

HUN-REN Office for Supported Research Groups

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

(Gender Equality Plan)

(GEP)

Preamble

One of the main ambitions of research organizations is to enhance research performance and effectiveness, striving for excellence and quality. Introducing the dimension of gender equality into research and innovation content improves the overall quality of research design, hypotheses, protocols, and outcomes across many areas. This partially results in addressing gender bias and building more evidence-based and comprehensive research, while also contributing to multidisciplinary. As science and innovation become increasingly important to society and are often co-created with groups within society, reflecting the diversity of participants and users from the earliest stages of research is essential.

Attracting and retaining talented and creative researchers is a long-term investment that requires significant resources. Research organizations operate in a highly competitive environment; therefore, it is crucial to reach a wide pool of talent, including underrepresented women. The HUN-REN Office for Supported Research Groups (HUN-REN TKI, hereinafter the Employer) pays special attention to supporting the personal and professional development of its staff and to facilitating the realization of their full potential, thereby contributing to the long-term retention of researchers.

From the Communication of the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: “A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025 towards a gender-equal Europe. In continuing its activities, the Union strives to eliminate inequalities and promote equality between women and men.” Under the Treaties, the Union has a duty to promote equality between women and men in all its activities. Gender equality is one of the EU’s fundamental values, a fundamental right, and one of the most important principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights that embodies our identity. Gender equality is also an essential precondition for an innovative, competitive and thriving European economy. In business, politics and society as a whole, we can only reach our full potential if we harness all our talents and diversity. Gender equality creates more jobs and higher productivity—we must realize this opportunity just as we implement the green and digital transitions and face our demographic challenges. The European Union is a global leader in gender equality: of the 20 countries worldwide that lead in gender equality, 14 are EU Member States.

In line with the efforts of the European Union, the Hungarian legal system pays special attention to combating discrimination and promoting equal opportunities. This is affirmed by Act CXXXV of 2003. According to its Section 63 (4) budgetary bodies employing more

than fifty employees and legal entities under majority state ownership are obliged to adopt an equal opportunity plan. Accordingly, HUN-REN TKI has such a plan, which is available on its website.

Government Resolution 1004/2010. (I. 21.) set further goals within the National Strategy for the Promotion of Social Equality of Women and Men for the period 2010–2021. HUN-REN TKI is committed to implementing the EU's gender equality strategy at the institutional level.

This document, in harmony with HUN-REN TKI's regulations, establishes gender equality—an EU fundamental value and fundamental right—as the institution's official strategy, reinforcing the principles of the European pillar of Social Rights.

Recognizing every person's right to live as an individual of equal dignity, HUN-REN TKI issues the following Gender Equality Plan.

I. About the Gender Equality Plan

HUN-REN TKI makes every effort to create equal rights for employees, to prevent unlawful gender discrimination, and to minimize actions constituting sexual harassment. The concept of unlawful gender discrimination covers any person who suffers a disadvantage in the workplace due to their gender.

HUN-REN TKI also strives to achieve the following goals:

- 1) Reducing gender inequalities in employment;
- 2) Promoting a better balance between work/professional life and private/family life;
- 3) Reducing imbalances in the participation of men and women in science (where analysis of regular surveys makes this justified);
- 4) Taking measures necessary to prevent/handle workplace violence;
- 5) Supporting the fight against gender-related stereotypes.

1.1 Establishment of the GEP

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the European Union's principles of gender equality, with special regard to the guidelines applicable to Gender Equality Plans.

1.2 Scope of the GEP

This document applies to the operation and activities of HUN-REN TKI, to HUN-REN TKI employees, and to the entire premises of HUN-REN TKI.

1.3 Review of the GEP

This document must be reviewed annually in order to assess the effectiveness of the measures applied and, where necessary, to adopt new measures.

1.4 Resources Allocated to Gender Equality

Tasks related to updating the GEP are carried out by the Integrity Officer, who also performs the duties of Equal Opportunities Officer. Reports of sexual misconduct are handled by the Equal Opportunities Officer, currently József Kígyósi (phone: +36/70-000-2488, email: kigyosi.jozsef@tki-office.hu).

