

# GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

2025-2027

Law and Internet Foundation

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### Glossary

**Gender** refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being female and male and to the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as to the relations between women and those between men. While “sex” refers to biological differences, the term “gender” focuses on roles, relations, power dynamics and inequalities that are socially created.<sup>1</sup>

**Gender Equality** “Equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys.”<sup>2</sup>

**Gender Discrimination** “Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”<sup>3</sup>

**Gender Gap** “Gap in any area between women and men in terms of their levels of participation, access, rights, remuneration or benefits.”<sup>4</sup>

**Gender Stereotypes** “Preconceived ideas whereby females and males are arbitrarily assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their gender.”<sup>5</sup>

**Gender Mainstreaming** “Systematic consideration of the differences between the conditions, situations and needs of

women and men in all policies and actions.”<sup>6</sup>

**Gender-Sensitive** refers to the ability to acknowledge and highlight existing gender differences, issues and inequalities, and consider them in the design and implementation of strategies and actions.<sup>7</sup>

**Intersectionality** is an analytical tool for studying, understanding and responding to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination.<sup>8</sup>

**Gender Analysis** is the critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect women, men, girls and boys in a given policy area, situation or context.<sup>9</sup>

**Sensitivity Training** refers to programs designed to increase awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues, including understanding and respecting differences in gender, culture, and identity.

**Sexual Harassment** is “any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature occurs, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality, 'Gender' (Gender Equality Glossary and Thesaurus, Term 1046) <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1046>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1059>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1090>.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1086>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1223>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1070>.

<sup>7</sup> UN-REDD Programme, 'Gender Sensitive' (UN-REDD Glossary) <https://www.un-redd.org/glossary/gender-sensitive>.

<sup>8</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality, 'Gender' (Gender Equality Glossary and Thesaurus, Term 1046) <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1050>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1055>.

<sup>10</sup> Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast).

## Introduction

**Law and Internet Foundation (LIF)** is a Bulgarian NGO & Research centre which supports and performs applied studies, scientific research, programmes and projects, provides consultancy and delivers trainings in the field of legal, technological, and social issues related to the use of information and communication technologies both in the public and private sectors.<sup>11</sup> One of the main goals of LIF is providing accessible activities to people no matter their gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity, cultural and religious background. We actively advocate for diversity, equality, and non-discrimination in all our projects and organisational practices. Furthermore, across various initiatives, we have placed specific focus on addressing gender-based discrimination, promoting gender equality, and creating inclusive digital and social environments. Through targeted research, training, and policy advocacy, LIF consistently works to mainstream gender perspectives and uphold human rights.

In order to ensure that the research LIF performs is of the highest quality, the team behind our organisation is open, well-adjusted, and committed to continuous learning, collaboration, and inclusivity. Our multidisciplinary experts bring diverse perspectives and experiences, enabling us to address complex societal challenges through innovative and evidence-based approaches. We actively foster a working culture grounded in respect, equality, and intersectionality, which informs both our internal operations and external engagements.

Gender equality is fundamental to fulfilling LIF's mission to advance the inclusive, rights-based, and socially responsible use of information and communication technologies. LIF's Gender Equality Plan (GEP), 2025–2027, reflects and builds upon the progress made in our previous plan (2022–2024), translating our ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and non-discrimination into clear, actionable measures that promote gender equality across all our projects, partnerships, and internal operations.

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<sup>11</sup> More at: <https://www.netlaw.bg/en/p/about-us>.

### Gender Equality Plan – What is it?

According to the European Commission (2021c), Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is “a set of commitments and actions that aim to promote gender equality in an organisation through a process of structural change.” A Gender Equality Plan consists of 3 elements:

- Conducting impact assessment to identify gender bias
- Identifying and implementing innovative strategies to correct any bias
- Setting targets and monitoring progress via indicators

### Objectives

- Foster equality
- Ensure gender balance in decision-making processes and bodies
- Integrate gender dimension in research content

**Our Gender Equality Plan** has helped us structure our approach towards being more gender inclusive. It has furthermore made it possible to focus on introducing an intersectional lens to any issue we work on. Having a thorough GEP has allowed us to pinpoint weaknesses in our internal processes and address them accordingly.

