



Gender Equality Plan

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EGO-0365A-2024

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1. Foreword

This Gender Equality Plan is a set of actions aiming at identifying and implementing strategies to correct gender bias, by setting targets and indicators to monitor progress towards gender equality.

In 2021, the European Gravitational Observatory (EGO) carried out a first comprehensive analysis of gender differences and drafted its first Gender Equality Plan, adopted with Council Decision EGO-COU-942-2022 of March 22nd, 2022. Since then, we have been working to further promote gender equality and diversity at EGO. The current GEP consists of concrete objectives to be implemented in the period 2024-2026. It fulfills all mandatory process-related requirements established within the European Research Area in terms of: publication/dissemination; dedicated resources; data collection and monitoring; training and capacity building. It includes all the essential factors for gender equality in Research & Innovation (work-life balance and organizational culture; gender balance in leadership, recruitment and career progression; measures against gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment) and fits within the diversity actions adopted at EGO-Virgo, including actions of citizens engagement and inclusion of persons with disability.

The GEP contributes to the achievement of several related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as indicated in Annex 2.

EGO acknowledges the binary language (Male/Female- Men/Women) in the current Gender Equality Plan and is looking for less binary ways to address EGO diversity policy in the future.

GEP Working Group

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2. Background Analysis of Gender Equality at EGO

2.1. Gender distribution of EGO staff¹ and share of top-level management positions

Figure 1a shows the gender distribution, all positions, type of contract (permanent/fixed term), Part-time/Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) combined. Figure 1b shows the gender distribution in top management roles, including the following positions: Director, Deputy-Directors, Heads of Departments.

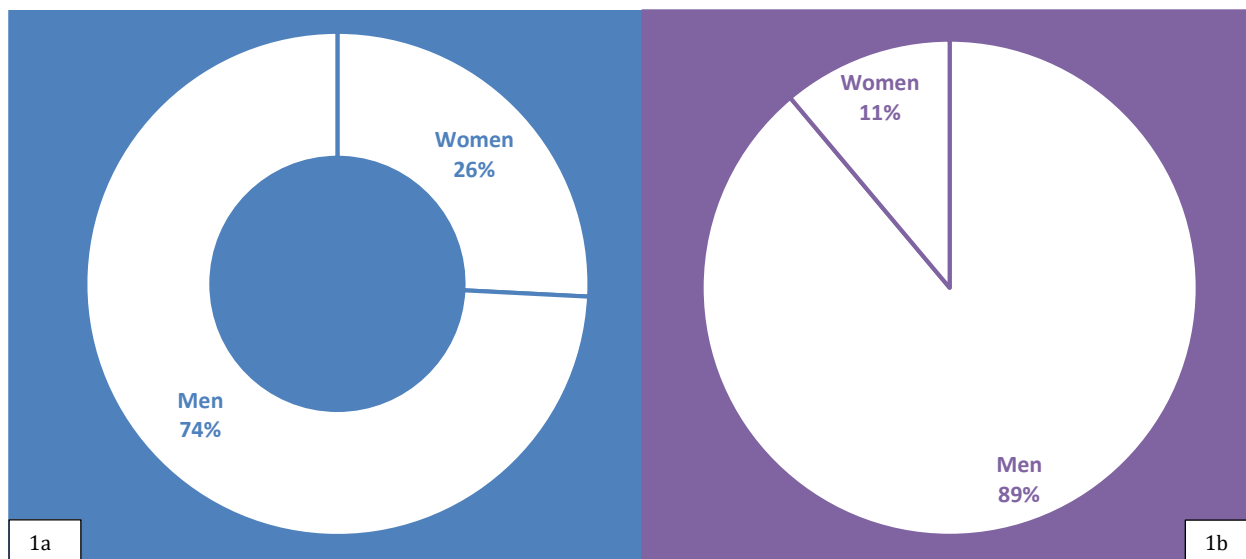


Figure 1a: Gender distribution of EGO Staff (updated to October 2024)- Figure 1b: Gender distribution in top management positions (updated to October 2024)

2.2. Gender distribution by activity

Figure 2 shows the number of women and men participating to different EGO activities, grouped as follows:

- **Administration, Direction and Management**-include personnel performing managerial or administrative tasks, attached to the Direction and the Directorate Team, the Administration and the Heads of Department;
- **Science, Computing, Engineering and Technical Support**- include personnel attached to the Interferometer Technology, the Optics and Controls, the Vacuum & Mechanics, the Information Technology, the Infrastructures and the Systems Engineering departments, and performing scientific or technical work associated with one of these departments.