II. Presentation and Analysis of the Current Situation

Women make up half of the population, and their specific issues touch upon fundamental social questions. According to the 2011 census, in Hungary 47% of women aged 15–64 and 53% of men in this age group were employed. Women’s position in workplace hierarchies can be characterized as follows: the lower we go in the ranking of occupations, the more women we find among the holders of positions associated with lower earnings; the low proportion of female leaders indicates vertical segregation. Although the educational composition of working women has improved significantly in recent decades and Hungary’s higher education system overall provides more equal opportunities for women, the gender differences have not decreased; they are greatest among white-collar workers. The goal is to achieve balance in this area of equal opportunity as well.

In 2021, the European Commission proposed a directive titled “to strengthen the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women, by enhancing pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms.” The Directive requires organizations to ensure pay transparency within their structures, enabling employees to uncover and prove gender-based pay differences.

The first step of any change process is a careful assessment of the current situation to establish a baseline. For this purpose, HUN-REN TKI’s anonymized labor database with a reference date of 1 January 2025 was analyzed. We examined the ratios of men and women in each job and in logical job groups; among researchers, the data were further broken down by career stages. We assessed gender ratios in research group leader positions.

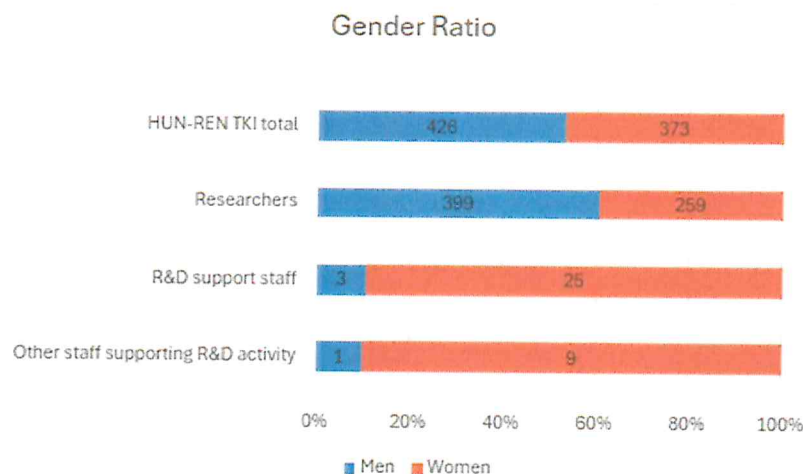
The phenomenon of the “pay gap”—where male employees receive higher pay in the same job—is well-known and researched. We examined whether this tendency can be observed in HUN-REN TKI as well; therefore, in comparable, well-characterized jobs we compared average gross salaries between genders.

Situation Assessment

The data reflect the status as of 1 January 2025.

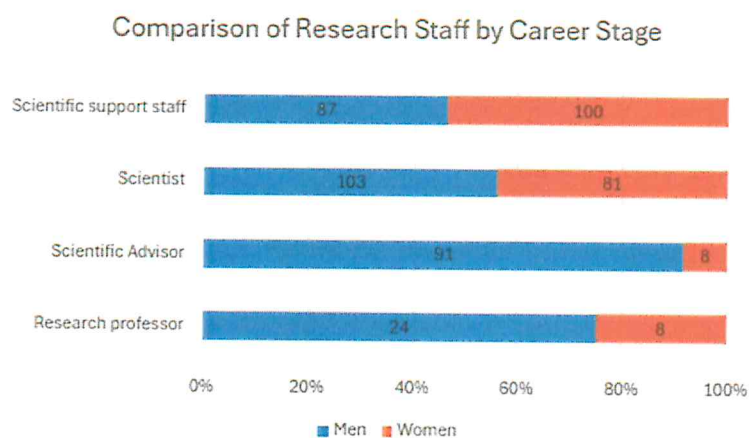
The Employer had 486 employees (average headcount/FTE).

2.1 Comparison of Headcount by Roles and Job Categories



Across HUN-REN TKI as a whole and in most job categories, a lower proportion of female employees can be observed. Breaking down ratios by job category within research-supporting roles does not provide meaningful information due to small numbers; however, they correspond to traditional gender roles (support activities primarily involve office and finance/administrative positions, in which a higher proportion of women is characteristic nationwide).

