



# GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

For the year 2025  
results of the review

28 April 2026

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## 1 Tasks identified under the gender equality plan

The Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives (CESCI) adopted its Gender Equality Plan at its Annual General Assembly on 25 May 2022. In order to coordinate the implementation of the Plan, the need to appoint a gender equality officer was also laid down. As there were no volunteers to act as rapporteurs, the directors decided that part of the rapporteurship would be carried out by one of the directors, with the assistance of two colleagues.

In addition to coordination, the rapporteurs are responsible for monitoring and reporting annually to the directors on the implementation of the Plan, indicating the results achieved so far and any obstacles that may arise. The organisation shall publish the annual report on its website. If interim changes or additions to the Gender Equality Plan become necessary, the rapporteurs shall draw up a proposal to amend it.

This document is the fourth annual report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan, which examines the progress made in 2025. The report for the year 2022, which was adopted at the 2023 Annual General Assembly of the Association, proposed that the one-off measures already completed should not be considered separately in subsequent reports. Accordingly, these indicators are not included in this document.

## 2 Annual monitoring of the Gender Action Plan (2025)

This chapter examines the development of gender equality actions formulated for the 2021-2027 period on the basis of the values of pre-defined indicators for 2025, also identifying the actions implemented in relation to the given action.

Table 1 : Colour key for the table summarising the values

Colouring	Report
Green	The indicator has achieved its objective.
Blue	There is an improvement/stagnation in this indicator.
Grey	The indicator is not relevant due to the minimum number of elements.
Pink	There is a gap for this indicator.

Table 2 : Evolution of indicator values in 2025

Action	Indicator	Target value	Value (2022)	Value (2023)	Value (2024)	Value (2025)	Evaluation (2025)
1.1 Approaching gender equality in the Presidency	Proportion of women in the presidency	Not specified	25%	25%	25%	30%	In 2025, a new female member was added to the presidency, resulting in an improvement
1.2. Approaching gender equality in top management in the work organisation	Share of women in top management	33,3%	33,3%	33,3%	33,3%	33,3%	The composition of senior management did not change in 2025.
	Pay gap between female and male senior managers	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	Equally ranked female and male senior managers were remunerated at the same salary in 2025, so this indicator maintains the target.
1.3 Approaching gender equality in the workplace	Pay gap between women and men among non-managerial senior and junior workers	0%	0,50%	3,72%	0,53%	3,68%	Differences in pay for non-managerial workers can only be observed due to different jobs and responsibilities.

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Action	Indicator	Target value	Value (2022)	Value (2023)	Value (2024)	Value (2025)	Evaluation (2025)
	Pay gap between non-senior female and male researchers <sup>1</sup>	0%	Improved	Improved	Improved	Improved	In 2025, the pay gap between female and male researchers continued to narrow.
	Proportion of female researchers	Not specified	33,3%	33,3%	33,3%	33,3%	The number of employees delegated to the research group did not change in 2025, so the value of the indicator did not change.
2.1. Ensuring gender equality in recruitment	Percentage of women among candidates called for interviews	Not specified	Not specified	33,3%	70%	29%	In 2025 we did not differentiate between the applicants on the basis of gender, we always decided to invite the applicants on the basis of professional criteria. (As in previous years, the evolution of the value is significantly determined by the number of applicants.)
	Proportion of women among interviewers	Not specified	Not specified	33,3%	47%	53%	When organising the interviews, we primarily took into account the professional aspects, however, where we had the opportunity to do so, we endeavoured to achieve a balanced gender ratio among the interviewers.
2.2 Ensuring gender equality in career development	Ratio of female to male workers in training	Not defined	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not relevant	In 2025, one person continued their studies.
3.1. Provision of working time and other benefits to achieve work-life balance	The fact of providing flexible working environments	Be insured	Insured	Insured	Insured	Insured	Flexible working frameworks are provided in line with colleagues' needs and work organisation
	Percentage of part-time applications accepted	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	During the year 2025, all part-time applications were accepted by the organisation.
	Percentage of children receiving one-off financial support	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	The support system was developed previously, but none of the colleagues had children in 2025.

<sup>1</sup> For data protection reasons, no specific numerical value is provided in the report, only the direction of the trend is indicated.