¹ Please note that EGO Staff include only those having an employment contract with EGO and working at EGO (i.e. not seconded to other institutions). Personnel seconded to EGO but having an employment contract with another institution, including EGO founding institutions such as the Italian National Institute for Nuclear Physics (Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare -INFN) and the French National Centre for Scientific Research (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique-CNRS), is not considered "EGO Staff".

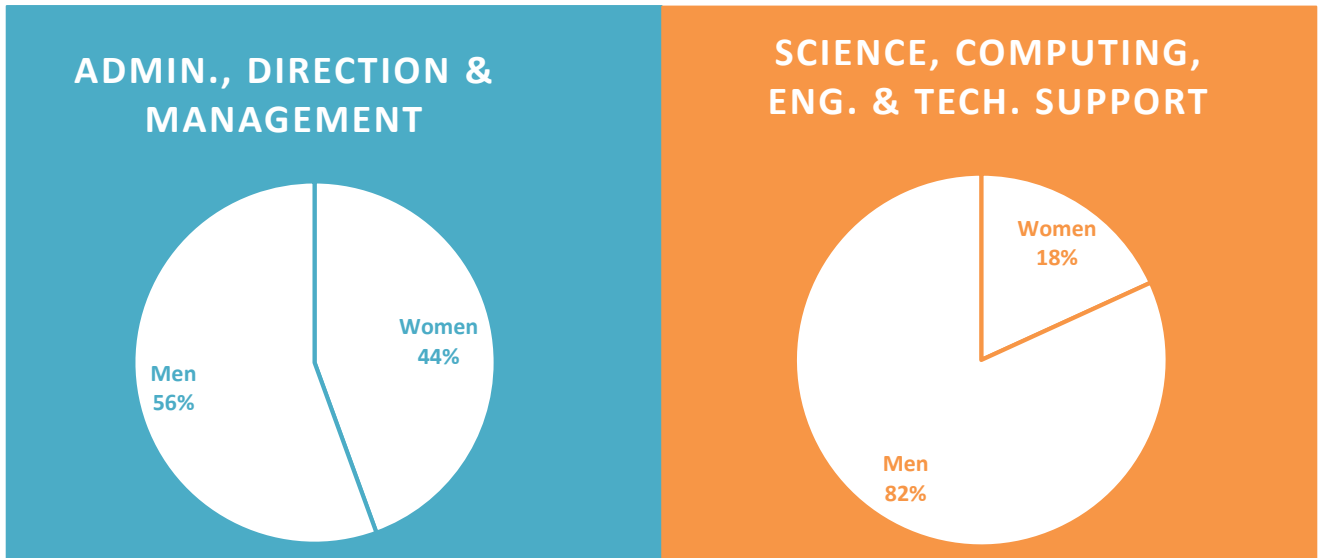


Figure 2: Gender distribution in EGO activities (updated to October 2024)

2.3. Evolution of women distribution in different EGO activities (2015-2024)

Figure 3 shows the evolution of the distribution of women in different activities at EGO over the last 10 years (2015-2024).

