

# EUN GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

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04 September 2025





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## 1. Introduction

EUN Partnership aisbl ('EUN') is actively committed to promoting gender equality and fostering an inclusive, respectful and supportive working environment for all its staff. Beyond complying with the requirements of the Horizon Europe programme, in line with the guidelines of the European Commission's gender equality plan, EUN adheres to universal principles and international best practices in the field of equality.

As an organisation based in Belgium and a recipient of European funding, EUN defends the fundamental right of every individual to live and work free from violence, harassment and discrimination. This commitment is accompanied by the implementation of robust, transparent procedures that comply with European and Belgian legislation.

This Policy has been designed to reinforce our commitment to a fair, inclusive and diverse workplace. It complements our current human resources policy by providing a clear framework for defining, communicating and evaluating our gender equality objectives and actions within the organisation.

Furthermore, this Policy is a concise reference document, which is essential for our participation in national and European calls for proposals, where a formal commitment to equality may be required. It reflects our desire to take concrete action to advance gender equality and to make our commitments visible to our partners, donors and stakeholders.

## 2. Objectives of the Gender Equality Policy

- No gender discrimination in management and decision-making roles through action items outlined in Section 3 of this Policy.
- Ensuring transparent and inclusive recruitment and promotion processes as described under Section 3 of this Policy.
- Promoting work-life balance and flexible working arrangements as described under Section 3 of this Policy.
- Combatting gender-based violence at the organisation level through measures defined under section 4 of this Policy.
- Raising awareness across the organization of the key principles and expectations related to gender equality, as outlined in Section 6 of this Policy.
- Serving as a reference document for integrating gender equality aspects into the content of our Horizon projects and/or proposals, where applicable.

## 3. Human Resources practices and Current Gender Equality Statistics at EUN

### 3.1. Recruitment practices

At EUN, we are committed to ensuring fair, inclusive and diversity-friendly recruitment practices. At EUN, our recruitment practices actively seek to fight discrimination and to ensure fairness and equal access to

new positions and to promotions within the organisation. Our goal is to ensure equal treatment for all candidates, regardless of their gender, origin, age, sexual orientation, disability or any other personal characteristic. We are committed to recruiting solely based on skills, experience and potential, to foster an inclusive, respectful and diverse working environment. This approach is part of our commitment to be a fair and responsible organization. To this end, we have implemented several measures during various stages of the recruitment process.

At each stage of the recruitment process, a trained HR representative is part of each recruitment process. Their presence help ensure consistency, uphold inclusive practices, and mitigate the impact of potential bias during key stages of recruitment.

Before the interview process:

- Using inclusive wording in job postings by avoiding the use of gender language, for example, replace the pronoun of “he” or “she” to remain neutral or use a no-gender title like “Communication Officer”

During the interview process:

- The recruitment panels ensure an impartial evaluation of all CVs, with no gender-based discrimination.
- Avoiding discriminatory questions (e.g. related to children, pregnancy desire, gender, age, ...)
- Avoiding questions about candidate's salary in interviews, to avoid reinforcing existing pay disparities

### 3.2. Equal pay

At EUN, we are actively committed to ensuring gender pay equity. Our recruitment practices aim not only to ensure fair treatment for all employees with equivalent level of responsibilities, but also to have no pay gap at all. This objective reflects our desire to promote a fair, inclusive and respectful professional environment in which everyone, regardless of gender, is recognised and remunerated according to their true value, skills, expertise and competences. We consider this approach to be essential to the cohesion and sustainable performance of our organisation.

### 3.3. Working conditions and work-life balance

EUN is committed to promoting work-life balance, fostering diversity and inclusion across the organization, and supporting the well-being of its employees. To achieve this, EUN commits to fulfil the following actions:

- Flexible and adaptable working environment: we offer all employees a flexible and adaptable working environment. Each employee can choose from 18 arrival and departure time slots to better balance their professional and personal responsibilities.
- Work from home: employees can work from home up to three days per week and benefit from occasional flexibility based on their individual needs, for instance, if the employee has a medical

appointment with a specialist where availability is limited, or if the employee must stay at home for family reasons. All staff, including interns, regardless of gender or position, benefit from this flexible working arrangement.