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Action	Indicator	Target value	Value (2022)	Value (2023)	Value (2024)	Value (2025)	Evaluation (2025)
	Number of employees with individual working time	Not defined	Not defined	Not defined	Not defined	Not defined	For the partly affected colleagues, the organisation provided individual working hours.
3.2 Contact with workers on parental leave	Number of family meetings per year	1	(1)	0	0	0	During the year 2025, no family meeting was announced, however, when organising CESC Light events, the organisation took into account the perspectives of employees with families (e.g. earlier start), and former colleagues are also invited to the events.
4.1 Organisation of Sensitisation training	Number of training sessions	1	0	0	0	1	In the year 2025, sensitisation training was carried out, which is described in more detail in the report, so the indicator reached its target.
4.2 Informing new employees of the organisation	Percentage of new entrants who received information	100%	100%	100%	100%	not relevant	There were no new employees in 2025.
4.3 Gender mainstreaming in the organisation's events	Percentage (number) of women speakers invited to events	Not defined	26,19%	37,78%	49%	36%	In the organisation of professional events, reaching out to female speakers was also a priority in 2025, however, there is a decrease compared to the previous year.
	Proportion of women speakers at professional events	Not defined	22,54%	37,78%	44%	35%	In the organisation of professional events, reaching out to female speakers was also a priority in 2025, however, there is a decrease compared to the previous year.
5.1. Developing a gender complaint procedure and rules	Percentage of complaints treated	100%	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not relevant	No complaints were received (number of cases = 0).

### 3 Sensitisation training

The entire CESC team participated in a three-hour sensitisation training on 7 April 2025. The aim of the workshop was to provide a common framework for organisational thinking on gender equality and to support staff members in reflecting more consciously on their own experiences, attitudes and patterns appearing in organisational functioning. The training was based on participation, the creation of a safe space for conversation, and experience-based learning.



In the introductory phase of the programme, ice-breaking exercises and short, sensitisation mini-games helped participants tune in to the topic. These exercises served to strengthen trust within the group, to activate cooperation and to take a risk-free approach to the basic concepts and situations related to the topic. After the introduction, the participants gathered together the type and extent of experience present within the organisation, and reviewed how CESC's mission is related to inclusive operations that also take equal opportunities considerations into account.



Most of the training was a creative, group-based exercise. Participants – divided into female and male groups – produced a poster displaying an imaginary 'celebration conference', using images and captions that could be cut from selected newspapers. According to the conference's narrative, CESC had achieved its objective related to cross-border cooperation and is celebrating and presenting this success. The task encouraged both vision-building and the visual expression of participants' implicit expectations, priorities and different interpretations of 'success' and 'reaching the goal'.



The presentation of the posters of the two groups revealed marked differences in terms of emphasis, wording and the elements that participants considered important to highlight when describing the 'successful' status, as well as how all this was visually represented. Under the guidance of the trainer, the group worked on these differences together: during the discussion, participants reflected on experiences, organisational impressions and more general social patterns that could influence perceptions and chosen narratives. The purpose of this reflection was not to 'evaluate' the differences, but to raise awareness and interpret them and to examine how the organisation can respond to them sensitively and constructively in organisational operations.



The training helped to make the issue of gender equality a common topic within the organisation, and participants can talk about differences, goals and the desired organisational vision through concrete, shared impressions. As a result of the workshop, the culture of joint reflection was strengthened.

*The poster of the male group is shown above, while the poster of the female group is shown below*



## 4 Outcome of the annual monitoring

Based on the above table, the Association has made progress in several areas in realising and implementing the measures set out in its Gender Equality Plan. The most significant measure of the year 2025 was the successful organisation of sensitisation training. As the organisation's 2023 General Assembly adopted the proposal that the one-off measures implemented should no longer be examined separately in subsequent reports, the organisation of the awareness-raising training will no longer be the subject of the next review.

Although there are still areas where further improvements and corrections are needed, overall it can be said that:

- In the case of 6 indicators, the development of the values was essentially determined by professional considerations. Typically, these indicators have improved only slightly or stagnated, and further equal opportunities measures are recommended in the following years, where possible:
  - Proportion of women in the presidency;
  - Proportion of women in senior management;
  - The pay gap between non-leading female and male researchers;
  - Proportion of female researchers;
  - Proportion of women among applicants invited to interviews;
  - Proportion of women among interviewers.
- In the case of 5 indicators, the values are clearly positive, have improved or maintain their target:
  - Pay gap between female and male senior managers
  - The fact that flexible working arrangements are provided
  - Percentage of accepted part-time applications
  - Number of workers with individual working hours
  - Number of training sessions
- For 4 indicators, the indicator could not be meaningfully assessed due to the low sample size:
  - Share of female and male workers in training;
  - Share of children receiving one-off financial support;
  - Share of new entrants informed;
  - Rate of complaints handled.
- For 4 indicators, the target action was not achieved in 2025 or there was a decrease compared to the previous year. Even in these cases, the evolution of values was mainly determined by professional, structural (job composition) and external factors (scope and availability of applicants/lecturers). The organisation of the family event is proposed for 2026:
  - Wage gap between female and male workers among non-senior and junior workers;
  - Number of family events per year;
  - Proportion (number) of female speakers invited at events;
  - Proportion of female speakers at professional events.