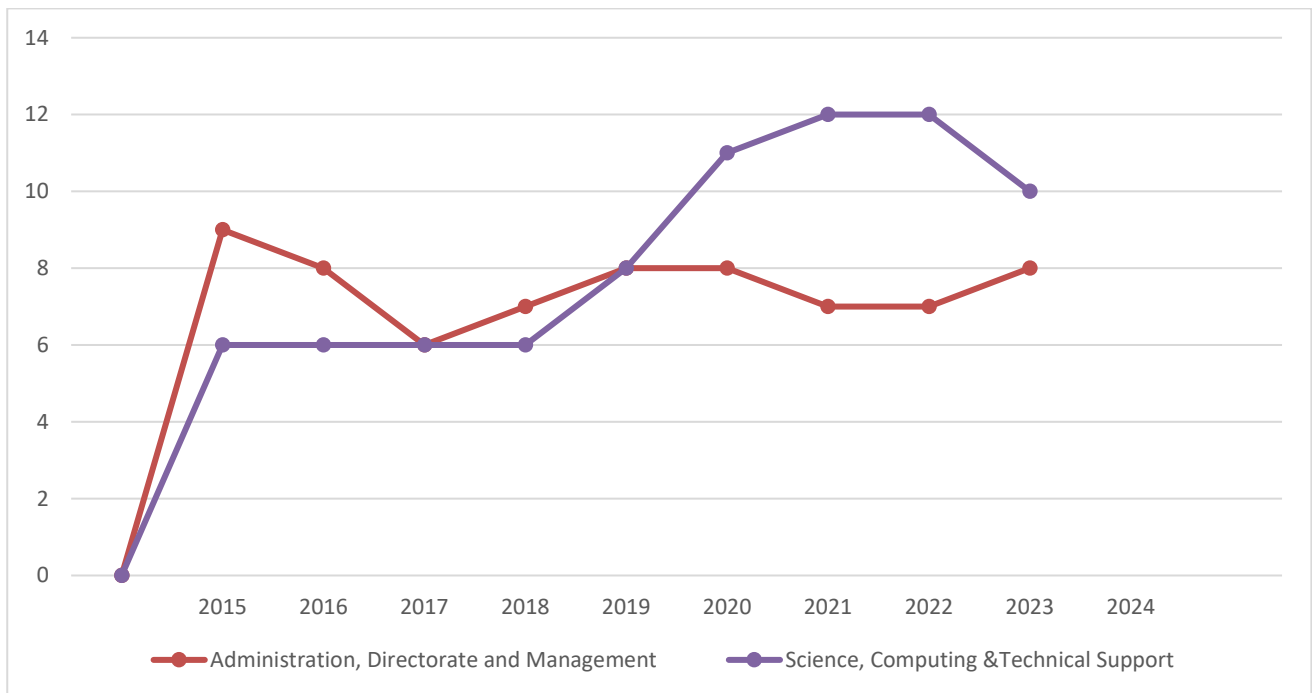


Figure 3: Evolution of the distribution of women in different activities at EGO over the last 10 years (updated to October 2024)

2.4. Gender distribution by staff category (functions/grade)

Staff categories at EGO are organized in different function groups, corresponding to the tasks listed below:

- manual support-service tasks (technical operator)
- administrative and technical support-service tasks (administrative/technical assistant)

- administrative, accountancy and other equivalent tasks (administrative officer)
- management, scientific and advisory tasks (technologist/researcher).

Careers at EGO ranges from grade V to I, with V being the entry level for technical operators with a junior secondary education diploma (ISCED level 2). Grades IIIa-I are reserved for specialists profiles (researcher/technologist) with relevant educational background (Master’s degree or PhD) and several years of work experience (grade II-I).

Figure 4 shows the gender distribution of EGO staff by function group.