- Work from abroad: employees can work 20 days from abroad. This benefit is designed to support our international staff, many of whom are EU nationals working away from their home countries and families. This option is also available to our interns on a six-month internship, with the possibility of teleworking for up to 10 days from abroad
- Dedicated room for breastfeeding: we provide a dedicated room that can be used by breastfeeding employees (the Dewey meeting room).
- Parental leave: as an employer, we actively support the use of parental leave and time credit schemes to help each employee adapt their work schedule to their personal and family life.
- Training opportunities: We also encourage participation in individual and collective internal and external training opportunities, enabling all employees to develop their skills and advance professionally, regardless of gender.

### 3.4. Staff and Gender Statistics

Please refer to Annex – Staff and Gender Statistics for the most up-to-date gender statistics among EUN employees.

## 4. Measures Against Gender-Based Violence and Promotion of Diversity and Inclusion

### 4.1. Existing Mechanisms for psychosocial risks

EUN has established procedures and dedicated resources to ensure that complaints related to gender-based violence or harassment are addressed, these measures stem from legal obligations to ensure the prevention of psychosocial risks:

- Easily accessible: Reporting mechanisms are visible, easy to navigate, and inclusive.
- Confidential: Information shared during the complaint process is handled with the highest level of discretion, in accordance with privacy laws (e.g. GDPR).
- Timely and impartial: Complaints are addressed without undue delay by dedicated and trained personnel who are independent of the case.
- Victim-centered: Processes ensure psychological safety and dignity for those reporting.
- Non-retaliatory: Complainants and witnesses are protected from retaliation or adverse consequences.

- Monitored for improvement: Regular audits are conducted to review the effectiveness of the mechanisms, and anonymous data is used to inform policy adjustments and training needs.

To that effect, the following mechanisms have been established. All these reporting channels address complaints from staff members facing gender-based violence, harassment, or discrimination, among other matters.

#### **a. Psychosocial prevention counsellor (External)**

EUN has designated a psychosocial prevention counsellor to fulfil various roles as regards prevention of psychosocial risks. The counsellor may take part in risk analysis and the drawing up of preventive measures and receive informal and formal requests for psychosocial intervention from staff who declare themselves to be victims of psychosocial risk.

This role is fulfilled by a counsellor from an external service for prevention and protection at work—CESI Prévention et Protection a.s.b.l.

The name and contact details of the psychosocial prevention counsellor are prominently displayed on EUN's intranet and in working regulations.

#### **b. Confidential Counsellor (Internal)**

A staff member, equipped with appropriate training and assured independence, has been appointed to serve as a confidential counsellor. This individual is responsible for receiving and advising staff members who feel they are experiencing conflict, stress, harassment, or discrimination. Bound by professional confidentiality, the counsellor provides a safe and supportive space, offering confidential advice, guidance, and assistance with informal resolution.

In addition to handling individual cases, the counsellor contributes to broader prevention efforts and anonymously reports patterns of repeated incidents to relevant external services. While line managers remain the first point of contact for general well-being concerns, staff may also directly approach the confidential counsellor, who ensures gender-sensitive, victim-centered responses to all complaints.

The name and contact details of the confidential counsellor are prominently displayed on our intranet and in working regulations.

#### **c. Psychological Support Hotline (External)**

The external service for prevention and protection at work (CESI) offers a psychological support service for staff and family members living at the same address. This service is available for a range of situations, including cases of harassment, which individuals may prefer to discuss with an external professional in a confidential setting.

#### **e. Register for acts of third parties (Internal +External)**

EUN has established a register to record acts of violence, psychological harassment, or sexual harassment committed by third parties. The purpose of this register is to assist EUN management in implementing

appropriate preventive measures against such acts perpetrated by external parties, including clients, vendors, and project partners.

The register documents the nature and extent of these incidents, and the information collected are taken into account during the annual evaluation of prevention measures related to psychosocial risks and are reported once per year to the line manager meeting if needed.

## 4.2. Existing Internal Policies

EUN has established a number of internal policies which address, among other matters, anti-discrimination, the prevention of harassment, workplace well-being, diversity, inclusion, and gender-based violence and all are found in the working regulations.

