



REGION OF
WESTERN
MACEDONIA

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN (GEP)

(Version 1)

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The first version of the Gender Equality Plan of the Region of Western Macedonia was compiled by the Department of European Projects, Smart Specialization and Innovation of the Region of Western Macedonia:

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Introduction

Equality of opportunity is a core to Region of Western Macedonia's mission and gender balance is a critical component for the organization to ensure fair access and equality for its administrative, technical and support personnel. Region of Western Macedonia incorporates these principles in its priorities and everyday operations, especially in the context of EU-funded programs like Horizon Europe, Interreg, and other collaborative EU initiatives.

We recognize that gender equality is not just a fundamental right, but a key driver of innovation, research, and sustainable development. As a participant in these programs, we pledge to actively promote gender equality in all stages of the project lifecycle— from planning to implementation and evaluation.

However, responding to the current demands and following acts drawn up both at national level (Action for Gender Equality 2021-2025) and at European level (Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025, Gender equality in the European Research Area), Region of Western Macedonia commits to systematizing its practices through the delivery of an effective Gender Equality Plan (GEP). The aims of the GEP are:

- The recording of the current situation as formed by the procedures and practices applied in the Region of Western Macedonia, in order to identify possible gaps or weaknesses in the equal treatment of genders;
- The identification and application of corrective practices;
- The setting of targets and their monitoring through specific indicators.

The Regulatory Framework

This GEP legitimates and protects every strategy aiming to achieve gender equality at Region of Western Macedonia. It is devised according to National and European laws and aligns with national initiatives and actions focusing on equality of women and men rights, discrimination banning, equal treatment, harassment in the workplace, social responsibility of organisations. Specific references to legislation can be found below:

European Union Law

TFEU

- **Article 157 TFEU** states:
 1. Each Member State shall ensure that the principle of equal pay for male and female workers for equal work or work of equal value is applied.
 2. For the purpose of this Article, “pay” means the ordinary basic or minimum wage or salary and any other consideration, whether in cash or in kind, which the worker receives directly or indirectly, in respect of his employment, from his employer. Equal pay without discrimination based on sex means:
 - a. that pay for the same work at piece rates shall be calculated on the basis of the same unit of measurement;
 - b. that pay for work at time rates shall be the same for the same job.
 3. The European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, and after consulting the Economic and Social Committee, shall adopt measures to ensure the application of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation, including the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value.
 4. With a view to ensuring full equality in practice between men and women in working life, the principle of equal treatment shall not prevent any Member State from maintaining or adopting measures providing for specific advantages in order to make it easier for the underrepresented sex to pursue a vocational activity or to prevent or compensate for disadvantages in professional careers.”

Chapter of Fundamental Rights of the EU

- **Article 21(1)** states: “Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited”.
- **Article 23** states: “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 favour of the under-represented sex”.

Directives

- **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
- **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 (Text with EEA relevance)
- **Directive 2010/41/EU** of the European Parliament 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 2000/78/EC** of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation
- **Council Directive 2000/43/EC** of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin
- **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 (tenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC)
- **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
- **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 Greek Law

Greek Law

Constitution

- **Article 4(2)** provides: “Greek men and women have equal rights and obligations”
- **Article 22(1)(b)** states: “All workers, irrespective of sex or other distinctions, have a right to equal pay for work of equal value”
- **Article 116(2)** states that: “Positive measures aiming at promoting equality between men and women do not constitute discrimination on grounds of sex. The State shall take measures to eliminate inequalities existing in practice, in particular those detrimental to women”

Laws

- **Act 4604/2019**, “On the promotion of substantive gender equality etc.”, OJ A 50/26.3.2019
- **Act 4443/2016**, “1) Transposition of Directive 2000/43/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, of Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation and of Directive 2014/54/EU on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers (...)”, OJ A 232/9.12.2016 [replacing Act 3304/2005 which had initially transposed Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/EC], OJ A 16/27.1.2005]
- **Act 4097/2012**, “Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment of Men and Women Engaged in an Activity in a Self-Employed Capacity – Harmonisation of the legislation with Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and the Council”, OJ A 235/3.12.2012 (Directive 86/613/EEC had not been transposed)
- **Act 4075/2012**, Articles 48-54, “Incorporation into Greek Law of Directive 2010/18/EU of the Council of the EU Implementing the Revised Framework Agreement on Parental Leave Concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and Repealing Directive 96/34/EC”, OJ A 89/11.4.2012
- **Presidential Decree 80/2012**, “Granting of Parental Leave and Leave of Absence to Workers under a Contract of Maritime Work on Vessels Bearing the Greek Flag, in accordance with Directive 2010/18/EU”, OJ 138/14.6.2012
- **Act 1756/1988**, Code on the Status of Judges, OJ A 35/2.2.1988
- **Act 3896/2010**, “Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Matters of Employment and Occupation. Harmonisation of Existing Legislation with Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and the Council”, OJ A 207/8.12.2010.
- **Act 3769/2009**, “Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment of Men and Women Regarding Access to Goods and Services and Their Supply”, transposing Directive 2004/113/EC, OJ A 105/1.7.2009, as amended by Article 162 of Act 4099/2012 implementing the CJEU Test-Achats judgment, OJ A 250/20.11.2012
- **Act 3488/2006**, “Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment of Men and Women Regarding Access to Employment, Professional Training and Evolution and Terms and Conditions of Work”, transposing Directive 2002/73/EC, OJ A 191/11.2006
- **Presidential Decree 105/2003**, “Adaptation of Domestic Law to Directive 97/80/EC on the Burden of Proof in Cases of Sex Discrimination,” OJ A 96/23.4.2003; repealed by Article 30(5) of Act 3896/2010 transposing Directive 2006/54/EC
- **Presidential Decree 87/2002**, “Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Occupational Social Security Schemes in Compliance with Directives 96/97/EC and 86/378/EEC”; repealed by Article 30(5) of Act 3896/2010 transposing Directive 2006/54/EC
- **Presidential Decree 176/1997**, “Measures for the Improvement of the Safety and Health at Work of Pregnant Workers and Workers Who Have Recently Given Birth or are