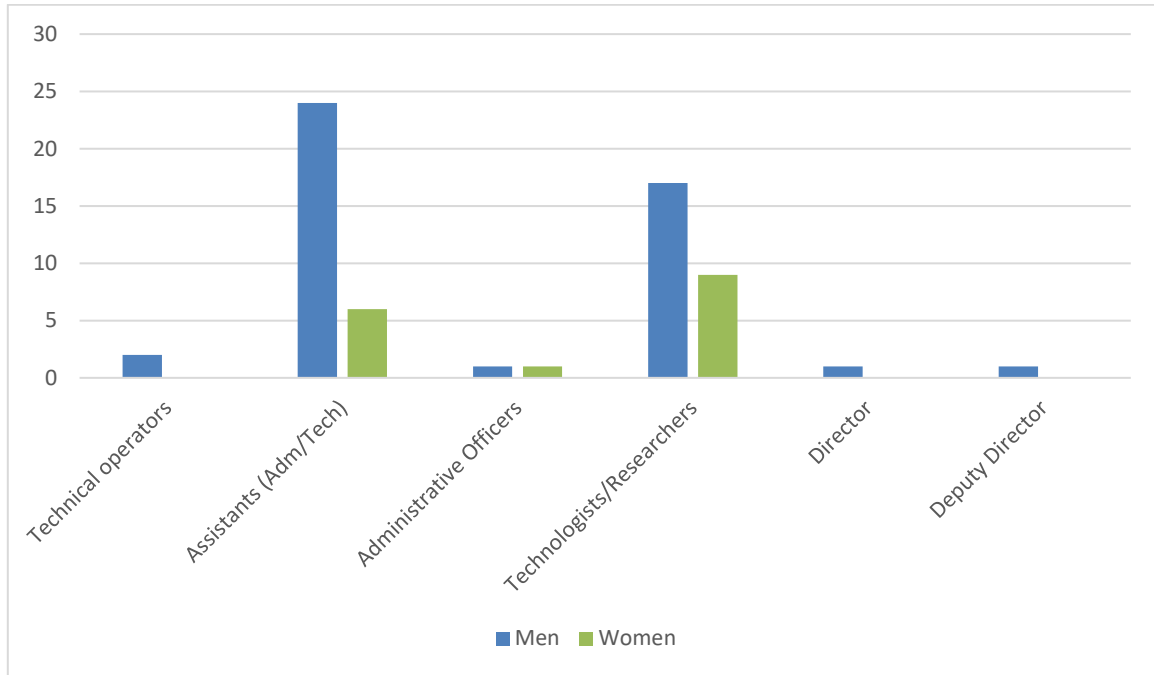


Figure 4: Gender distribution of EGO staff by function group (updated to October 2024)

Figure 5 shows the gender distribution of EGO staff by grade.

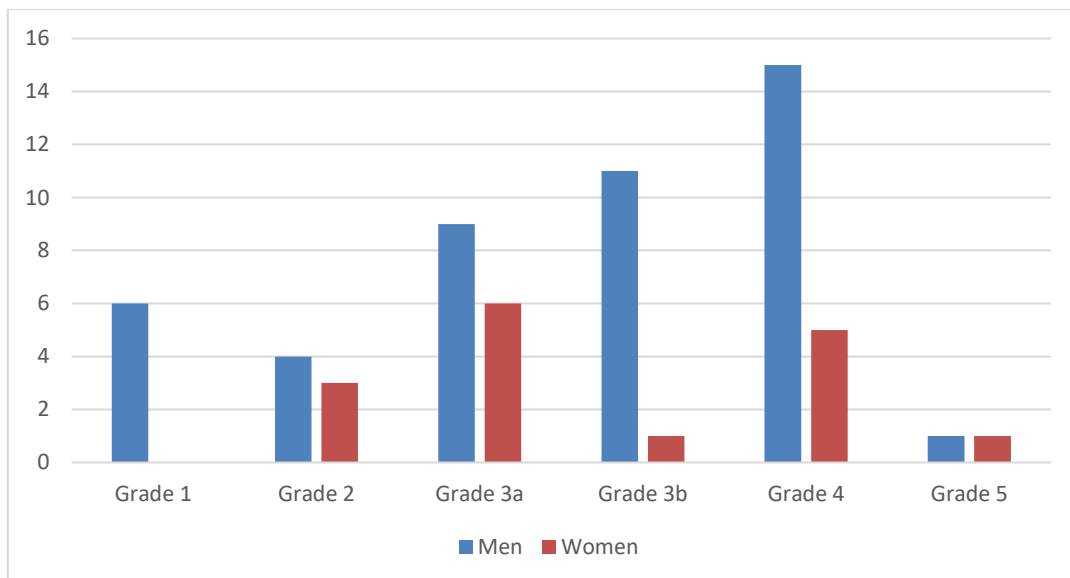


Figure 5: Gender distribution of EGO staff by grade (updated to October 2024)

2.5. Performance-related bonus by gender

A performance-related bonus is distributed annually² to EGO staff since 2015. It includes both a fixed (collective) and a variable (individual) percentage. This latter is allocated according to two different coefficients:

- Coefficient 1: to the 80% of EGO staff;
- Coefficient 2: to the 20% of EGO staff.

And on the basis of the following criteria:

- Accuracy and quality of the annual performance;
- Ability to adapt to evolving organizational needs;
- Ability to collaborate within and across the offices;
- Ability to propose innovative solutions and contribute to organizational and management improvements.

