any element of direct and/or indirect discrimination	HR	<p>5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels</p> <p>16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels</p>
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2.2. Promotions, advancement and career development	Promote advancement and promotion policies that foster gender equality	Mapping, analysing and mitigating the obstacles that prevent the access, permanence and promotion of women and men in the contexts of work	HR	8.5 By 2030, achieve productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
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	Overcome obstacles and difficulties for equal opportunities at all levels of the career ladder	Promoting transparency and gender sensitivity throughout all phases of promotion, advancement, and career development	EC, assisted by HR	16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
		Proposing a policy ensuring gender balance in all promotion committees (for both academic and non-academic staff)	HR, assisted by Gender Equality Committee	

2.3. Study	Overcome obstacles and difficulties for equal opportunities in study	Designing actions to tackle segregation in hirings, projects and its effects, considering specific needs of researchers and non-research staff at different levels within the Centre	HR	4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples
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		Addressing gender-related obstacles for advancement in early-stage career through mentoring	Education and Training Gender Equality Comm	and children in vulnerable situations
		Creating mentoring structures for the under-represented gender in specific fields of studies		5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
		Providing support for under-represented gender in specific fields (for example, women in STEM) through promoting role models		5.C Adopt and strengthen sound Policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

3. Promoting and ensuring equal participation and representation in the CYENS community and decision-making bodies

KEY AREAS	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	RESPONSIBLE BODY	GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) (ILO & UN)
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3.1. Leadership	Promote the participation and balanced representation of women in decision- making bodies	Promoting excellence through balanced gender representation in decision-making bodies	BoD / EC	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere 5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels and decision-making in political, economic and public life 5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels
		Reinforcing the balanced presence of women and men in leadership positions		
		Increasing understanding and awareness of critical gender barriers in access to leadership positions		
3.2. Student Community	Promote the participation of women in community involvement	Incorporating the gender perspective and encouraging the balanced presence of women and men in research’ activities, leadership and all departments	HR	

4. Embedding the gender perspective in Research and Innovation

KEY AREAS	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	RESPONSIBLE BODY	GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) (ILO & UN)
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4.1. Teaching and learning	Promote a gender diversity perspective in research and innovation	Providing guidelines, workshops, and training on how to integrate the gender perspective in research and innovation	HR, assisted by Education and Training	4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations
		Encouraging and acknowledging the incorporation of the gender perspective in researching scope of work and within the ID scope of work	Research Office	
4.2. Research	Promote a gender diversity perspective in research processes	Promoting gender diversity within research teams in line with the European Charter for researchers and the codes of ethics and conduct	Research Office	10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status 10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard
		Encouraging the successful integration of the gender perspective in research according to EU Funding Agencies	Research Office RSO HR	

5. Promoting an organization free of sexism, harassment, and gender violence

KEY AREAS	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	RESPONSIBLE BODY	GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) (ILO & UN)
5.1. Harassment	Promote measures and policies against sexual harassment and gender violence	Mapping the situation by analyzing existing incidents and conducting confidential research to identify them	HR	<p>16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere</p> <p>16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all</p> <p>16.B Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development</p> <p>8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment</p>
		Raising awareness to prevent and tackle sexist and gender- based violence situations in all Centre's activities		
		Disseminating existing codes of conduct, policies, procedures, and materials on the prevention of gender-based violence (CYENS Code of Conduct, Equality and Anti-discrimination Policy, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy, Procedure for Managing Complaints and Grievances, etc.)		
		Creating the necessary conditions that will encourage the staff and the researchers of the Centre's Community to report any gender- based violence cases		
5.2. Gender-based violence	Provide support to survivors of gender- based violence who work or study at the University	Providing mental/emotional support to gender-based violence survivors	HR	
		Creating mechanisms for alleviating and addressing the phenomenon of gender-based violence through a holistic approach		

Actions

A. Publication and official Endorsement of the GEP

The Centre uses a gender-neutral language in all the official documents, vacancy announcements, all internal and external communications such as the website, newsletters and the social media accounts.

B. Dedicated Resources

The Centre is committed to arrange activities, events, training with specific indicators monitoring the targets set by HR. The Centre will allocate sufficient resources to implement the GEP.

C. Data Collection and monitoring

The Centre will develop a comprehensive reporting system which will help monitor the objectives/targets set by the Centre.

