



**GROUP FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION
(GIE)**

**GENDER EQUALITY PLAN
2026-2029**

Approved institutional document

Approval and entry into force: October 2026
Implementation period: October 2026 - December 2029
Mid-term review: 2028 | Final evaluation: 2029

Approval and institutional commitment

The Group for European Integration (GIE) adopts this Gender Equality Plan (GEP) as a formal institutional commitment to equal opportunities, equal treatment, non-discrimination, dignity, inclusion and the prevention of gender-based discrimination and harassment. The Plan applies to GIE's organisational practices, staff, governance, recruitment and professional development, as well as to the design and implementation of research, education, training and European cooperation activities.

The GEP is designed in line with the four process-related building blocks used by Horizon Europe for Gender Equality Plans: public commitment, dedicated resources, data collection and monitoring, and training/awareness raising. It also addresses the five recommended thematic areas: work-life balance and organisational culture; gender balance in leadership and decision-making; gender equality in recruitment and career progression; integration of the gender dimension into research and educational content; and measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

Approval Decision: No. 9 of 07.10.2026

President's approval and signature

President: Georgeta Chirleşan

Date of approval: 07 October 2026

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Document control

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1. About GIE and purpose of the Plan

The Group for European Integration (GIE) is a Romanian non-governmental organisation established in 2002. Its work covers education and training, research, social inclusion, lifelong learning, curriculum and resource development, non-formal and informal education, intercultural dialogue, civic engagement and European cooperation. GIE has participated in more than 40 European and international projects and works with schools, universities, VET and adult education providers, NGOs, public authorities and other stakeholders.

The purpose of this first institutional GEP is to consolidate gender equality as a systematic organisational principle and to translate it into measurable actions. The Plan establishes governance arrangements, a baseline and monitoring process, awareness-raising measures and concrete objectives for GIE's internal practices and its research, training and project activities.

The Plan enters into force on 07 October 2026. October-December 2026 is an establishment and baseline phase. Full implementation and annual monitoring will continue through 2027-2029.

2. Policy and legal framework

This GEP is informed by the European Union's commitment to gender equality and by the Horizon Europe framework for institutional Gender Equality Plans. GIE voluntarily applies the full Horizon Europe GEP standard as a quality framework appropriate to its research, education and European cooperation profile.

At national level, the Plan is aligned with Romanian Law no. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and equal treatment between women and men, as amended, which promotes equality and the elimination of sex-based discrimination in public and private life, including employment and education.

The GEP should be read together with GIE's applicable internal rules, employment arrangements, project ethics and safeguarding requirements, data-protection obligations and relevant national and EU anti-discrimination law.

3. Principles and scope

GIE will implement this Plan according to the following principles:

- Equal opportunities and equal treatment, irrespective of sex or gender.
- Zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and retaliation.
- Respect for dignity, privacy, confidentiality and procedural fairness.
- Evidence-informed decision-making based on proportionate, sex/gender-disaggregated monitoring.
- Work-life balance and an organisational culture supportive of diverse personal and caring responsibilities.
- Fair, transparent and competence-based recruitment, allocation of responsibilities and professional development.
- Meaningful integration of sex/gender considerations in research, projects, training and educational content whenever relevant.
- Intersectional awareness: gender may interact with disability, age, socioeconomic disadvantage, ethnicity and other circumstances.

The Plan covers GIE staff and leadership and, where relevant, experts, trainers, researchers, volunteers, project participants and other persons engaged in GIE-led activities. Project-specific rules and partner responsibilities remain applicable in addition to this Plan.

4. Governance and dedicated resources

Responsibility for the GEP rests with GIE's top management. Operational coordination will be assigned to a GEP Coordinator, supported by a small Gender Equality Working Group (GEWG). This proportionate structure reflects GIE's size while ensuring clear responsibility, continuity and access to relevant expertise.

GEP Coordinator: Dumitru CHIRLEȘAN, Founding Member

Gender Equality Working Group (GEWG):

- Sorin FIANU, Founding Member
- Alina Maria FILDIROIU, Member
- Lucia MIHAI, Member

Core responsibilities will include:

- coordinating implementation of the Action Plan and maintaining the annual monitoring file;
- collecting and reviewing proportionate sex/gender-disaggregated organisational data;
- proposing corrective or improvement measures when indicators reveal gaps;
- organising or facilitating awareness-raising and training;
- providing a confidential first point of contact or referral route for equality-related concerns;
- supporting project teams to consider the gender dimension where relevant;
- preparing an annual internal GEP progress note and coordinating the 2028 mid-term review and 2029 final evaluation.

GIE commits staff time and reasonable organisational resources to GEP implementation. Where specialist expertise is required, GIE may use external legal, equality, safeguarding or training expertise.

5. Baseline data, indicators and monitoring

Because this is GIE's first formal GEP, the organisation will establish its institutional gender baseline during October-December 2026 rather than retrospectively presenting monitoring systems that were not previously in place. The baseline will be proportionate to GIE's size and will respect data-protection and confidentiality requirements.