Figure 6a shows the gender distribution of the top performance bonus (coefficient 2) since the first year of its allocation (2015), and figure 6b the male/female ratio:

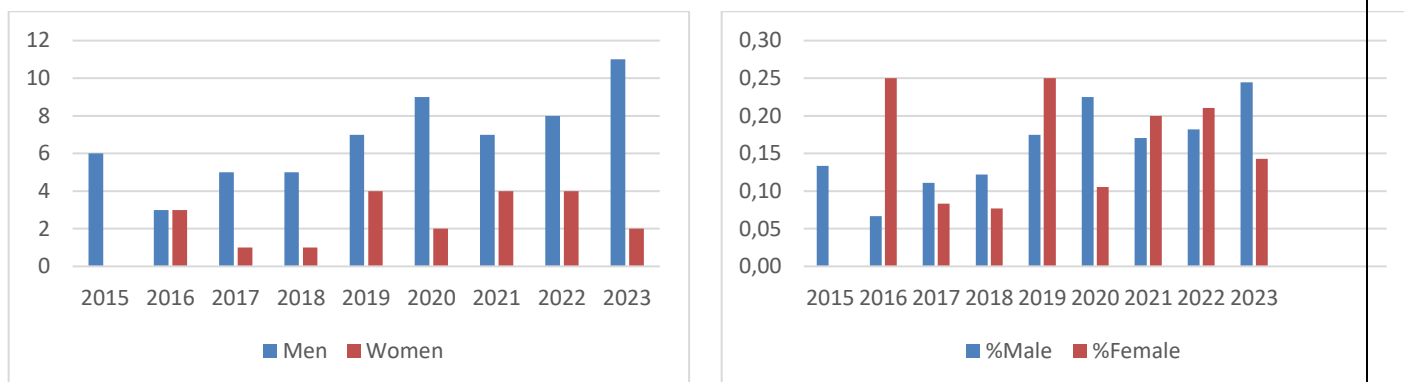


Figure 6a: Allocation of the annual top performance bonus by gender- Figure6b: male/female ratio of the annual top performance bonus

2.6. Share of fixed term and flexible employment contracts (2015-2024)

Figure 7 shows the share of fixed terms and flexible employment contracts (collaboration contracts, temporary contracts etc.), all positions/activities combined over the last 10 years (2015-2024).

² The performance-related bonus is distributed in March of the following year. As a consequence, the bonus for the year 2024 will be distributed in March 2025.

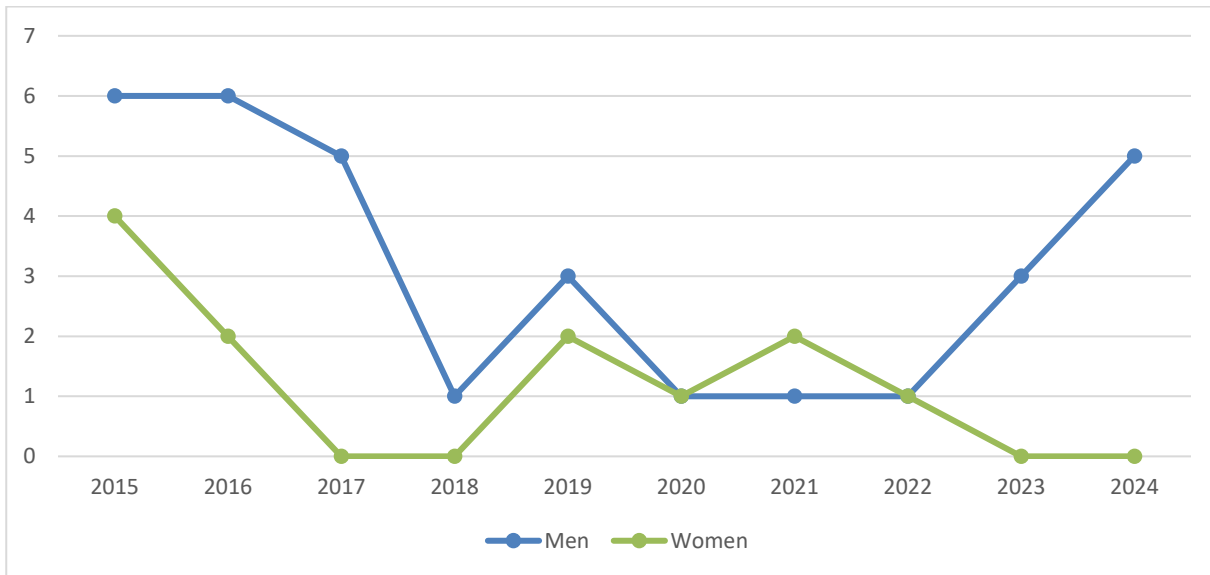


Figure 7– Share of fixed term and flexible employment contracts over the last 10 years (updated to October 2024)

2.7. Gender Distribution of Full-time and Part-time contracts

Figure 8 shows the distribution of full-time and part-time contracts at EGO.