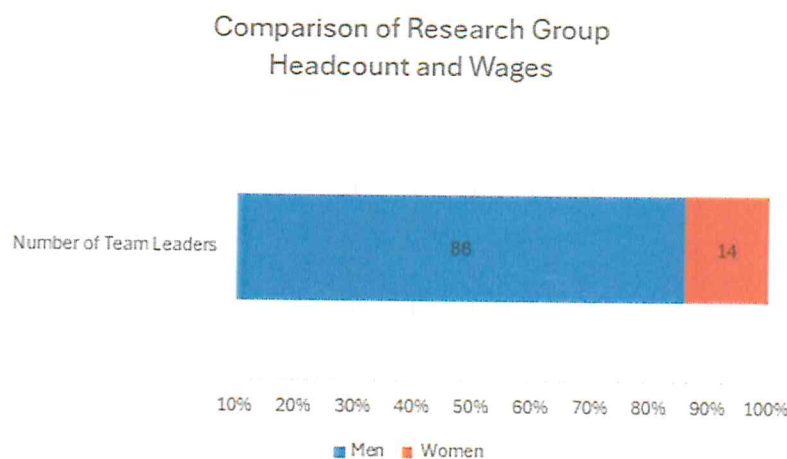
2.2 Comparison of Research Staff by Career Stage



Within the total number of researchers (employment headcount: 658 persons), men numbered 399 and women 259. Overall, the proportion of women within the total headcount is lower. At the lowest position—Research Assistant—the ratio of women to men is roughly equal, which is not an exceptionally poor figure.

A reassuring result was obtained from comparing average salaries of researchers grouped into the same positions by gender. In every category the gender differences were negligible. This is particularly encouraging in light of Eurostat's 2019 survey, which showed an average 17% pay surplus ("pay gap") in favor of men in Hungary's science/technology sector.

2.3 *Comparison of Research Group Leaders: Headcount and Pay*



A comparison of data for those in Research Group Leader positions showed a male majority. However, in terms of salaries, the amounts are identical; there is no difference between women and men. (HUN-REN TKI announces calls for proposals to establish research groups every two or three years. Evaluation criteria are the importance of the research field and the quality of the proposal. Among the most recent winners, the gender ratio improved slightly.)

III. **Interpretation of the Assessment, Identification of Intervention Points**

By looking at the data three trends can be identified that require continuous monitoring and, where necessary, intervention:

- 1) Female employees are underrepresented in certain job categories. It would be desirable to increase their proportion.
- 2) In research positions, the proportion of female employees decreases as career stages advance. Since universities apply objective, performance-based rules for advancement in academic positions—and HUN-REN TKI follows these—gender-based bias can be excluded as a cause. The so-called “leaky pipeline” phenomenon—showing worsening ratios at higher research grades—has long been

known and is generally observed in the natural sciences; efforts must therefore be made to mitigate it.

- 3) Among Research Group Leaders, the proportion of women is lower. Where possible (e.g., if there is a female candidate with the necessary abilities), efforts should be made to increase their share.

IV. Measures

An employee appointed by the employer is responsible for reviewing the implementation of this Equal Opportunities Plan and, by 31 December 2025, preparing a report on the review. The Equal Opportunities Officer's duties are performed by HUN-REN TKI's Integrity Officer in office at any time.

The Equal Opportunities Officer shall prepare the equal opportunities plan for the upcoming period and consult it with employees.

The appointed employee shall review, in an anonymous manner, any complaints submitted by employees and forward them to the employer.

HUN-REN TKI shall introduce measures to promote work-life balance by regulating flexible working hours and by reviewing their use to date. It shall explore institutional support options for those returning from maternity/paternity and parental leaves (CSED, GYED, GYES).

4.1. General Measures

Our fundamental principle is that women and men should have equal opportunities in employment. HUN-REN TKI strives to create such a balanced workplace and to ensure that work to promote gender equality receives adequate attention and resources. International experience shows that gender balance contributes to workforce retention as well.

HUN-REN TKI aims to establish a healthy work environment in which employees are not exposed to sexual harassment, and everyone is treated equally. We consider it important that employees know whom to turn to if they experience sexual harassment. To this end, HUN-REN TKI maintains an Equal Opportunities Officer service, currently provided by József Kígyósi (phone: +36/70-000-2488, email: kigyosi.jozsef@tki-office.hu).