The 2026 baseline comprises 15 staff members: 8 women (53.3%) and 7 men (46.7%).

GIE's decision-making board consists of three members: one woman (33.3%) and two men (66.7%):

- President: woman
- Vice-President: man
- Scientific Secretary: man

Systematic monitoring of recruitment and professional-development indicators begins with the adoption of this GEP in 2026.

At minimum, annual monitoring will cover:

- staff composition by sex/gender, using data lawfully held by GIE;
- gender balance in leadership and formal decision-making roles;
- recruitment/applications/appointments where meaningful and data are available;
- participation in professional development and GEP-related training;
- work-life balance measures requested/used, reported only in aggregated form where appropriate;
- reported gender-equality, discrimination or harassment concerns, using anonymised/aggregated information and without compromising confidentiality;
- projects or major outputs in which a gender dimension was considered relevant and how it was addressed.

The GEP Coordinator will prepare an annual monitoring summary for management. Public reporting may present aggregated indicators and progress while protecting personal data and confidentiality.

6. Training and awareness raising

GIE will provide periodic awareness raising on gender equality and unconscious gender bias for staff and persons with decision-making or recruitment responsibilities. Training will be proportionate to organisational needs and may be delivered internally, through EU project resources, or by external specialists.

Actions will include:

- Introductory GEP briefing for all staff following adoption of the Plan.
- At least one gender-equality/unconscious-bias learning activity during each full implementation year (2027-2029).
- Targeted briefing for persons involved in recruitment, selection, appraisal or allocation of project responsibilities.
- Periodic awareness on prevention of harassment, respectful communication, bystander responsibility and confidential reporting.
- Guidance for project teams on integrating the gender dimension in research, needs analysis, training, dissemination and evaluation where relevant.

7. Thematic objectives and measures

7.1 Work-life balance and organisational culture

Objective: *Promote a respectful, inclusive organisational culture in which work arrangements take reasonable account of caring responsibilities and personal circumstances without creating gender disadvantage.*

Measure / action	Responsibility	Indicator / target	Timeframe
Maintain transparent and equitable access to flexible working arrangements where compatible with roles and project obligations.	Management / GEP Coordinator	Requests handled consistently; staff awareness	Ongoing
Review meeting and event scheduling to avoid unnecessary barriers linked to caring responsibilities.	Project managers / Management	Scheduling practice reviewed; concerns addressed	2027-2029
Include respectful communication, equality	GEP Coordinator	At least 1 relevant activity/year	2027-2029

and non-discrimination in GEP awareness activities.			
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7.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

Objective: *Maintain fair access to leadership, representation and decision-making opportunities and monitor potential gender imbalances.*

Measure / action	Responsibility	Indicator / target	Timeframe
Establish and annually review the sex/gender composition of formal leadership and decision-making roles.	GEP Coordinator / Management	Annual indicator available	Baseline 2026; annual
Use competence-based and transparent criteria when assigning leadership/project coordination roles.	Management	Criteria applied consistently	Ongoing
Where comparable candidates/experts are available, seek balanced representation in panels, events and project teams without compromising merit.	Project managers	Balance considered and documented where relevant	2027-2029

7.3 Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Objective: *Ensure fair and transparent recruitment, allocation of responsibilities and access to professional development.*

Measure / action	Responsibility	Indicator / target	Timeframe
Review recruitment and selection language/processes for unnecessary gender bias.	Management / GEP Coordinator	Review completed and guidance used	2027
Use role-related, competence-based criteria and, where feasible, more than one evaluator for recruitment/selection.	Management	Transparent selection records	Ongoing
Monitor access to training, project roles and professional-development opportunities by sex/gender where meaningful.	GEP Coordinator	Annual monitoring indicator	2027-2029

7.4 Integration of the gender dimension into research, projects, training and educational content

Objective: *Systematically consider whether sex/gender is relevant to the design, implementation, analysis and communication of GIE's research, training and project activities.*

Measure / action	Responsibility	Indicator / target	Timeframe
Add a gender-relevance check to the planning of new research and major educational/project activities.	Project/research leads	Gender relevance documented	From 2027
Where relevant, use sex/gender-sensitive data collection, analysis, examples, imagery and language.	Project teams	Evidence in relevant outputs	2027-2029
Consider intersectional factors when gender interacts with disability, age, socioeconomic disadvantage or other circumstances.	Project/research leads	Relevant analyses/materials reflect intersections	2027-2029

7.5 Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Objective: *Maintain a safe organisational environment with clear prevention, confidential reporting and proportionate response mechanisms.*

Measure / action	Responsibility	Indicator / target	Timeframe
Adopt and communicate a confidential reporting and response pathway for discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment.	Management / GEP Coordinator	Procedure adopted and communicated	By Dec 2026
Ensure concerns are handled promptly, confidentially, impartially and without retaliation, consistent with applicable law.	Management / designated contact	Procedure followed; records protected	Ongoing
Include harassment prevention and respectful workplace content in periodic awareness activities.	GEP Coordinator	Awareness activity delivered	2027-2029

8. Prevention of and response to gender-based violence and sexual harassment

GIE does not tolerate gender-based violence, sexual harassment, sex-based harassment, intimidation or retaliation. Any person covered by this Plan should be able to raise a concern without fear of adverse treatment. Reports will be handled on a need-to-know basis, with respect for confidentiality, data protection, the rights of all persons involved and applicable Romanian law.