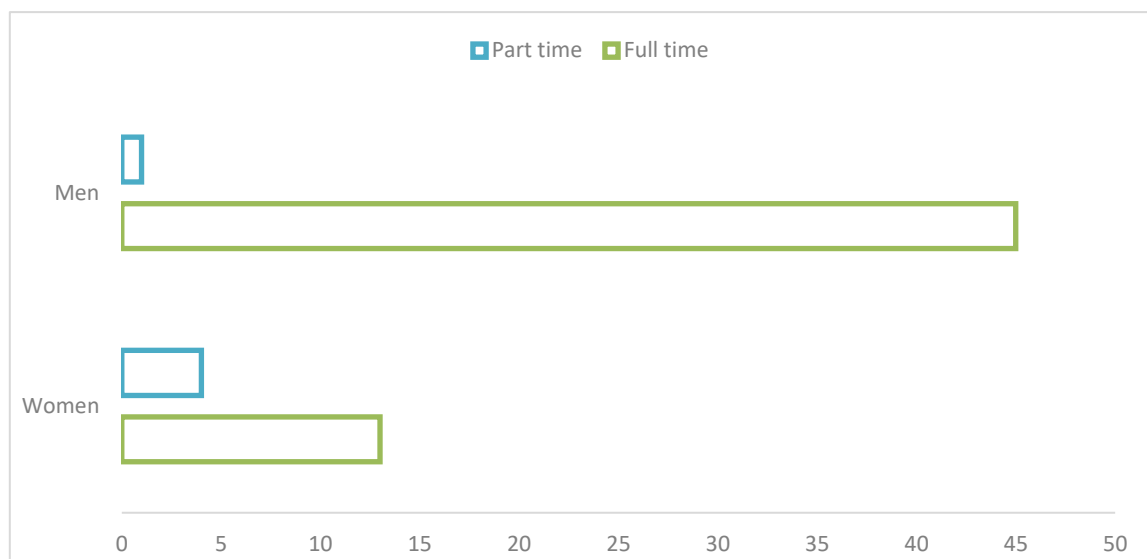
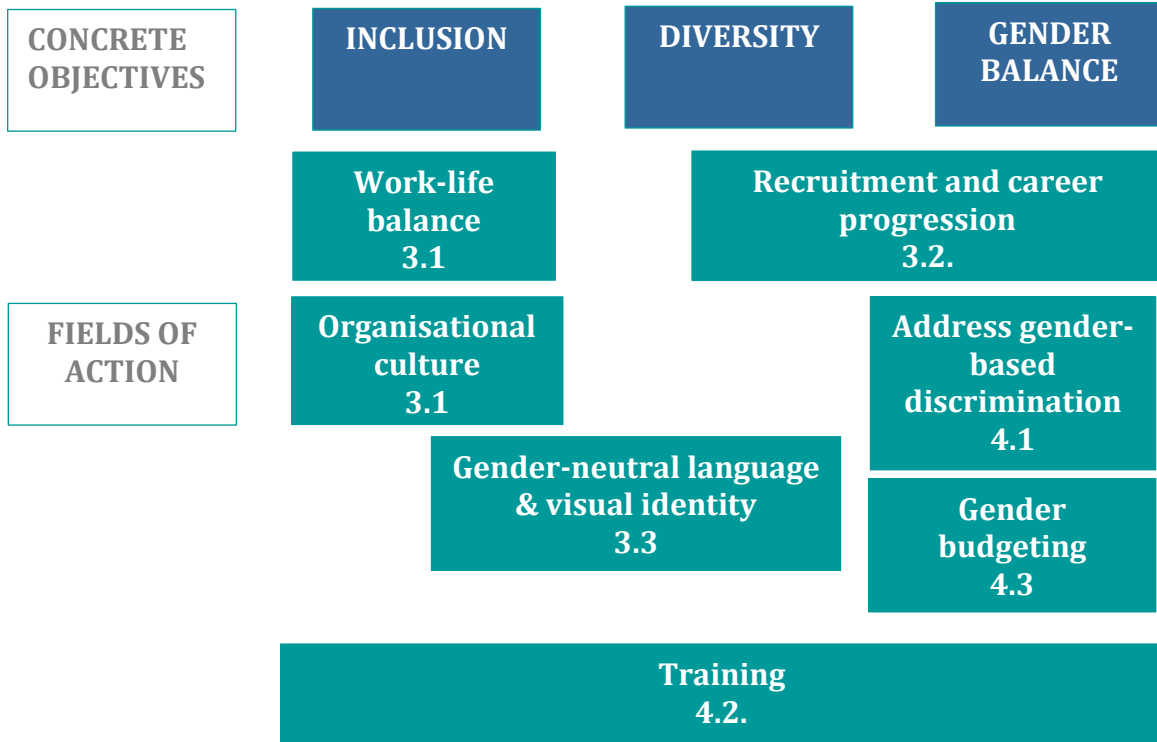