D. Training / Awareness

Engaging the whole organisation in different levels and roles including the Executives, Managers, Researchers, non-research staff and interns. The Centre will ensure the employees are fully aware of GEP and the activities included in this document.

3. THEMATIC AREAS

3.1. Work-life Balance and Organizational culture

CYENS has developed an Employee Handbook where one can find detailed information such as the below:

- Parental Leave policies
- Flexible working time arrangements
- Support for caring responsibilities
- Advice and Support

3.2. Gender Balance in Leadership and decision making

CYENS Centre of Excellence, supports the increase in its talent pool for leadership roles by maintaining a balance of both genders in key decision-making roles.

3.3. Gender Equality in recruitment and Career Progression

CYENS tries to overcome the discrimination and the barriers while recruiting, selecting and career progression measures aiming to ensure that women and men get equal chances to develop and advance in their careers.

- Recruitment and promotion
 - Establishing a code of conduct for recruitment and promotion, which are clearly defined principles which help increase transparency and avoid unconscious biases.
 - Involving gender equality expertise in recruitment and promotion committees/departments.
 - Providing unconscious bias training for a committee of recruiters.
 - Increasing the number of potential women candidates by widely advertising for vacancies.

- Strongly identifying women in underrepresented fields.
- Evaluation and Appraisal criteria
 - Identifying criteria that are considered to be unbiased as much as possible.
 - Assessing soft skills as well as the outcomes of each individual regardless of the gender.
 - Accounting for the time frame of the achievements and the intensity of work carried out regardless of gender.
- Considering organisation-wide workload planning models to promote transparency and fairness.
- Ensuring that administrative responsibilities alongside Research responsibilities are supervised and marking workloads are transparent and are valued along with the outcomes.

3.4. Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment

- CYENS is very strict against gender-based violence including sexual harassment. Details could be found in the Employee Handbook.

The GEP is a strategic document that engages the whole of the Centre. The GEP of CYENS has the support and official commitment of senior leaders, and is developed with the active engagement of the whole Centre, including staff, students, and external partners, and involving both women and men, as well as non-binary people.

The engagement of the whole Centre will be achieved throughout the development of the GEP, in initial audits, reviews of the problem, establishing aims and objectives, reviewing, and establishing new ways of working and communicating the plan.

4. RESPONSIBLE BODIES

- Executive Committee (EC)
- Human Resources Office
- The Board of Directors
- The QAC can act as an Advisor when they are consulted

5. FUTURE STEPS

After forming the The Gender Equality Committee under the Human Resources, will be coordinating the implementation of the GEP. For this purpose, annual audits on the progress of the implementation of the GEP's measures will be performed by the HR Department and Executive Committee, and an Annual Gender Equality Report will be published. The monitoring process of the GEP's implementation will be based on quantitative and qualitative data. There will be an annual internal meeting to monitor whether the measures have been applied successfully and effectively, and make recommendations regarding any improvements and adaptations that need to take place.

Hence, additional measures may be suggested from the QAC which will be an advisory accordingly. The next steps include the design of a Gender Equality Policy along with a timeframe for implementation, taking into consideration the proposed strategic objectives and measures. The implementation process of the Gender Equality plan, including the shortcomings and successes, shall be recorded and taken into consideration when updating the Gender Equality Plan.

5.1. Gender Equality Strategy Plan

The Gender Equality Strategy Plan can be seen in the diagram below.

5.1.1. Planning

The planning phase involves the creating of a Gender Equality Committee who is responsible for the main activities of the plan;

- Objectives of each activity
- Specific actions to achieve each objective

- Set a timeline for each activity
- Allocate resources to implement each activity
- Define the responsible body / bodies for each activity
- Set a plan for the next steps; implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review
- The draft GEP is reviewed by the HR and together with the committee, finalises GEP.

5.2. Implementation

Once the GEP is finalised, the Committee presents the plan to the EC and once approved, the plan is implemented. Each responsible body is allocated with the activity objective and timeline. This phase involves setting up working groups to develop and implement new policies and procedures, awareness raising and training efforts, to build capacity and support for the GEP across the Centre.

5.3. Monitoring, evaluation, and review

Each responsible body is responsible to monitor the activities and ensure that actions are within timeline and objectives are continuously met. Ongoing review of findings and progress is required. Once a year, the committee is responsible to evaluate and review the activities and propose improvements and adjustments.



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