

**INSTITUTE OF ELECTRONICS AND COMPUTER SCIENCE**  
**GENDER EQUALITY PLAN**

Issued under  
State Administration Structure Law  
Section 72, Paragraph one, Clause 2

Gender equality is one of the core values of the Institute of Electronics and Computer Science (hereinafter - Institute), as it promotes the advancement of research, improves the quality of research and innovations, allows to attract and retain more talents, and ensures that everyone can fully develop their potential. The Institute wishes and will conduct respective activities to create an inclusive working environment that provides equal opportunities for every employee of the Institute regardless of their origin, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, etc. including the opportunities to develop oneself and, of course, to be oneself in the Institute.

One of the fundamental human rights enshrined in Article 91 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia is that ‘All human beings in Latvia shall be equal before the law and the courts. Human rights shall be realised without discrimination of any kind’.

According to the European Institute for Gender Equality, gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the impact of any planned activities, including the impact of legislation, policies or programs, on women and men in all areas and at all levels. This means recognizing the equal role of men and women in the development of society, providing them equal rights and responsibilities, ensuring equal access to resources and their use to ensure equal benefits for women and men.

Equality means that the contribution of men and women to society and their concerns are perceived and addressed on an equal footing. Gender equality is important in all areas of life and applies to both women's and men's rights.

Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union states that ‘human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities’ are possible only in a society in which in addition to pluralism, tolerance, justice and solidarity there is also a prohibition of discrimination and different treatment and equality of women and men; furthermore, Article 3 of the aforementioned Treaty includes the commitment to combat social exclusion and discrimination, promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, intergenerational solidarity and the protection of the rights of the child.

Given that the Republic of Latvia is a member state of the European Union, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibits discrimination in the Member States, including that on the grounds of gender (Article 21), as well as imposes the obligation to ensure equality between men and women in all areas, stipulating that the gender equality principle does not prohibit from preserving or setting measures that provide for special advantages for the gender that are under-represented in a particular area (Article 23).

In order to implement the provisions of the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the European Union institutions propose targeted measures to reduce gender equality-adverse practices. The European Commission's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 sets out six lines of action:

1. Freedom from violence and stereotypes: ending gender-based violence and combating gender stereotypes;
2. Gender-sensitive economic growth: tackling gender inequalities in the labour market, equal participation in different sectors of the economy, closing the gender pay and pension gap, tackling gender inequalities in care;
3. Equal leadership in society as a whole: achieving gender balance in decision-making and politics;
4. Gender mainstreaming and an intersectional perspective on European Union policies;
5. Funding for actions aimed at making progress on gender equality in the European Union;
6. Ensuring gender equality and full opportunities for women worldwide.

The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all human beings are born free and have the right to equal dignity and rights, and everyone has the right to enjoy their fundamental rights and freedoms without any restrictions, including those on the basis of gender.

Based on all the above, the goal of the Institute is to observe the human rights specified in the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia as well as the principles specified in the European Union legislation, and to implement actual (de facto) gender equality in the following directions:

1. The Institute, as an employer, equally treats all employees in the performance of their duties, including the establishment of employment relationships, promotion / appointment to positions, involvement in decision-making, appointment as an expert, etc.;
2. Equal treatment with regard to pay;
3. Equal treatment with regard to the provision of an adequate working environment;
4. Equality with regard to the employees, giving the opportunity to pursue a career at the Institute.

### **Allocated resources, data collection and monitoring**

In order to mainstream gender equality and promote gender balance in the Institute, a gender equality commission consisting of 3 women and 3 men has been established by Order no. 1.1.-2 / 55-21 (hereinafter – The Commission). The Commission shall convene a meeting at least once a year to:

- design, improve and develop a gender equality plan / policy;
- promote and implement measures to promote gender equality and balance;
- collect, analyse and publish gender data on staff (including students);
- follow up the indicators to be achieved (see Table at the end of the document) and promote their achievement by organizing appropriate activities;
- provide annual reports based on the indicators achieved;
- provide written recommendations for improving gender equality and gender balance at the Institute.

### **Work-life balance and the culture of the Institute**

The institute supports a healthy work-life balance. Overtime is not a common practice at the Institute; therefore, the employees of the Institute have the opportunities to devote sufficient time to their private life. In addition, the Institute provides support for the physical and sporting activities of its staff, thus promoting a healthy lifestyle. Furthermore, in order to take care of the health of the Institute's employees, the Institute's employees have access to health insurance. In addition, the Institute is very flexible in terms of working hours: with the prior permission of the

management, employees can address the issues related to their private life (e.g. a visit to a doctor, taking the child to kindergarten, etc.) at the time they need and subsequently make up for the time they were absent as agreed with the manager. It is important for the Institute that all its employees are satisfied with their work and in good mental and physical health; therefore, the Institute is committed to continuing to look for new ways to further improve work-life balance and the Institute's work culture such as staff surveys, drawing on good examples from other organizations, etc.