Figure 8- Gender distribution of full-time and part-time contracts (updated to August 2024)

3. Concrete objectives

EGO is committed against any form of discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, (including sexual orientation, gender identity, and pregnancy), religion, age, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, disability, marital status, status as a parent. Traditionally, EGO has given a lot of attention to gender, age, LGBTQ+ and disability, by condemning all forms of discrimination or harassment, and assuring that all employees and collaborators are accorded equal dignity and respect.



3.1. Work-life balance and organizational culture

Work-life balance is to a large extent part of national care infrastructure. Working parents are entitled to certain leave arrangements (parental leaves), which in some cases are complemented by EGO (Art. 13 EGO Collective Labor Agreement).

EGO supports the health, well-being and work/life integration of EGO employees and collaborators, through the achievement of the following concrete objectives:

- 01** Fostering conciliation between work and personal/family life, through flexible working time arrangements (remote working, part-time, other alternative work arrangements) and the use of videoconferences whenever it is possible;
- 02** Adopting procedures for a better planning of working meetings accordingly to work life balance needs.

3.2. Gender balance in leadership, recruitment and career progression

To support an equal opportunities policy, EGO is committed to achieve the objectives listed below:

- 03** Promoting procedures that favor and support gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments;
- 04** Including in all job announcements a sentence indicating the commitment of EGO to Gender Equality and Diversity Management.

3.3. Adoption of a language/visual identity that respect gender differences

To promote a gender-responsive approach in all its organizational and research processes, EGO aims at achieving the following objectives:

- 05** Adopting a gender-neutral language in internal and external communication;

06 Ensuring the use of non-stereotypical and non-sexist images in internal and external communication;

07 Mobilizing institutional communication channels (website, social media accounts) to promote the actions taken within the GEP.

4. Strategies and practices

4.1.Measures against gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment

Gender-based discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favorably, or not given the same opportunities as a person of a different gender, because of their gender. It also occurs when policy and practices apply to everyone, but disadvantages a person because of her/his gender.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct, by means of verbal abuse, insults, behaviors that a reasonable person considers offensive, humiliating, or intimidating to the person being harassed.

Employees sexually harassed in the workplace may experience negative impact on health, well-being, career progression, employment and financial circumstances.

EGO ensures a discrimination-free and harassment-free workplace by adopting a strategy based on:

- A zero-tolerance approach to sex-based discrimination and harassment;
- Training on issues of sexual harassment.

4.2.Training and capacity building

Gender capacity building is a gender-sensitive approach to changing attitudes and behaviors that negatively impact on gender equality, both at the individual and the institutional level.

To create an enabling environment, the following practices will be adopted:

- Gender awareness initiatives (Heads of departments);
- Mentoring and empowerment courses (underrepresented gender).

4.3.Gender budgeting

A budget dedicated to gender actions, will be conserved annually, and will be controlled by the EGO Council.