Breastfeeding in Compliance with Directive 92/85/EEC”, OJ A 150/15.7.1997, as amended by Decree 41/2003, OJ A 44/21.2.2003

- **Act 1483/1984**, “Protection and Facilitation of Workers with Family Responsibilities”, as amended by Article 25 of Act 2639/1998, OJ A 205/2.9.1998 implementing Directive 96/34/EC and by Article 46 of Act 4488/2017,7 and Article 54(1) of Act 4075/2012 transposing Directive 2010/18/EU
- **Act 1414/1984**, “Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment of the Sexes in Employment Relationships”, transposing Directives 75/117/EEC and 76/207/EEC, OJ A 10/2.1984
- **Presidential Decree 1362/1981**, “Replacement of Paragraph 1 of Article 33 of Act 1846/1951 “on Social Security” in compliance with Directive 79/7/EEC”, OJ A 339/30.12.1981
- **National General Collective Agreements (NGCAs).**

Relevant national legislation:

- **Act 4531/2018** (OJ A 62/5.4.2018) ratifying the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence of the Council of Europe (IC), signed by Greece on May 2011.
- **Act 4491/2017**, “Legal recognition of gender identity... etc”, OJ A 152/13.10.2017.
- **Act 927/1979**, OJ A 139/28.6.1979, implementing the CERD, as amended by Act 4285/2014, OJ A 191/10.9.2014 and Act 4491/2017, OJ A 152/13.10.2017.

The Operational Regime

This GEP is approved by the Regional Committee of the Region of Western Macedonia (Decision number 471/2025), by which it is embedded within the work of the organisation in accordance with the Internal Regulation currently in force.

The Region of Western Macedonia is a local self-governing legal entity under public law and is a strong self-governing institution, with a multitude of competencies and development responsibilities, which shapes policy at the local and regional level.

The Region of Western Macedonia includes the Prefectures of Grevena, Kastoria, Kozani and Florina. The seat of the Region is Kozani. Each prefecture also constitutes a Regional Unit and each prefectural capital is the seat of the respective Regional Unit.

Mission of the Region of Western Macedonia, as described in article 3 of Law 3852/2010 "New Architecture of Local Government and Decentralized Administration - Kallikratis Program" (Government Gazette 87A'/07-06-2010), is the planning, programming and implementation of policies at a regional level, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development and social cohesion, within the framework of national and European policies.

The Objectives of GEP

Region of Western Macedonia's GEP has three tangible objectives, towards:

1. Embedding a **gender-aware culture** in the organization by shifting traditional perceptions;
2. Practicing **excellence** through female personnel (technical or administrative) career development and training;
3. Making **decision-making more inclusive** by including more women in the process thus ensuring diversification of views.

To achieve these objectives Region of Western Macedonia focuses on four implementing methods, following the guidelines of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) aiming to “identify and implement innovative strategies to promote cultural change and equal opportunities in Organisations” (EIGE, <http://eige.europa.eu>). These methods are:

Method 1: Adopting a gender-sensitive policy in the organization;

Method 2: Training programs with an emphasis on the participation of more women to ensure equal opportunities for career development;

Method 3: Gender equality in recruitment and in assuming positions of responsibility

Method 4: Monitoring and reporting progress.

The Methodology

Following the methodological steps of:

Understanding → Planning → Implementing → Monitoring [EIGE]

Region of Western Macedonia undertook initial work to understand and analyse the current status with the aim to address imbalances in all five areas if possible.

The analysis of the current status – identification of strengths and weaknesses in relation to gender equality issues – was based on the collection and analysis of statistical data. Part of them was collected from the Administration Department.

The planning of activities was based on the systematization of existing good practices and/or the adoption of new ones. Knowhow exchange with counterpart organizations and GEP experts supported the scheduling/prioritizing of the desired interventions.