### **Gender balance in the management and decision-making of the Institute**

The Scientific Council of the Institute as well as the entire management of the Institute (director, deputy director, heads of laboratories) have supported and will continue to support gender balance in decision-making, although not only in Latvia but all over the world there are unfavourable gender balance statistics in the information and communication technology (henceforth: ICT) sector. According to the Eurostat database, the proportion of men in the ICT sector in Latvia has been well above 75 percent for the last 10 years: In 2018, they made up 80.7%, but in 2020 they made up 77.1% of employed in the ICT sector.

At present (December 2021), there are 122 employees in the Institute, 21% of whom are women. There is already a good gender balance in the Directorate, Technical and maintenance department, and the Accounting department: 46% of employees are men and 54% are women. Good gender balance is also observed in the internal commissions of the Institute, wherein 6 out of 7 commissions  $\geq 40\%$  of members are women. Particular attention needs to be paid to gender balance in scientific laboratories, where only 12% are women, mainly due to the particularities of the sector. We want a better gender balance in the Institute's scientific laboratories, so the table at the end of the document sets out the ambitious results to be achieved.

### **Gender equality in recruitment and career development**

In the process of personnel selection and career development, each employee, regardless of their origin, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, etc. has the same rights and opportunities. The Institute treats all employees equally including the establishment of an employment relationship, promotion / appointment, involvement in decision-making, appointment as an expert, etc.; equal treatment with regard to pay; equal treatment with regard to the provision of an adequate working environment; equality between employees, giving them the opportunity to pursue a career at the Institute; equal access to and use of the Institute's resources; etc.

### **Gender equality in research**

The Institute supports and promotes the integration of gender into the Institute's research, development and innovation activities, as we believe that gender and other aspects of diversity are essential to achieving a high level of scientific results. These aspects are taken into account when setting research priorities, defining concepts, formulating research questions, developing methodologies, collecting and analysing data aggregated by gender, evaluating and reporting results, and carrying out knowledge transfer / commercialization activities. Researchers are also reminded about the importance of gender and other diversity aspects in their research and in their team when preparing project applications for European Union and national calls. For research activities involving humans in experiments, the Institute has established an Ethics Commission to specifically assess ethics as well as gender aspects. Gender aspects in research, development and innovation activities will be addressed in the Institute's internal annual seminars.

## Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

To date, there have been no complaints of gender-based violence or sexual harassment at the Institute. If such a case were reported, it would be individually assessed and appropriate action would be taken. Each member of staff of the Institute has free access to the project leaders, the management of the Institute and, where appropriate, can report any behavioural abnormalities, including behaviour that offends the dignity of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive environment. In order to ensure a professional and pleasant environment, the Institute has developed a code of ethics, which clearly highlights the basic principles of professional ethics of the Institute's employees, ethical principles of scientific activity, work ethics, mutual relations, etc.

## Awareness raising and training on gender equality and unintentional gender bias in employees and decision-makers

At least once a year, the Institute plans to organize awareness-raising seminars and / or training on gender equality and unintentional gender bias among staff and decision-makers, involving all employees. Gender training will be based on an evidence-based assessment of the Institute's needs.

Knowing the benefits of gender equality and balance, we believe that our gender equality plan will foster an inclusive and open environment that will lead to excellent and influential research at the Institute and abroad.

In order to promote gender equality and in particular gender balance in the Institute, the Table below defines clear goals, planned activities and expected results.

Planned activities		Expected results		
Deadline	Activity description	KPIs	Now	Goal (Year 2027)
Yearly	Collect gender data on staff (including students), analyse specific indicators and make recommendations for improving gender balance.	Gender balance in management and decision-making (director, deputy director (s), heads of units, etc.) (women / men)	22%/78%	~50%/ ~50%
Yearly	Awareness-raising and training seminar for all Institute staff on gender equality, unintentional gender bias, the Institute's gender equality plan / policy, the results to be achieved and how each staff member can contribute to their achievement.	Desired number of women on the Scientific Council of the Institute (members are elected by the general meeting of scientists according to their competence, candidates must agree to serve in the Council)	-	%, corresponding to the proportion of women in the Institute's scientific staff
Yearly	Survey of the Institute's staff to obtain information on the Institute's staff's views on gender equality and balance as well as get recommendations for improving working conditions (including work-life balance).	The rule is observed in all internal commissions established by the Institute that there are representatives of both men and women, and the	86%	100%

		predominance of representatives of one sex does not exceed 1. (the number of commissions in which the above condition is met)		
At least yearly	Develop a framework for experience stories and use it to interview the Institute's women working in science. Publish interviews on relevant media, social networks, and the Institute website to promote women's interest in research at the Institute.	The proportion of women in the scientific laboratories of the Institute	12%	22%
2022	Maintain gender balance among the members of the International Advisory Board (equality and competencies as a priority).	Gender balance in the International Advisory Board (women / men)	13%/87%	~50/~50
Yearly	Promote a wider representation of women on the Institute's website, in presentations, and other materials	Stories of women's research experiences published during the year.	-	at least 1
Being observed	Ensure gender equality in the recruitment process and career development of each employee			
Ongoing	Promoting a healthy work-life balance.			