HUN-REN TKI undertakes to inform current and new staff about the Gender Equality Plan and to make it publicly available on the HUN-REN TKI website (www.tki-office.hu), thereby enabling the broadest possible access.

The Employer shall prevent and prohibit discrimination against employees in the course of employment. This includes recruitment and employment—particularly compliance with Section 21 f) of Chapter III (Employment) of Act CXXV of 2003 on equal treatment and

the promotion of equal opportunities—as well as wages, income, benefits, training, further training, and other employment-related cases.

The prohibition of discrimination applies to any and all forms of discrimination against employees — particularly based on age, gender, marital status, nationality, race, origin, religion, political conviction, or disability.

4.2. Specific Measures

HUN-REN TKI undertakes that in any job category where one gender is clearly overrepresented; this will be taken into account during recruitment and — where professional qualifications are equal — the underrepresented gender will be given preference. HUN-REN TKI also undertakes to strive, in appointments to leadership positions, to give preference among candidates of equal professional quality and experience to the candidate of the gender underrepresented in the given position.

Therefore, HUN-REN TKI undertakes to:

- Support the reintegration of employees returning from CSED, GYED, and GYES (types of maternity/parental leave in Hungary);
- Provide, upon request, the possibility of reduced working hours for those returning from CSED, GYED, and GYES;
- Support opportunities for part-time employment;
- When approving the vacation schedules of employees raising children, take into account, where possible, kindergarten and school holidays;
- Within HUN-REN TKI's financial means, provide back-to-school support and education allowances, and strive to plan a social assistance budget line during annual budgeting;
- In the event of exceptional family circumstances (e.g., the birth of a child), provides leave from the annual leave entitlement; and
- Assist parents of young children — particularly single parents — in enabling them to fulfill both their work and family/household obligations. The employer must take into account the many different forms of family, considering responsibilities not only for children but also for other family members, e.g., elderly, ill, or disabled relatives. The employer shall not presume these are exclusively women's responsibilities and shall therefore make it possible to adjust work schedules to family needs, including the option of working from home where appropriate.
- Where needed (in underrepresented areas), organize training for employees to support the acquisition of leadership and mentoring skills.
- Within the framework of employment, the Employer strives to apply the principle of partnership by establishing transparent contractual relations, naturally while ensuring mutual benefits.

The prohibition of discrimination does not resolve all existing inequalities; therefore, we develop fair and flexible measures to improve and preserve employees' positions.

4.3. Ensuring Complaint Mechanisms

- In the event of a breach of equal treatment, harassment, unlawful segregation, or retaliation, the employee may contact the staff member assigned the duties of the Equal Opportunities Officer.
- If the nature of the case allows, the employee assigned the duties of the Equal Opportunities Officer shall, together with their opinion, present the complaint anonymously to the employer within 5 working days from the date of submission.
- To resolve the matter, the Employer is obliged to arrange an investigation. The investigation is conducted by the organizational unit designated by the Employer. The designated unit shall inform the Employer of the results of the investigation. If, even in light of the results, the Employer insists on taking the measure forming the basis of the complaint and the employee objects to it, the Employer may not implement the measure from the submission of the complaint to the Employer until the matter is resolved, but for no longer than 7 days.

If the complaint is not directed against a measure of the Employer and the investigation confirms the existence of the phenomenon objected to by the employee (harassment, violation of human dignity, etc.), the Employer is obliged to act immediately to eliminate the phenomenon.

- If the parties cannot reach an agreement, a mediator may be involved.
- The employee must be informed of the outcome of the procedure.

Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights – contact details:

1387 Budapest Pf. 40.

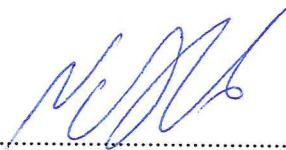
E-mail: panasz@ajbh.hu

Phone: (06-1-) 475-7100

V. Final Provision

This Equal Opportunities Plan enters into force on 1 January 2025 and is subject to annual review.

Budapest, 2 January 2025



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HUN-REN Office for Supported Research Groups

Dr. Attila Nyikos

director