The implementation of any intervention requires an inclusive approach from the commitment of the upper management to the active involvement of all staff members. The mindset behind the success is *“responsibility of the individual and collaboration with the team”*. Pilot activities will be implemented, if necessary, to feedback on the effectiveness of the proposed activities and/or assist in the fine-tuning of their parameters.

As a final step, control and self–assessment based on proper indicators ensure that the GEP is a dynamic document and that the interventions proposed have real impact. The typology of the indicators, the time frame and the target values which they compare with, are selected on a consensus basis. Thus, the GEP is an open, adaptable manual evolving together with the evolution of the genders’ equality¹.

¹ **NOTE: Region of Western Macedonia** recognizes that its community may include people who do not identify with the binary construct of being either male or female, and who may be gender diverse, including those who affirm their gender as being different to the sex assigned at birth; who were born intersex or whose sex is indeterminate; or who identify as transgender or no gender.

Since the dialogue on equal treatment has matured mostly for the two main gender categories (women/men), the initial survey was accordingly adapted. In updated versions, Region of Western Macedonia may address the gender issues embedding an even more inclusive approach.

The Current Status

To identify the current status (2025) of the gender equality practices in Region of Western Macedonia within the areas previously identified, the following practices were used:

1. Aggregation of the woman / man personnel data for the year 2025;
2. Aggregation of the composition of the governing bodies of Region of Western Macedonia over the period for the year 2025.

1) Governance and decision making

Governance and decision making are the responsibility of the Governor of Region of Western Macedonia, the Deputy Governor, the Vice Governors, the General Secretary and the Heads of the Region's General Directorates, Directorates and Departments.

Table 1: Governor of the Region of Western Macedonia

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
TOTAL	1	1	1	1	1	1
Men	1	1	1	1	1	1
Women						

Table 2: Deputy Governor of the Region of Western Macedonia

	2025
TOTAL	1
Men	1
Women	

Table 3: Vice Governors of the Region of Western Macedonia

	2025
TOTAL	12
Men	10
Women	2

Table 4: General Secretary of the Region of Western Macedonia

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
TOTAL	1	1	1	1	1	1
Men	1	1	1	1	1	1
Women						

Table 5: Heads of the Region of Western Macedonia

a) General Directors

	2025
TOTAL	6
Men	5
Women	1

b) Directors

	2025
TOTAL	42
Men	24
Women	18

c) Heads of Departments

	2025
TOTAL	155
Men	71
Women	84

2) Gender composition of personnel

Table 6: Employees of Region of Western Macedonia

	2025
TOTAL	593
Men	288
Women	305

It is worth noting that:

- Over the period 2012 – 2025, only men held the position of the Governor of Region of Western Macedonia.
- It is noted that 51.43 % of the Region’s personnel are female and 48.57 % are male.
- It is noted that only 16.66 % of the General Directors are female.
- It is noted that 57.14 % of the Directors are male and 42.86 % are female.
- It is noted that 45.80 % of the Heads of Departments are female and 54.19 % are male.
- Due to the large number of employees of Region of Western Macedonia, the efforts to collect more data will be continuous and our Region’ s GEP is going to be subject to a process of completion and enrichment over the years to come.

The Methods of Intervention

The following actions are planned in order to achieve the objectives of our Organization towards Gender Equality:

- **Method 1: Adopting a gender-sensitive policy in the organization**

It is important to change the common way of thinking and common language in our working place, in relation to gender. To this direction, we will adopt a different practice according to the main use of masculine gender, both in our official and unofficial language.

- **Method 2: Training programs with an emphasis on the participation of more women to ensure equal opportunities for career development;**

It was noted above that men occupy the majority of positions of high responsibility in the Region of Western Macedonia. To moderate that phenomenon, we plan to organize training programs for our personnel referred to their field and to offer motivation to female employees to participate. This may help to change the ratio of men to women in positions of high responsibility in the long term in our Region. We believe that empowering individuals of all genders in research and innovation is essential for achieving the EU's overarching goals of equality, justice, and prosperity. Our commitment extends to providing equal opportunities for career development, training, and mentorship, particularly for underrepresented groups. We will ensure that all team members, regardless of gender, are provided with the tools they need to succeed and thrive.

- **Method 3: Gender equality in recruitment and in assuming positions of responsibility**

The recruitment process, as long as the process of selecting a manager, should take into account the gender factor not in the common way, but in the opposite way, giving to the female candidates equal evaluation points despite the fact that they may take leave from work due to maternity or other caring obligations. We will strive to create an inclusive environment where individuals of all genders are represented equally in leadership, decision-making, and project roles, ensuring that both women and men have the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the success of each initiative.

- **Method 4: Monitoring and reporting progress.**

We aim to monitor the implementation of our GEP constantly, in order to report progress in the field of gender equality, but also in order to update and enrich it in the future with more data.

The Regional Governor of Western Macedonia

Georgios Amanatidis

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