5. Dedicated resources

5.1.EGO Committee for Personnel Equity (ECPE)

Gender misconduct will be treated in the framework of the EGO Committee for Personnel Equity to advance EGO commitment to providing an environment where all the employees feel safe to participate, whether conducting scientific work or working to support the achievement of the EGO-VIRGO collaboration goals.

All employees can connect with the Committee confidentially or anonymously, in person or in a virtual setting, to report a concern, file a formal complaint or request an informal resolution in case of discrimination or incident harassment and other personnel misconduct.

5.2.Delegates to support gender equality

Appoint delegates in all departments to be responsible for monitoring and ensuring procedures and practices that respect gender equality at the workplace.

6. Data collection and monitoring

Qualitative and quantitative data are continuously collected in a database and assessed by the EGO Committee for Personnel Equity at the end of each year, in order to evaluate the degree of compliance with the objectives set by the GEP and monitor the performance indicators.

The ECPE proposes eventually revisions of the GEP.

7. Publication and dissemination

The GEP will be sent to EGO personnel and published online. The indicators will be accessible in EGO internal website, as well as the objectives and their degree of compliance.

8. Annex 1 – Relevant legislation and documentation

	Title and reference	Link
Council of the European Union (2023)	Provisional agreement on Standards for equality bodies in the field of equal treatment and equal opportunities between women and men in matters of employment and occupation	https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-16772-2023-ADD-1/en/pdf
European Commission (2021)	European Research Area Policy Agenda- Overview of actions for the period 2022-2024- Action 5 “Promote gender equality and foster inclusiveness”	https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2021-11/ec_rtd_era-policy-agenda-2021.pdf
European Commission (2020)	Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (COM/2020/152 final)	https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en
Council of European Union (2015)	Conclusions on Advancing gender equality in the European Research Area – Council Conclusions adopted on 01/12/2015, 14846/15	https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/council_conclusions_2015_2.pdf
European Commission (2012)	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth, COM (2012) 392 final, 17.7.2012	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52012DC0392
European Parliament and Council (2006)	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), OJEU, L 204/23, 26.7.2006	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32006L0054
European Commission (2005)	Commission Recommendation of 11 March 2005 on the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, 2005/251/EC, OJEU L75/67, 22.3.2005.	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:075:0067:0077:EN:PDF
Council of Europe (2005)	Final report of the Group of Specialists on Gender Budgeting (EG-S-GB), EG-S-GB (2004) RAPFIN; Equality Division, Directorate general of Human Rights, Council of Europe, Strasbourg,	https://rm.coe.int/1680596143

9. Annex 2 – Objectives, indicators and connection with Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030

Key areas	Objective	Indicators	Connection with SDGs
Work-life balance and organizational culture	01 Fostering conciliation between work and personal/family life, through flexible working time arrangements (remote working, part-time, other alternative work arrangements) and the use of videoconferences whenever it is possible	<p>I1 Policies on work and personal/family life integration adopted in the period 2024-2026</p> <p>I2 Number of flexible working time arrangements signed in the period 2024-2026</p> <p>I3 Number of individual agile work agreements signed in the period 2024-2026</p> <p>I4 Number of top-performance bonuses awarded to female workers in the period 2024-2026</p>	SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth Target 8.5 By 2030 achieve full and 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
	02 Adopting procedures for a better planning of working meetings accordingly to work-life balance needs.	I5 Policies/Guidelines on work and personal/family life integration adopted in the period 2024-2026	SDG 10 Reduced inequalities Target 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
Gender balance in leadership, recruitment and career progression	03 Promoting procedures that favor and support gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments	I6 Positive actions adopted for the recruitment, career development and appointments of women in science	SDG 5 Gender Equality Target 5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and

		and leadership roles in the period 2024-2026	equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
	04 Including in all job announcements a sentence indicating the commitment of EGO to Gender Equality and Diversity Management	17 Positive actions adopted to remove gender bias in job descriptions	
Adoption of a language/visual identity that respect gender differences	<p>05 Adopting a gender-neutral language in internal and external communication;</p> <p>06 Ensuring the use of non-stereotypical and non-sexist images in internal and external communication;</p> <p>07 Mobilizing institutional communication channels (website, social media accounts) to promote the actions taken within the GEP</p>	18 Gender sensitive language and visual products on official documents and institutional communication channels adopted in the period 2024-2026	SDG 5 Gender equality Target 5.1. End all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere