



**Plan to Promote Equal and Non-Discriminatory Conditions
in the CESNET Association
for the Period 2025–2027**

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1. Introduction

The Plan for Promoting Equal and Non-Discriminatory Conditions in the CESNET Association for the Period 2025–2027, hereinafter referred to as the "Plan," was developed to further strengthen gender and intersectional equality and to foster a professional and non-discriminatory working environment within the organization and its daily operations. Through this Plan, CESNET, an association of legal entities (hereinafter referred to as the "CESNET Association"), explicitly commits to the principles of gender equality, equal treatment, diversity promotion, and the prohibition of any form of discrimination. Discrimination in this Plan is understood as defined by the Anti-Discrimination Act No. 198/2009 Coll., which also encompasses issues of gender identity and sexual orientation, pregnancy, and parenthood.

This document has been prepared in accordance with the requirements for a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) under the European Commission's Horizon Europe program and the Czech Science Foundation (GAČR).¹

The document also reflects the requirements of the Czech government, which emphasizes the implementation and promotion of gender equality principles, including in the fields of science and research.² The key guiding document in this regard is the Gender Equality Strategy for 2021–2030.

1 Websites of the European Commission and the NKC – Gender and Science (relevant to the Czech domestic context):

- https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en
- https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en#gender-equality-plans-as-an-eligibility-criterion-in-horizon-europe
- <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffcb06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-232129669>
- <https://genderaveda.cz/horizont-evropa>
- <https://genderaveda.cz/plany-genderove-rovnosti-jako-pozadavek-pro-ucast-v-soutezi-projektu-ga-cr-od-roku-2023/>

2 Particularly Chapter 8 on the Gender Equality Strategy for the Years 2021–2023, available online here: https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rovne-prilezitosti-zen-a-muzu/Aktuality/Strategie_rovnosti_zen_a_muzu.pdf

2. Context of this Document's Creation

The creation of this document was preceded by a gender audit. A comprehensive, structured baseline survey was conducted within the CESNET Association to assess the current situation in the areas of gender equality and equal opportunities more generally. This survey took place between April and August 2024.

The audit examined the integration of equality principles into internal documents, included a questionnaire distributed to all employees of the CESNET Association (hereinafter referred to as "employees"), organized focus group meetings, and conducted several individual interviews. Employees at all levels of the organizational structure were given the opportunity to express their opinions, provide input on working conditions, and share their personal experiences during the analysis. Additionally, the audit addressed various employee groups representing specific characteristics within the workforce.

A separate audit report summarizes the findings from this survey. The Plan was developed based on these findings.

3. Measures for Implementing the Plan

Specific measures and their implementation methods are detailed in a separate operational document titled "Measures for Implementing the Plan to Promote Equal and Non-Discriminatory Conditions in the CESNET Association for the Period 2025–2027" (hereinafter referred to as "Measures"). This document is classified as internal under the Rules for Information Management within the CESNET Association and is accessible to employees via the CESNET internal website (wiki.cesnet.cz).

The implementation of these Measures over the next three years aims to promote gender equality and further develop equal opportunities within the CESNET Association. In line with the European Commission's recommendations³ for this type of document, the Measures are divided into five key and interrelated areas, as follows:

- I. Gender balance within the organization, including decision-making positions
- II. Recruitment, career progression, training, and compensation
- III. Work-life balance, personal life, and family life
- IV. Prevention of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment
- V. The gender dimension of research

Each measure is formulated to enable ongoing monitoring and evaluation of its implementation. In addition to a description of each measure, the document specifies its objective, accountability, performance criteria, target group, financial resources, and timeline (in accordance with the so-called SMART framework⁴).

³ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en#gender-equality-plans-as-an-eligibility-criterion-in-horizon-europe

⁴ SMART = Specific – Measurable – Achievable – Realistic – Time-bound

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

The specific steps outlined in the operational document will be continuously monitored and implemented by the Equality Working Group in accordance with the established timelines. Additionally, the members of the Equality Working Group will conduct an annual evaluation of the Measures document. The evaluation will result in an annual report that assesses the implementation of planned measures, including a description of their progress, outcomes, and any further planned steps.

Responsibility for the implementation of the Measures lies with the Director of the CESNET Association. Given the cross-cutting nature of the measures and the necessity to effectively promote equality and equal opportunities on a daily basis, synergy among all employees, including those in leadership positions, is required.

Focused attention will be given to the collection and ongoing evaluation of aggregated statistical data on the representation of women and men in CESNET. Gender and other relevant statistics will be generated. The data monitoring will enable year-on-year comparisons, observation of long-term trends, and the adoption of any necessary corrective actions. Surveys will also consider age characteristics and other relevant variables beyond gender/sex to ensure that the collected data can be appropriately utilized.

5. Final Provisions

The CESNET Association is committed to the continuous implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the Plan and Measures, as well as to allocating the financial and human resources necessary to implement the Plan.

An essential component of promoting gender equality in practice is awareness-raising and education at all levels of the organization. Therefore, CESNET will contribute to achieving this goal through continuous educational and related activities.

CESNET will publish this document on its official website.

Prague, 19 December 2024

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