While creating this GEP, we have consulted our partners, looked over the practices of other experienced organisations and relied on the recommendations and guidance set by the European Institute on Gender Equality.<sup>12</sup> When identifying the objectives and measures we decided to base our GEP on, we looked over several considerations:<sup>13</sup>

- **Location** – being located in Bulgaria and Eastern Europe, we considered the cultural prejudice and stereotypes relevant to our region that could influence the access of women to research opportunities, as well as common work-based hardships individuals face based on their gender, sexuality, ethnicity and other marginalised identities.
- **Economical background** – we considered the relevant economic background and how it would influence gender-inclusion policies, for example whether unpaid internships would dissuade economically marginalised groups from applying, whether our family leave policies influence employment and family decisions of our staff, etc.
- **Policies** – we considered the relevant EU-wide, national, sectoral and organisational policies that were already in place and influenced the *status quo* of our organisation.
- **History** – we analysed the historical development of our organisation and how this may influence or even limit our understanding and openness to change in accordance with the goal of achieving a more inclusive and diverse environment.
- **Leadership and governance** – we recognised the strong influence our organisation’s approach to leadership and internal structure could have on the work atmosphere and openness to diversity, our organisation works on a non-hierarchical basis and this helps us achieve a friendly and accepting atmosphere among workers and cultivates more trust towards our founders and executive director, which in turn creates accountability and reliance.
- **Organisational culture** - we analysed our organisational culture in order to ensure we would be aware if there were any policies or measures that could cause resistance

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<sup>12</sup> EIGE, ‘Gender Equality in Academia and Research - GEAR tool’, available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear>.

<sup>13</sup> EIGE, ‘Gear Step-By-Step Guide For Research Organisations, Universities And Public Bodies - Step 1: Getting started’, available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear/step-step-guide/step-1>.

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and how to present these changes to our workers in a way that would be understood and well-accepted.

- **Size** – we considered how the size of our organisation would influence its structure and affect different measures, as well as how realistic their implementation would be, we found that our close-knit team would be well accepting of most proposed policies and thus the processes we adopted were to a large extent effective.

### Status Quo Assessment

A vital part in having an effective GEP is conducting beforehand a detailed assessment of the status quo at the time of creation of the plan. This assessment was conducted by our experts specialising in human rights law, who used their past experiences and knowledge in the field of gender equality and anti-discrimination policies. Their mandate and tasks were clearly defined by our managerial bodies in a way that would avoid any misconceptions and potential challenges during their work.

Our assessment focused on some key considerations:

- Applicable EU policies and recommendations;
- Applicable national policies and recommendations;
- Current practices of our organisation;
- Additionally, we distributed a survey among our employees to gain insights into their experiences. We focused on key indicators such as satisfaction with the work environment, perceptions of mutual respect, sensitivity to diversity, and opportunities for professional development. An analysis of these findings is provided at the end of each development area discussed below.

## Gender Equality Plan – Legal Basis

### European Legal Guidelines

#### **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)<sup>14</sup> –**

- *Article 8*: Gender equality must be mainstreamed in all policies.
- *Article 157*: Guarantees equal pay for equal work.

#### **EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025<sup>15</sup> –**

- Outlines strategic actions and encourages GEPs in research institutions and public bodies.
- Focuses on gender mainstreaming, equal leadership opportunities, closing gender pay gaps, combating gender-based violence, and promoting work-life balance.

#### **Horizon Europe Requirement (2022 onward)**

- Any public body or research organisation applying for Horizon Europe funding **must have a Gender Equality Plan** in place.
- Aims to ensure that gender equality becomes a core part of research culture and organisational structures.

### National Legal and Policy Guidelines

#### **Law on Equality between Women and Men (2016)<sup>16</sup>**

- The Law on Equality between Women and Men provides the legal foundation for the state's gender equality policy in Bulgaria.
- Aims to ensure equal treatment and opportunities for women and men in all public spheres
- Mainstreaming the principle of gender equality in the design, implementation, and evaluation of national, regional, and sectoral policies

#### **The National Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2021–2030)**

The National Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2021–2030)<sup>17</sup> is Bulgaria's key policy for promoting gender equality. Adopted in 2020, it focuses on:

- Equal economic independence
- Reducing the gender pay gap
- Balanced participation in decision-making
- Combating gender-based violence
- Challenging gender stereotypes

While not research-specific, it supports broader equality goals relevant to all sectors, including science and innovation. It's implemented through annual action plans with measurable targets and monitoring. The current action plan in place is the Action Plan for the Promotion of Equality Between Women and Men 2025-2026<sup>18</sup> which sets forth specific objectives and measures for the 2025-2026 year aimed at reducing gender disparities across various sectors,

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<sup>14</sup> Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union [2012] OJ C326/47.

