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Εθνικό Δίκτυο Υποδομών Τεχνολογίας και Έρευνας

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National Infrastructures for Research and Technology

GRNET S.A. – National Infrastructures for Research and Technology S.A

Gender Equality Action Plan

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1. Purpose and scope

Gender equality is a fundamental human right for the development of societies and the full integration of every individual, regardless of gender. The concept of gender equality translates into equal rights, freedoms and opportunities for all genders, for the purpose of promoting assessment, recognition and participation on equal terms in the entire range of public and private life. In recent year, such concept has been in the center of attention and has become an important goal of companies and organizations at an international level.

Taking into account the essential contribution of companies towards a democratic and inclusive society, as well as the importance of diversity - especially as it relates to gender - for the balance and development of companies, the National Infrastructures for Research and Technology (hereinafter "GRNET") addresses the issue with great care.

As a technology body with significant influence in the Greek public sector, it is of paramount importance for GRNET to include gender equality in its daily operation in order to be successful in its mission.

GRNET provides advanced network, cloud computing and IT services infrastructures to academic and research institutions, to educational organizations of all levels and to entities of the public, wider public and private sector. It has a key role as coordinator of all digital infrastructures for Education and Research.

In addition, it advises the Ministry of Digital Governance in matters of design and upgrade of advanced information systems. It contributes to the promotion and implementation of the strategic objectives of the Ministry of Digital Governance, with in-depth analyses, technological studies, model solutions and special know-how; it designs and develops advanced information systems and infrastructures to achieve the Digital Transformation of the country.

It advises and supports the State, with: the design of advanced information systems and infrastructures, the design, development and maintenance of advanced computing & network infrastructures and services, the pan-Hellenic fiber optic network, data centers, the high performance computing system (HPC-ARIS), the operation of the National Competence Center -EuroCC-Greece HPC Hub, the operation, development and promotion of the National Academy of Digital Competencies, the coordination of the project "Digital Governance Innovation Hub'



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(DigiGov InnoHub), aiming to join the European Digital Innovation Hubs by supporting innovation at both a National and European level, the coordination and participation in Open Science projects and the participation in configuring and shaping a national strategy for Artificial Intelligence.

It conducts technological Research and Development (R&D) in telecommunication networks and computing services matters. It implements and manages National, European and International Projects. It provides international interconnectivity through the pan-European GÉANT network, and is the National Research and Education Network (NREN).

It manages the Greek Internet Exchange (GR-IX), a national infrastructure that interconnects the most important internet companies operating in Greece (e.g. Internet service providers, cloud, hosting, VoIP, etc.).

Fostering equality and tolerance, regardless of gender or cultural identity is a prerequisite in GRNET's values, in response to modern requirements and in line with the plans elaborated both on a national (National Gender Equality Action Plan for 2021-2025) and on a European level (Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025, Gender equality in the European Research Area).

The goal of gender equality makes a substantial contribution to improving people's well-being. During the 20th century, a significant progress has been made towards achieving gender equality. However, still much remains to be done in the 21st century too.

GRNET's Gender Equality Action Plan presents an overview of the concept and how genders are treated within the company, with the aim of strengthening equality in all company projects and activities. In our view, managing gender matters in an equitable manner contributes to social and economic well-being, reduces the possibility of a gender related harassment, strengthens people's ties to the company, enhancing employees' and partners' well-being o as well as the company effectiveness.

As it becomes apparent, gender matters play a key role in GRNET's areas of activity and the company plan. The Gender Equality Action Plan covers all areas of GRNET's activity and applies to all members of its human resources, regardless of employment relationship, position and role in the company, as well as gender identity.



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2. Definitions

Gender: The biological characteristics of individuals with regard to their reproductive organs and functions.

Gender identity: The social identity of a person with regard to gender, which may vary in place and time, but also among different cultures. Gender identity differs from gender, whereas it is noted that it is not predetermined by biology or anatomy.

Gender Equality: The state in which persons of all genders and gender identities are free to develop their personal skills and make decisions without the constraints imposed by rigidly defined social roles. Different individual behaviours, expectations and needs are taken into account and assessed in an equal manner.

Equal opportunities for people of all genders and gender identities evidence the absence of gender-based barriers to economic, political and social participation.

The gender dimension includes the ways in which the conditions, needs and challenges may vary for different individuals according to their gender/gender identity, with a view to eliminating inequalities and the perpetuation thereof, as well as to promoting gender equality within a particular policy, plan or process.

Gender related prejudices are often the unintentional and implicit differentiation between persons of different genders/gender identities, by ranking certain gender/gender identity higher than the rest within a certain context, as a result of gender related stereotypes.

Gender balance refers to human resources and the equal participation of persons of all genders and gender identities in every company activity, plan and project.

Intersectional factors such as national or ethnic origin, age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, special needs, combined with gender may shape the opinions of an individual or a group of individuals, influencing the form of discrimination and inequality.

Women's empowerment is the process through which women regain control over their lives and gain the ability to make strategic decisions.

Gender analysis is the assessment of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights affect people of all genders/gender identities within a particular context.



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Human Resources: All GRNET employees and partners, regardless of employment relationship, position, role within the company and sexual identity. It includes employees with fixed or open-ended contracts, the management, external partners, partners under project or service contracts etc.

3. Legal Framework

A. International legal framework

In 1948, for the first time in history, the United Nations International Declaration of Human Rights, in its first article reading "all men are born free and equal in dignity and rights", established equality between genders as a fundamental right.

The International Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030 was adopted in 2015 by all member states of the European Union and the United States of America. All 17 international goals set out therein are inspired by gender equality. Additionally, Sustainable Development Goal 5 "to achieve gender equality and strengthen the rights of women and girls" is dedicated to gender equality. Paragraph 20 of the International Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030 stresses the need to bridge gender gaps and strengthen gender equality. Also, a sustainable development indicator (5.C.1.) relates to gender budgeting.

B. European Union (EU) legal framework

Gender equality is a concept of capital significance in EU and is explicitly referred to in the shared values on which the Union was founded.

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights prohibits discrimination in all areas of activity and acknowledges the right to gender equality, encouraging actions to promote it.

The Commission, since 1996, has adopted a 'dual approach' towards the realization of gender equality. The 'dual approach' includes adopting a gender approach to all policies, while implementing specific measures to prevent, eliminate and address gender inequalities.

Gender equality in EU is protected under the following texts:

• Articles 2 and 3(3) of the Treaty of the European Union (TEU), articles 21 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and articles 8 and 157 of the Treaty on the



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Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) establish equality between men and women.

Article 157 paragraphs 1 and 2 of TFEU stipulate that: "Each member state ensures application of the principle of equal pay between male and female workers for equal work or work of equal value". "Pay" means the ordinary, basic or minimum wage or salary and any additional emoluments whatsoever, payable directly or indirectly, whether in cash or in kind, by the employer to the worker and arising out of the worker's employment. Equal pay, without gender based discrimination means: a) that the remuneration provided for similar work, at a flat rate is determined on the basis of the same rate, b) that the remuneration for work paid on time basis is same for a similar work position".

EU Chapter on Fundamental Rights

- Article 21 paragraph 1 sets outs that: "Any discrimination based on grounds such as gender race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership to a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited".
- Article 23 provides that: "Equality between women and men must be ensured in all areas, including employment, work and pay. The principle of equality shall not prevent the maintenance or adoption of measures providing for specific advantages in favor of the under-represented gender"
- The Treaty of Lisbon contains a commitment for gender equality through Declaration no. 19.
- The EU Economic Development Policy (Europe 2020) aims to increase the participation of women in the labor market.
- The Barcelona Objectives include a specific target for childcare to facilitate work-life balance for men and women.
- A number of Directives, including:
 - Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU;



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- -Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC;
- Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Pparliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC;
- 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);
- Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services;
- -Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation ('the Employment Equality Directive');
- Council Directive 96/34/EC of 3 June 1996 on the framework agreement on parental leave concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC;
- Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding;
- Council Directive 79/7/EEC of 19 December 1978 on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security
- Council Directive 76/207/EEC of 9 February 1976 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions;



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- Council Directive 75/117/EEC of 10 February 1975 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women.

Pay inequalities and diversity in organizational structures are also priorities for the Commission, which are directly linked to EU funding targets. These priorities have been established:

- In the legally binding Directive 2014/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 amending Directive 2013/34/EU as regards disclosure of non-financial and diversity information by certain large undertakings and groups (A text presenting interest with regards to EEA);
- In the non-binding Recommendation 2014/124/EU on strengthening the principle of equal pay between men and women through transparency; and
- In the EU Action Plan 2017-2019 on "tackling the gender pay gap".

The Strategic Engagement for gender equality 2016-2019 framework highlighted that EU funds are the Union's key tool for fostering and promoting gender equality, through:

- continuous monitoring and support to Member States to achieve the Barcelona Targets on childcare;
- taking into account public consultations on work-life balance;
- strengthening diversity platforms to support companies with the aim of increasing women's participation in the labor market,
- the integration of the gender dimension in the European Agenda on Migration regarding the obstacles, immigrant women are faced with in terms of work,
- enhancing awareness for the promotion of female entrepreneurship.

The Gender Equality Pact 2011-2020 consisted of the following gender equality measures:

- eliminating pay inequality and combating gender discrimination in the labor market;
- promoting work-life balance for men and women;
- addressing all forms of violence against women.

The European Pillar of Social Rights (2017) set out the framework for achieving better working and living conditions in the EU. It focusses on three main areas: equal



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opportunities and access to the labor market (including principle no. 2 'gender equality'), fair working conditions, social protection and inclusion.

The LGBTI Equality Strategy 2020-2025 adopted by the Commission also includes important EU initiatives to strengthen gender equality and paves the way to the future, becoming a global model.

The European Commission (EU) (European Commission, 2021) introduces four fundamental requirements (or "building blocks") that any Gender Equality Plan (GEP) should meet:

- I. . A formal document signed by top management, and disseminated within the institution. It should demonstrate a commitment to gender equality, set clear goals and detailed actions and measures to achieve them.
- II. Dedicated resources: Resources for the design, implementation, and monitoring of GEP may include funding for specific positions as well as earmarked working time for management and administrative staff.
- III. Arrangements for data collection and monitoring: GEP must be evidence-based and founded on gender or gender-disaggregated baseline data collected across all staff categories. This data should inform the GEP's objectives and targets, indicators, and continuous progress evaluation.
- IV. Training and capacity-building: implementation of informative actions, raising awareness through workshops and communication activities as well as training and education on gender equality and unconscious gender biases among staff, management and those responsible for decision making, are required.

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https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en#gender-equality-plans-as-an-eligibility-criterion-in-horizon-europe

C. The Greek legal framework

Greek legislation also includes important provisions on gender equality. These are as follows:



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Constitution

- Article 4 paragraph 2 sets out: "Greek men and women have equal rights and obligations".
- Article 22 paragraph 1b provides: "All workers, regardless of gender or other discrimination, have the right to equal pay for work of equal value."
- Article 116 paragraph 2 sets out that: "Positive measures aimed at promoting equality between men and women do not constitute discrimination on grounds of gender. The State takes measures to eliminate existing inequalities in practice, especially those that impair women."

Legislation

- ❖ Law 4808/2021 "For the Protection of Labor Establishment of an Independent Authority "Labor Inspection" - Ratification of Convention 190 of the International Labor Organization for the Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work - Ratification of Convention 187 of the International Labor Organization for the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health− Incorporation of Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the balance between professional and private life, other provisions of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and other urgent arrangements".
- **❖** Law 4604/2019 "On the promotion of true gender equality, etc.".
- Law 4443/2016 "I) Incorporation of Directive 2000/43/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of gender or ethnic origin, Directive 2000/78/EC on the establishment of a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, and Directive 2014/54/EU on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred to workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers",
- Law 4097/2012 "Application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity" Transposing Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council", Directive 86/613/EEC had not been transposed.
- ❖ Law 3896/2010 "Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Matters of Employment and Occupation. Alignment/compaliance of existing legislation with Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council".



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- Law 3769/2009 "Implementation of the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services".
- Law 3488/2006 "Implementation of the principle of equal treatment of men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions"
- ❖ Presidential Decree 176/1997 on "Measures to improve safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding in accordance with Directive 92/85/EEC"
- Law 1483/1984 on "Protecting and facilitating workers with family responsibilities Amendments and improvements to labor laws"
- Law 1414/1984 on "Application of the principle of gender equality in employment relations and other provisions"
- ❖ National General Collective Labor Agreements (NGCAs).
- Other relevant national laws
- ❖ Law 4531/2018 (Government Gazette 62/A/5-4-2018) on the ratification of the Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence of the Council of Europe (IC), signed by Greece in May 2011.
- **❖** Law 4491/2017, (Government Gazette 152/A/13-10-2017) "*Legal recognition of gender identity... etc.*".

4. GRNET values

The values of inclusion and diversity have been part of GRNET's philosophy since its establishment, being essentially linked to the development and diversification of its operation. These values assume a prominent place in the agenda of GRNET management.

Over time, these values have spread throughout the company, through the promotion of equal opportunities for all, regardless of role and position within the company, regardless of gender identity, nationality, age, religious beliefs or sexual orientation. It is important for GRNET to create and implement a corporate strategy, which focuses on and invests in the development of individuals through evaluation, adopting an approach that aims to ensure sustainability in the management of people, in particular with regard to the provision of equal opportunities, regardless of gender or gender identity.



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1. Methodology and Scope

GRNET's Gender Equality Action Plan has an organizational purpose. It sets guiding principles for the implementation of gender equality goals and accountability measures for all corporate structures, operations and projects.

The adoption and implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan means that GRNET:

- benefits from the creation of the plan, which requires the identification and prioritization of gender gaps, as well as broad internal consultation and awareness;
- sets the criteria and the guidelines, which allow the company to comply with the legal framework currently in force and to evaluate gender equality as a factor in all its operations.

GRNET is committed to promoting gender equality during its operation. Inequality for any reason is not tolerated. The present Action Plan is one of the tools used to achieve such goal.

Gender equality within the company is assessed in terms of:

- 1. Human Resources: The balance between individuals of all genders within the company is monitored.
- 2. Content: Any diversity among individuals of different genders is analyzed and taken into account in all GRNET projects.

GRNET puts in place all necessary measures to foster and promote, to the extent possible, equal opportunities between persons of all genders. The goal is to achieve gender balance at all levels of human resources, including members of top



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management. Monitoring and evaluating results and progress towards the goal of gender equality shall be effected during the present Action Plan.

The gender dimension is always applied within GRNET through:

- o determining the significance of integrating gender analysis into the operation of the company;
- o acknowledging gender diversity, which must be explored and addressed on the basis of internal policies and procedures;
- o examining gender factors, which may affect the prioritization of projects;
- o the assessment of project deliverables regarding the varying impact they may have on persons of different gender;
- o maintaining gender balance in work groups;
- o strengthening the cooperation of individuals of all genders;
- o putting in place specific measures to eliminate gender inequalities, where existing,
- o investing in awareness and education that promote gender equality.

GRNET intends to continue to foster and promote an inclusive culture, initiating its human resources in the implementation of the pertinent initiatives.

6. Objectives and Initiatives

OBJECTIVE 1. Equality in access to employment

The purpose of strengthening gender equality and diversity in the recruitment and career progression process, is to ensure that every person has equal opportunities and prospects to be employed and promoted in GRNET, regardless of gender identity. We wish to attract, retain and develop the best talents across all areas of GRNET's activity. This requires transparent and familiar to the Company recruitment procedures.

Initiatives:

 GRNET encourages equal opportunities when recruiting, by integrating gender equality in the human resources evaluation process.



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 GRNET promotes the application and participation of all individuals in roles/positions where they are underrepresented.

OBJECTIVE 2. Equality in trainings and employment conditions

GRNET is committed to developing or strengthening internal procedures for skills development, as well as for promoting participation in projects, ensuring that its human resources enjoy the best possible working conditions.

Initiatives:

In the career development process, GRNET is committed to the equal recognition of skills of all its human resources (qualifications, trainings and professional experience), regardless of gender identity.

OBJECTIVE 3. Protection of parents and carers

GRNET promotes parenting and caring for individuals, by respecting applicable legislation, as well as by creating an encouraging environment for all members of its human resources who are parents and/or carers of other individuals.

Initiatives:

- GRNET is respectful of the right of its human resources, regardless of gender and gender identity, to be absent from work in order to take care of children and other persons.
- GRNET adopts flexible working practices, such as working remotely, etc.

OBJECTIVE 4. Preventing workplace harassment

Aiming to improve the employment culture, especially with regards to aggressive behaviours, is meant to ensure that all individuals feel well and safe at work. GRNET has focused on preventing and addressing all forms of harassment, aggressive behavior and discrimination.

Initiatives:

- GRNET is committed to constantly improving the knowledge base of its human resources in matters of aggressive behavior and discrimination.
- GRNET sets strict criteria regarding management of aggressive behavior among members of its human resources at all levels and has authorized the



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management of the company to handle and address incidents of aggressive behavior.

- GRNET shall adopt a Policy for Receiving and Managing Reports/Complaints regarding Violence and Harassment in the workplace.
- GRNET shall put in place a a system of internal reporting channels including the option of anonymous reporting.

OBJECTIVE 5. Training of the organization

Improving the company's knowledge on gender equality and diversity matters aims to ensure that all members of its human resources possess the skills and the tools to achieve GRNET's ambition that all individuals, regardless of gender and gender identity, feel welcome, safe and included in their workplace.

Initiatives:

• GRNET in collaboration with specialized organizations, entities and professionals shall provide training on a permanent basis to all members of its staff regarding gender equality, diversity, discrimination.

OBJECTIVE 6. Broad participation

A final and very important goal is to ensure the broad participation of the entire company in terms of the goals and directions related to gender equality and diversity. This is particularly important for the present Action Plan. At the same time, it is a goal of special significance to GRNET, whose values foster openness and equality.

Initiatives:

The company will systematically conduct an internal dialogue among members
of its staff for the purpose of identifying the most important challenges that
need to be addressed.

Table A – Objectives & Measures

Objectives	Measures	Responsible	Involved	Status	Indicators
		groups	groups		



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Equality in accessing employment	Embedding gender equality in the application of assessment criteria Promoting gender representation balance in job applications through genderneutral job descriptions	Human Resources Department Human Resources Department	Human Resources Department Human Resources Department	To be implemented To be implemented	Drafting a procedure and sharing it with the groups involved Drafting a procedure and sharing it with the groups involved
	Women Involvement in the recruitment procedures	Human Resources Department	Recruitment Department	To be implemented	Drafting a procedure and sharing it with the groups involved
	Use of templates for a gender-equitable recruitment procedure	Human Resources Department	Recruitment Department	To be implemented	Providing templates
Equality in education and employment conditions	Equal skills recognition of during the recruitment and the career development process & career development	Human Resources Department	Human Resources Department	Implemented	Drafting of a procedure and sharing it within the company



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Objectives	Measures	Responsible	Involved	Status	Indicators
		groups	groups		
Parents and carers protection	Internal process allowing staff members to take time off work to care for children and other persons. Ensuring parental leave for all staff members	Human Resources Department	Human Resources Department	Implemented	Drafting procedure
	Informing all staff members about the possibility as parents to share parental leave	Human Resources Department	Human Resources Department	To be implemented	Drafting of a recommendation and sharing it within the company
	Leave without pay: the company may grant staff members, upon request, leave without pay.	Human Resources Department	Human Resources Department	To be implemented	Drafting of a procedure and sharing it within the company
	Adoption of flexible employment practices	Human Resources Department	All groups	Implemented	Adoption of flexible employment practices by staff members
Prevention of harassment at work	Improving the Knowledge Base for Aggressive Behavior and Discrimination	Human Resources Department	All groups	In progress	Implementation of Trainings
	Setting strict criteria regarding management of aggressive behavior among staff members at all levels	Human Resources Department	Heads of all organizational units	In progress	Drafting criteria and communicating them within the company
	Putting in place a procedure for	Administrative Department	All groups	In progress	Policy Drafting and adopting



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	receiving and Managing Reports/Complaints about Violence and Harassment at Work Adopting a system of internal reporting channels with an option of anonymous reporting/ complaining	Administrative Department	All groups	In progress	Adopting a system
Organization training	Training on a continuous basis for all staff members on gender equality, diversity, discrimination	Human Resources Department	All groups	To be implemented	Trainings Implementation
Broad participation	Systematic internal dialogue among staff members	Human Resources Department	All groups	To be implemented	Communication/sharing



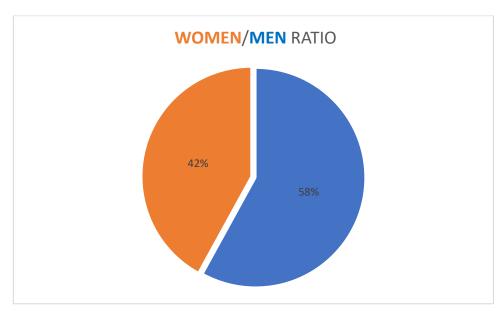
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7. Current GRNET statistics

*The purpose of these statistics is not to differentiate by gender, but to depict the current situation within GRNET, as well as GRNET's ambition and efforts to encourage equal opportunities between individuals of all genders, based on the initiatives described in Section 6 hereof.



Graph A1. The allocation of GRNET's human resources by gender.

GRNET has a gender-balanced management (50% women and 50% men).

8. MONITORING

The measures provided for in the GRNET Action Plan are assessed and monitored by the company, in order to ensure the correct implementation thereof and to identify opportunities for further improvement.

The monitoring is carried out by the Human Resources Department, whose responsibilities are:

- To ensure and monitor the implementation of initiatives and measures for continuous improvement,
- To draft plans/ programs and measures relevant to diversity,



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- To create groups, where required, or assign responsibilities to existing groups regarding the implementation of designed measures and initiatives,
- To ensure that the whole company is informed about the initiatives and the Action Plan,
- To monitor the impact of the Action Plan through the assessment indicators provided above.

The monitoring and assessment shall be effected on an annual basis.

9. The next steps

Based on all the objectives and initiatives mentioned hereinabove, as well as the continuous knowledge gained, in 2024 GRNET shall focus on drawing up the next Gender Equality Action Plan for years 2025-2027.