### a. Code of Conduct

EUN has adopted a Code of Conduct that outlines our zero-tolerance approach toward all forms of harassment and discrimination. This document clearly states that EUN management and Human Resources treat all staff members fairly, politely, and courteously, and respect all member's differences and experiences. EUN doesn't discriminate against any person, nor it engage in any activity that could constitute sexual or psychological harassment or bullying under applicable legislation.

The Code of Conduct is:

- Disseminated to all staff
- Included in induction materials
- Periodically updated, in consultation with staff and legal manager, to reflect evolving norms and legislation

### b. The Working Regulations

The Working Regulations include a dedicated annex on the Prevention of Psychosocial Risks at Work Including Stress, Violence and Psychological or Sexual Harassment at Work.

The Working Regulations:

- Define psychosocial risks, including all forms of harassment (physical, sexual, psychological) and discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, disability, or any other protected characteristic.
- Clarify the rights and responsibilities of both staff and the management of EUN in preventing and responding to psychosocial risks at work.
- Outline measures to prevent psychosocial risks, an internal procedure for requesting psychosocial intervention.
- Set out sanctions in case of violations (meeting with HR, warning by registered letter, dismissal, ...)

## 5. Monitoring and Evaluation of this Policy

- Annual collection and analysis of gender-related statistics.
- Annual progress reports, based on the annual review of the staff to monitor implementation and adjust this Policy accordingly. These reports will be reviewed in the last management meeting of the year.
- Regular updates of the Policy (every 2–3 years) based on findings of the reports and changing organizational needs.

## 6. Commitment

This document presents the practices and procedures established by EUN, as outlined above, to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence. This Policy builds on those foundations, reaffirming our commitment to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and equitable work environment for all staff, regardless of gender.

Moving forward, EUN is committed to continuing the implementation of these existing practices. Gender equality will continue to remain as a priority focus for each EUN employee. Annual progress reviews will be conducted to monitor outcomes, identify any shortcomings, and inform the development or streamlining of additional measures where necessary.

This Policy serves as an awareness-raising tool, reinforcing key principles and expectations related to gender equality across the organization. Additionally, certain other types of awareness-raising activities, such as One Voice sessions and/or dedicated trainings on gender equality, inclusive working environment and unconscious gender bias will be implemented for all staff and decision-makers. These initiatives aim to maintain sensitivity to gender equality issues, while also equipping participants with the knowledge and skills needed to actively support gender equality goals. When planning and delivering the training sessions, the Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans will be followed.

## 7. Approval and Communication

This Gender Equality Policy has been approved by EUN's management and by EUN's Executive Director on 02/09/2025 and published on EUN's intranet accessible by all staff members as well as EUN's corporate website.

All EUN employees will be informed that delivering the commitments and actions outlined in the Policy is a shared responsibility across all levels of the organization. Each staff member will be held accountable for the implementation of the Policy within their respective areas of work.

# References

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1. Gender equality in research and innovation

[https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-research-and-innovation/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-research-and-innovation/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en)

2. Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans

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

3. Gender Equality: a strengthened commitment in Horizon Europe, Factsheet,

<https://op.europa.eu/en/web/eu-law-and-publications/publication-detail/-/publication/51704c8d-ca5f-11eb-84ce-01aa75ed71a1>

4. [Après le Luxembourg, la Belgique est le pays européen avec l'écart salarial le plus bas | Statbel](#)

# Annex- Staff and Gender Statistics

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## EUN Situation (based on data as of 31 December 2024)

As part of our strong commitment to promote gender equality at EUN, we pay close attention to the representation of women and men across our workforce.

The organisation currently employs **89.5 full-time equivalent**, distributed as follows:

- **66.4 women** (approximately **74%** of the workforce)
- **23.1 men** (approximately **26%**)

This strong female predominance can be partially attributed to our recruitment data, which shows that most applications we receive come from women.

In terms of progression, here is the current breakdown by gender, regardless of the type of position held:

- **at level 2**, there are 25 women for 6 men.
- **at level 3**, 16 women for 6 men.
- **at level 4**, 16 women for 5 men.

These figures illustrate a concrete commitment to gender equality, with a marked female presence in positions of responsibility.

At the **management level**, the distribution is nearly equal, with a **slight female majority (55.6%), 5 women for 4 men**.



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