<sup>15</sup> European Commission, *A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025* (Communication) COM(2020) 152 final <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0152>.

<sup>16</sup> Law on Equality between Women and Men, SG No. 33/26.04.2016 (Bulgaria).

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, National Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2021–2030) (2021) <https://mlsp.government.bg/uploads/41/ravni-vzmozhnosti/strategy-nsnrjm-2021-2030.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Action Plan for the Promotion of Equality Between Women and Men 2025–2026 (2024) <https://www.mlsp.government.bg/uploads/41/pkhurvsp/na-natsplan-2025-2026.pdf>.

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including employment, education, and health. The plan emphasises the importance of integrating gender perspectives into policymaking and promotes equal participation of women and men in all areas of public and private life.

### **The National Strategy for Research Development in Bulgaria 2017-2030<sup>19</sup>**

- Sets out the country's long-term vision for building a strong, innovative, and internationally competitive research environment. While it does not include specific gender equality measures, it recognises the importance of fair and transparent recruitment and promotion processes

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<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Education and Science, *National Strategy for Development of Scientific Research in the Republic of Bulgaria 2017–2030: Better Science for Better Bulgaria* (2017)  
[https://www.eufunds.bg/sites/default/files/uploads/opseig/docs/2020-05/1\\_ScienceStrategy\\_2030\\_BG.pdf](https://www.eufunds.bg/sites/default/files/uploads/opseig/docs/2020-05/1_ScienceStrategy_2030_BG.pdf).



### Area of Development 1: Work–life balance and organisational culture

Our organisation's main activities include research and working on various projects that aim to analyse and promote a large range of topics connected to the legal and ethical aspects of information and communication technologies. This line of work while extremely important, allows for a flexible working culture that prioritises the health and well-being of our experts. We create an open environment focused on self-development, better results and a good balance between work and personal life. Some of our **key principles** include:

- Open communication;
- Understanding each other's differences;
- Flexibility;
- Responsible work ethic;
- Prioritising mental health;
- Loyalty to our partners and our teammates.

These principles have helped us to establish a healthy working environment where professionals can grow and develop. However, there are still some objectives that we would like to work on in order to ensure our experts are content and satisfied. In addition, we have mitigated potential hardship that might be faced by any members of minority groups that work with us or would do so in the future.

These **objectives** are as follows:

- Providing the best system for parental leave for our team members;
- Providing enough support for the mental and physical well-being of our team members;
- Emphasising the importance of healthy living;
- Creating a work environment where experts do not suffer from unwarranted stress.

To achieve these objectives, we have established a number of measures we would like to apply:

- A clear system that would provide team members with clarity how they can take days-off and that would allow us to accommodate this effectively;
- Providing flexibility for study leaves to support continuous learning and professional development.
- Providing the experts with the ability to work from home;
- Organising team-buildings that would aim to reduce stress and create a friendly work environment;
- Making lunches a team activity where people can cool off from stress and socialise with each other;
- Turning our office space into an inviting environment – having pictures of our team, decorating it for different celebrations, encouraging team members to bring home-cooked treats to facilitate a feeling of homeliness, listening to songs together near the end of the workday to take tension off, etc.;
- Celebrating when our experts become parents and giving them enough time and resources instead of making them anxious whether this would influence their work security, special focus can be given to women who are often dissuading from starting a family as they are afraid how this would influence their career or on young fathers who could also be unsure whether their need to be with their children would be respected due to their gender and cultural prejudice;
- Discuss openly the mental challenges work can cause and prioritise the importance of mental well-being and a balanced lifestyle;

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- Providing multisport cards to facilitate the physical activity of our team members that would help their overall wellbeing;
- Respecting the particular needs of representatives of cultural, ethnical and religious minorities: special holidays during minority religion festivals, accommodating specific dietary practices, being flexible in relation to providing days-off for family gatherings for individuals with strong familiar ties based on their culture.
- Fostering an open and supportive environment where all team members are encouraged to share feedback or raise concerns, whether personal or work-related, with the leadership team in a safe, respectful, and confidential manner.

In our previous GEP, we placed particular emphasis on improving overall team satisfaction and supporting a healthy work/life balance. At that time, around 75% of team members reported feeling at ease in their workplace, and 70% felt they had a good work/life balance. Thanks to the measures outlined above, we have seen meaningful progress: current figures show that **83% of team members** now feel comfortable in their work environment, and **87% report a positive work/life balance**. Building on this momentum, our goal in the current plan is to further improve these outcomes and raise both indicators to over 90% by the end of the implementation period, ensuring a workplace culture that is consistently supportive, inclusive, and sustainable.