The internal pathway will provide:

- a clearly identified confidential contact person and an alternative contact where the primary contact is involved or unavailable;
- options for informal advice and, where appropriate, formal reporting;
- prompt acknowledgement, risk assessment and proportionate action;
- protection against retaliation and unnecessary disclosure;
- referral to competent external authorities or specialist support when required or requested;
- secure, minimal and access-controlled record keeping.

Primary confidential reporting channel: gie@gie.ro

Alternative confidential contact: President of GIE, Georgeta Chirleşan at g.chirlesan@gie.ro

If a concern involves the President or another conflict of interest exists, an uninvolved member of the Gender Equality Working Group (GEWG) will be designated to handle the matter.

This GEP does not replace legal rights or external complaint/reporting mechanisms. Where conduct may constitute a criminal offence or otherwise requires external intervention, the person concerned will be informed about appropriate competent authorities and support options.

9. Implementation Action Plan 2026-2029

Period	Key actions	Responsibility	Main output/indicator
Oct-Dec 2026	Publication of the approved GEP; appoint Coordinator/GEWG; establish baseline; adopt confidential reporting pathway; communicate GEP internally.	President / Management / GEP Coordinator	GEP publicly available; roles appointed; baseline and procedure established
2027	First full implementation year: awareness/training; recruitment/process review; gender-relevance check introduced for new projects; annual monitoring.	GEP Coordinator / Management / project leads	Training delivered; monitoring summary; measures implemented
2028	Continue measures and training; annual monitoring; mid-term review and adjustment of targets/actions where needed.	GEP Coordinator / GEWG / Management	2028 progress review; revised actions if needed
2029	Continue implementation; annual monitoring; final evaluation; consult staff/management; prepare successor GEP.	GEP Coordinator / GEWG / Management	Final evaluation and next GEP prepared

10. Reporting, review and sustainability

Implementation will be monitored annually. The GEP Coordinator will consolidate indicators, completed actions, training activities, emerging needs and proposed improvements. Management will review progress and approve corrective actions where necessary.

A mid-term review will take place in 2028. The review will assess whether actions remain appropriate to GIE's size, staffing, project portfolio and legal obligations. The final evaluation in 2029 will inform a successor Gender Equality Plan so that institutional commitment continues beyond the present planning cycle.

The public GEP will remain accessible through GIE's website. Updates that materially change commitments, responsibilities or procedures will be formally approved and communicated.

Annex 1. Baseline and annual monitoring template

Indicator	2026 baseline	Monitoring approach	Frequency
Total staff	15: 8 women (53.3%); 7 men (46.7%)	Women / men / other categories only where lawfully and reliably recorded	Annual
Leadership/decision-making roles	3 board members: 1 woman (33.3%); 2 men (66.7%)	Number and percentage by sex/gender	Annual
Recruitment	Systematic monitoring begins with the GEP in 2026	Applicants/shortlisted/appointed where meaningful	Annual
Professional development	Systematic monitoring begins with the GEP in 2026	Participation by sex/gender where meaningful	Annual
GEP/gender-equality training	0 before formal GEP unless records show otherwise	Number of activities and participants	Annual
Gender-relevance in projects/research	Monitoring starts 2027	Number/share of relevant activities documenting a gender-relevance check	Annual
Equality/harassment concerns	Confidential system established 2026	Aggregated/anonymised case count and procedural learning only	Annual

Annex 2. Confidential reporting and response pathway

Step	Procedure
1. Seek information or raise a concern	Contact the primary confidential reporting channel or the alternative confidential contact identified in this GEP.
2. Immediate safety/confidentiality check	Assess urgent risks, explain confidentiality and available options, and avoid unnecessary disclosure.
3. Choose an appropriate route	Informal advice/resolution where appropriate and freely chosen, or formal internal handling; external options remain available.
4. Fair and proportionate response	Management/designated persons take appropriate steps, avoiding conflicts of interest and respecting the rights of all persons involved.
5. Outcome, support and follow-up	Communicate relevant outcome information, prevent retaliation, consider support/referral and identify any organisational learning.
6. Protected record keeping	Keep only necessary records, securely and with restricted access, in line with applicable data-protection requirements.

Reference framework

European Commission, Horizon Europe: Gender equality in research and innovation / Gender Equality Plans guidance. Official information: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-research-and-innovation/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en

European Research Executive Agency (REA), Gender in EU research and innovation. https://rea.ec.europa.eu/gender-eu-research-and-innovation_en

Romania, Law no. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and equal treatment between women and men, as amended. Official legislative portal: <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/228298>

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