For the next two years, we aim to further reduce stress levels among our team, as we have identified that around 41% of employees experience some kind of stress. While this stress is not directly related to the office environment, colleagues, or management, it remains an important factor influencing overall well-being and productivity. Our goal is to lower this figure to below 30% by the end of the current plan period. To achieve this, we will continue promoting mental health, encouraging healthy work habits, and fostering a supportive, flexible work culture that helps our team manage both internal and external pressures more effectively.

The **responsibility** to overlook these processes lies on our managerial bodies and on our office manager. They will initiate the implementation of the applicable measures.

### Area of Development 2: Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

Our organisation **has women in leadership positions**, and this helps guarantee the decision-making process takes into consideration the marginalisation of women in the workforce and helps us adopt measures to ensure our female team members feel included and supported. However, we would still focus on some **key objectives**:

- Ensuring the decision-making process is considerate of the hardships women face in the workforce;
- Ensure that the decision-making process is through an intersectional lens that acknowledges that individuals often fall under a multitude of identities that may influence how they are perceived and what opportunities they are given;
- Ensure individuals feel safe and respected to raise any concerns they have to our executive leader;

The **measures** we would implement include:

- Consulting our experts, especially those of underrepresented voices, in order to ensure all views and interests have been considered before substantial decisions are made;
- Create channels and mechanisms where individuals can anonymously submit their complaints;
- Have socialising events between our team members and the heads of our organisation to ensure there is familiarity and individuals do not feel intimidated to address their supervisors.

Our commitment to **inclusive decision-making** has driven meaningful cultural progress within the organisation. Recent feedback indicates that **over 85% of team members feel comfortable raising concerns** and openly sharing aspects of their identity, such as culture, sexuality, and other personal characteristics. This represents an encouraging improvement from previous levels. Building on this progress, we will continue to **embed intersectionality** into all decision-making processes, ensuring that the diverse experiences and needs of all individuals are actively considered and addressed.

The **responsibility** to overlook these processes would lie mainly on our managerial bodies and executive director.

### Area of Development 3: Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

We believe we have created an efficient recruitment mechanism that allows us to help people, without prejudice to their gender, to show their strength during our selection process and start working in our organisation. Furthermore, individuals are later equally supported in their career progression in our structure. Still to protect this balance and to ensure individuals from underrepresented backgrounds also have equal opportunities we have focus on a number of **objectives**:

- Incentivise women, especially those from ethnical, religious, sexual and other minorities to apply for vacant positions in our organisation;
- Ensure our recruitment process does not discriminate directly or in-directly;
- Provide enough career progression opportunities for representatives of minorities in our structures;

To achieve this, we have focus on the following **measures**:

- Formulating our job offers in a way that does not subconsciously dissuade women or other underrepresented groups from applying;
- Ensuring our recruiters are aware of any implicit biases they may have;
- Ensuring our executives, recruiters, experts and others to have had sensitivity trainings on topics, such as religious tolerance, gender and sexual rights, etc.;
- Creating an accepting environment for minority representatives so they feel supported at work and can perform to their best capacity: allowing them to wear cultural and religious symbols at work, providing an open environment where they can share their culture and experiences, etc.

Our employees consistently demonstrate high levels of satisfaction and **inclusion** within the organisation, with recent surveys showing that **all team members** feel comfortable with the application and selection processes, highlighting continued progress in transparency and fairness. This builds on earlier achievements where **over 90% of team members reported feeling content** with their positions and accepted at work. While our previous objectives focused on hosting cultural events annually and providing yearly sensitivity training on anti-discrimination topics, **our current focus** is on expanding these training offerings and embedding discussions on diversity and inclusion more deeply into our organisational culture.

The **responsibility** to overlook this would lie on our managerial bodies, office manager and requirement officers.

### Area of Development 4: Integration of the gender dimension into our research and other activities

In order to ensure our research is objective and thorough we seek to include as many voices as possible during our research and other activities. The fact that our team consist of representatives of gender helps us ensure we have a comprehensive approach towards our topics of research. Furthermore, we always seek to work with partners and external experts that would be able to give us valuable insights and to moderate our work processes to ensure we have an intersectional approach and responsibly handle all elements of our work process. Still, we have pin-pointed the following **objectives** we seek to pursue:

- Including as many voices as possible and ensuring that on specific topics that influence gender and other minorities there are key representatives of said groups;
- Ensuring our researchers recognise potential biases they may have when conduct research and other activities;
- Ensuring our findings are comprehensive and objective.

The **measures** we would implement include:

- Providing sensitivity trainings for researchers that are taking part in discussions on sensitive topics;
- Seeking guidance from renowned minority voices in research fields when we address topics relevant to them;
- Ensuring we have a third-party that will overlook our work and findings in order to ensure it is objective and comprehensive;
- Giving back to minorities who have supported us during our work – promoting their voices and interests, acknowledging their contribution, providing them free trainings and including them in our events.

A continuous indicator of our progress in this area of development is **the consistently high** levels of satisfaction reported by our external experts, with **over 85%** expressing positive feedback on their collaboration with us. Furthermore, we have actively worked on various projects addressing the negative effects of digital technologies on women and other marginalised groups and are expanding our efforts to increase research in these areas. Even in projects where this is not the primary focus, we apply **a human-rights** lens and **gender mainstreaming** principles to ensure ethical guidelines on **diversity, non-discrimination, and responsible technology development** are consistently followed. This approach promotes diverse participation and provides clear guidance on addressing challenges related to inclusion, equity, and fairness. Moving forward, we will continue to embed intersectional approaches to ensure our work remains comprehensive, objective, and inclusive.

The **responsibility** to overlook this would lie mainly on our research team and the coordinators of our projects.

### Area of Development 5: Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Our team has worked on topics concerning sexual harassment and gender-based abuse, thus it is well versed in these topics and to a large extent this has helped us preserve a safe and supporting work environment. Still, we have found **key objectives** we would like to pursue:

- Ensuring our team members are aware of sensitive topics concerning gender-based violence and sexual harassment;
- Ensuring our understanding of gender-based issues is also from an intersectional perspective and that we acknowledge how racial, religious and other prejudice can influence these issues;
- Ensuring our experts are able to freely report any incidents they have experienced or witnessed;
- Providing adequate measures against offenders and creating a 'victim-centric' system for dealing with instances of abuse and harassment;
- With account to the prevalent biases in Bulgaria towards men victims of sexual abuse, we would emphasise that individuals without prejudice to their gender can be victims of sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

The **measures** we envision include:

- Creating an anonymous system for reporting;
- Creating clear codes of conduct that envision the obligations of our experts towards one another and the applicable penalties for any instances of harassment or abuse;
- Conducting trainings on topics such as how to stop sexual harassment at the workplace, differences in cultural understanding between team members that may lead to risks of microaggressions or unwanted sexual advances, etc.

Our organisation has maintained a safe and supportive work environment, with recent feedback indicating that **all team members currently feel safe** at work and report no experiences of gender-based violence or sexual harassment. Building on this positive foundation, we remain committed to further strengthening our efforts in this critical area. Key objectives continue to include **raising awareness of gender-based violence** and sexual harassment from an intersectional perspective, recognising how factors such as race, religion, and other prejudices can influence these issues, and ensuring that all team members feel empowered to report any incidents freely.

The **responsibility** to overlook this would lie mainly on executive and managerial bodies, as well as in particular on our office manager.

### Area of Development 6: Gender balance of audiences

An important aspect of our work is its role in sharing information and reaching relevant audiences. Many of the topics we address and activities we organise aim to raise social awareness or to inspire legislative change or for enacting better policies and practices. Thus, a key number of our activities include creating dissemination materials, organising trainings and events, etc. We aim to have a wide audience that consists of all groups of society.

To achieve this, we have focused on **two key objectives**:

- Reaching as many people as possible on a multitude of social media platforms and where appropriate through traditional media;
- Making our content and events as accessible as possible for diverse audiences no matter their professional background, level of education and other similar characteristics.

The **measures** we have envisioned are as follows:

- Using accessible language for the informative materials we create;
- Where the topic calls for professional language and difficult terminology, using clarifications and disclaimers in order to guide the reader in case they may become lost in the messaging;
- Tackling diverse topics and issues to ensure we are able to reach interested groups from different fields;
- Analysing whether certain language or style of writing will dissuade certain reader groups from engaging with our materials, for example whether certain STEM terminology may intimidate female audiences, due to the systemic barriers that have made it difficult for them to enter these fields or for example how to tailor some of our topics concerning sexual abuse online towards male audiences without prejudice to them and their experience;
- Using all appropriate channels to promote events or topics in order to reach wide audiences;
- Using past contacts in order to reach new target groups;
- Trying to foster and preserve existing target groups that have worked with us and are interested in our topics and activities – sending them informative content if they have consented to such updates, inviting them to follow events, etc.;
- Analysing the demography, we have managed to reach, and seeing if we should work to include underrepresented groups;
- Asking for feedback after events in order to gain insights how to better our communication approach;
- Contacting any advocacy groups for different minorities to help us promote events and to share materials if the topics concern those groups or as a whole or if their engagement would help us have a more comprehensive understanding of the issues, such groups could include for example women or men from ethnical minorities, men victims of sexual abuse, women or men with disabilities, etc.
- Ensuring gender mainstreaming throughout all of our work and projects by conducting gender impact assessments, applying a gender lens to data collection and decision-making processes, and aligning with international gender equality standards and best practices.

We continuously refine our communication by monitoring audience diversity, gathering feedback, and partnering with other organisations to ensure our outreach effectively engages underrepresented communities and addresses their unique needs. Our goal for this GEP time

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period is to have at least 25% of audiences come from targeted groups relevant to the topics discussed, alongside striving for equal representation between female and male participants. These indicators will help us measure the inclusivity and reach of our dissemination efforts.

The **responsibility** to overlook this would lie mainly on our research team and the coordinators of our projects.



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### Evaluation

To ensure this GEP is being effectively applied we will introduce **annual evaluations** during the period of this plan. These will be conducted by our office manager, with the help of our human rights experts. If LIF Executive Director decides that it is needed, the organisation can seek further assistance from external experts on gender-based research and the way it can be further improved.

In order for this plan to be considered efficiently applied, after the first year the requirements under all objectives and indicators must be satisfied at **minimum 40%**. After the second year, they must be accomplished **at 100%**, however if this is not the case, we would aim for them to reach **80%**, with the remaining requirements having to be effectively worked on and fulfilled **in the following 3 months** after the end of the second year.

After each evaluation, the team that conducted it must create and disclose a **report** on shortcomings and developments. They must furthermore elaborate on **what measures must be taken in addition** to those already pursued to ensure the plan is effectively applied. These findings must be presented to the managerial bodies and the Executive Director.

### ANNEX 1: Example questions to be used during evaluation

**Preliminary remark:** These are only points of reference, the evaluating team have full discretion how to conduct their analysis, the only form of supervision could come from the executive director of LIF.

#### ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE

**Remark 1:** We **strongly advice** that this questionnaire is distributed to **all team members** no matter their position and is to be filled at their discretion through an **anonymous online** form.

**Remark 2:** We **strongly advice** that the team conducting the evaluation emphasises that the answers under this questionnaire **would not be traced to the individual** that submitted them and **would not be able to influence them**.

**Remark 3:** We **strongly advice** that if this questionnaire is to be modified, the evaluation team should continue to prioritise using **neutral and inclusive language** and should avoid including points that may strengthen unconscious biases.

1. Do you feel stressed at work?
2. How would you describe the work environment in the office of your organisation?
3. Are your needs for leisure and days-off well respected?
4. Are you given enough flexibility and opportunities for remote work?
5. Is your office and supervisor understanding of your needs in relation to your cultural, religious, gender, sexual, etc. identity?
6. Do you feel your work is in conflict with your family life?
7. Would you say that men and women are given equally challenging tasks in your organisation? If not, why so?
8. Are there women in leadership positions in your organisation? Do they have the same authority as men in similar roles? If not, why so?
9. Do you feel satisfied with your current role?
10. Do you believe you are given enough opportunities to grow in the ranks of your organisation?
11. Do you feel that women are given enough opportunities for additional work and skill-related trainings?
12. Did you feel comfortable with the selection process when you applied for your position?
13. Do you believe your organisation provides enough sensitivity trainings?
14. Do you feel comfortable expressing your gender, sexual, ethnical, religious, cultural or other identity at your workplace? Do you feel comfortable expressing it in front of your supervisors?
15. Do you feel the topics you research address important societal questions? Does our research consider the influence of these topics on gender and other identity-based minorities?
16. Do you gain enough insights from representatives of minority groups when you address topics linked to said groups?
17. Have you witnessed sexual harassment at your workplace?
18. Have you been a victim of sexual harassment at your workplace? Have you suffered from other forms of prejudice and/or microaggressions?
19. Do you feel comfortable filing complaints for harassment and abuse at the workplace? If not, why so?
20. What would you change in order to ensure gender and other identity-based minorities are supported at your workplace?



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