



IZMIR BIOMEDICINE
AND GENOME CENTER

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

(2022-2025)

IZMIR BIOMEDICINE AND GENOME CENTER

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I. SUMMARY

The Izmir Biomedicine and Genome Center (IBG)'s Gender Equality Plan (GEP) was prepared in 2021 and entered into force on 23.09.2022 with the approval. The IBG-GEP is a policy document covering the next three years (2022-2025) with which the IBG aims to implement actions and maintain a policy that contributes to ensuring gender equality and enhancing diversity regarding age, culture, physical ability, sexual orientation, multilingualism etc. for all its employees and students irrespective of their gender identity and expression.

IBG effectively started to operate in January 2018 as the first Thematic Research Center of Turkey. IBG is an independent research infrastructure funded by the Ministry of Industry and Technology. The authorities, duties and responsibilities of the Izmir Biomedicine and Genome Center (IBG) are determined by the "Law on Supporting Research Infrastructures" (Law) No. 6550 and its related regulations. The mission of IBG is to develop innovative technologies and products for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases using basic research in life sciences as a driving force. As a center of excellence in life sciences, IBG offers new generations a different path free from prejudice and stereotypes, as well as appreciating their individuality and originality.

After obtaining qualification under the Law No. 6550 in IBG, the Human Resources (HR) unit was established, and studies were carried out to improve and update the organizational chart, and to structure the personnel performance and development process in accordance with the provisions of the Law No. 6550. In this context, documents regarding IBG's Human Resources recruitment principles, gender equality and ethical rules to be followed by employees, which should be prepared within the scope of European Commission projects applications, were also prepared by APK and made visible in accordance with the principle of transparency.

The main principles followed in the IBG's HR Policy are as follows:

1. IBG respects the rights and other fundamental rights and freedoms of the personnel arising from the Labor Law and helps to protect their rights.
2. IBG aims to provide employment to qualified and unique people.
3. IBG aims to ensure that the work provided/given is as efficient as possible.
4. IBG values the talent that each personnel bring to the system and aims to benefit from their knowledge, experience, and opinions.
5. IBG supports each personnel to acquire the necessary qualifications to work in a job suitable for them; regardless of race, color, gender, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, it aims to enable them to use their qualities and abilities.
6. IBG supports individuals to receive vocational training aimed at equipping them with the skills and competencies required by the labor market.

7. IBG ensures that employees are supported with bonuses or bonuses for efficient and high performance, thus supporting working with high performance.
8. IBG evaluates positive/negative feedback and ensures that necessary measures are taken.

As of 2021, the total number of employees at IBG is 149 (researchers 59 (40%), technicians 53 (35%), administrative staff 37 (25%). The 73% of them are permanent staff and 27% work on secondments. In addition, a total of 191 people, including 92 fellows, 7 project staff, 23 visiting researchers, and 69 non-scholar students conduct their research at IBG. In addition, there are 24 people who support the needs of the institution through service procurement. The overall number of employees is 364. Approximately 73% of this number consists of people doing research. 3 of our personnel are disadvantaged, 53% of them are women. The number of foreign researchers conducting their research at IBG is 9.

This Gender Equality Plan is prepared in line with Labor Law No.4857, Law No.6550, 11th Development Plan, and the European Commission Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025. This document describes a set of commitments and actions aiming to promote gender equality through institutional and cultural change. IBG commits itself implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the objectives of GEP as a part of its Strategy Document.

II. KEY OBJECTIVES

Izmir Biomedicine and Genome Center started the preparation of the Gender Equality Plan with the following objectives:

1. To raise awareness and increase the sensitivity and level of knowledge about Gender Equality at IBG and within its network.
2. To implement gender-neutral communication strategy
3. To put a new complexion on gender equality in research & innovation, in terms of career development, employment terms and conditions, rewards systems, opportunities to achieve a work–life balance, working conditions, amount of sick or parental leave accessible, etc.
4. To maintain the gender balance in leadership and management, at all levels of decision-making.
5. To ensure gender equality principles in the Recruitment, selection, and hiring processes.
6. Improving existing mechanisms for the prevention of sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and discrimination
7. To monitor and evaluate the process of structural changes and for effective implementation of measures.

III. ACTION PLAN

The five main areas suggested by the European Commission (European Commission, 2020) are covered by the Gender Equality plan and indicators primarily are:

1. Organizational Culture & Capacity Building
2. Work-Life Balance
3. Leadership and Decision-Making
4. Recruitment, Promotion and Career Progression
5. Integration of Gender Dimension in Research and Teaching
6. Measures Against Gender-Based Violence

The action plan and guidelines for each area is detailed below:

1. ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE & CAPACITY BUILDING

- a. *Data Collection, Monitoring and Reporting:* Systematic sex or gender-disaggregated data collection will be ensured and reflected on the Strategy Document and Annual Reports
- b. *Trainings:* Annual trainings will be organized for all IBG staff for continuous awareness raising about GEP and discuss ownership and inclusion to maximize the capacity-building efforts.
- c. *Use of gender-neutral language:* Attention will be paid to prepare all IBG communications in a gender-neutral language.
- d. *Resources:* IBG will allocate funding for Gender Equality Team will be established at IBG to plan the implementation and sustain the organizational structure change through workshops and communication activities.
- e. *Networking:* Gender Equality Team members will take active part in at least one gender equality workshops or meetings annually to utilize external best practices and for further improvements.

2. WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- a. *Conduct Satisfaction Survey:* HR Department will conduct an employee satisfaction survey annually including gender equality aspects in the evaluation to understand the fulfilment of employees about the workplace and working conditions
- b. *Skills development of evaluators:* All relevant personnel (i.e., Human resources manager, program committee directors, assistant directors, etc.) will receive internal/external training on how to best evaluate the effects of breaks and part-time work on the applicant's performance.

- c. *Encourage paternity leave:* While the length of paternity leave is short compared to maternity leave, male academics and personnel will be encouraged to extend it via part-time work. Incentives such as flexible hours will also be provided when necessary.
- d. *Encourage flexible working:* Flexible working rules will be established for employees and a guideline will be published.

3. LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING:

- a. *Encourage leadership:* Increasing the number of women researchers and administrative staff at all levels of management and decision-making positions.
- b. *Training:* Annual trainings will be provided decision-makers and leaders with gender equality and gender-bias trainings.
- c. *Gender Dimension:* Gender balance at all decision-making bodies and committees (e.g. executive committee, advisory board, research program committee etc.) will be ensured.
- d. *Encourage leadership in R&I:* Promote women leadership in research groups, make the women project coordinators more visible

4. RECRUITMENT, PROMOTION AND CAREER PROGRESSION:

- a. *Female representation will be kept >45% for each:*
 - i. Management (Departments as outlined in IBG's Organization Chart: Director, Assistant Directors, Financial Affairs, Purchasing, Information Technologies, Education and Communication, Human Resources, Support Services, Technical Infrastructure, Research Support, Quality Management, Project Office, Management Information Systems)
 - ii. Research Programs (Group leaders and research personnel working in research labs)
 - iii. Technology Platforms (Drug Analysis and Control Lab, IBG-NEVCELL, IBG-PHARMA, IBG-Biobank, IBG-BIP Bioinformatic Platform)
 - iv. Research Support Units (Vivarium, Flow Cytometry and Cell Sorting, Electron Microscopy, Optical Imaging and Histopathology, Laboratory Support Units)
 - v. Administrative offices
- b. *HR Policy:* The HR Policy will be updated that guarantees gender equality in the recruitment process which leads to HRS4R certification and ensure gender balance in all recruitment committees.

- c. *Job Vacancies*: IBG will use gender-neutral language in vacancy advertisements and disseminate vacancies on at least 3 platforms and/or websites to reach equally qualified people from all genders.
- d. *Evaluation of achievements*: Breaks and periods of part-time work due to maternal leave will be considered when the employees are evaluated for their achievements. During promotion applications, an opportunity of the applicant will be considered in parallel with achievements, rather than separately.
- e. *Education and training of academics*: Academics, management and platform personnel will receive training on career planning and soft-skill development. Online webinars, workshops, and other training modalities will be provided to employees at all levels.
- f. *Provide career support for female academics with caring responsibilities*: For the early- and mid-career female academics, a support program will be in place that will aim to prepare and support them before, during and after their maternal leave. The program will include a dedicated person from the HR office, the Business Development and Commercialization Unit, and a psychologist/psychiatrist.
- g. *Follow-up*: Feedback from the applicants will be sought regarding their evaluation of the recruitment process in terms of gender equality. Also, analyze systematically the reasons behind resignations for female and male employees.

5. GENDER DIMENSION IN RESEARCH AND TEACHING

- a. *Education and training of ESRs*: To increase the level of knowledge, new courses will be included into the curriculum for Early-Stage Researchers for the gender equality dimension in research activities.
- b. *Raising awareness*: IBG researchers will ensure awareness of / commitment to gender equality and diversity in workshops and events
- c. *Entrepreneurship*: Business Development and Commercialization Unit will promote women researchers to participate in technology-based entrepreneurship programs.
- d. *Gender Dimension*: Improve gender balance among fellows and technicians in research teams in each PIs' Lab.
- e. *Funding Opportunities*: Business Development and Commercialization Unit at IBG will promote and encourage women scientists at all levels to apply for specific grants.
- f. *Scientific Events*: Gender balance among the speakers at IBG events and weekly seminars will be ensured.

6. MEASURES AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- a. *Awareness Raising:* Repetitive trainings will be provided on gender-based violence, discrimination, and sexual harassment to all IBG staff, fellows, top-management, and newcomers.
- b. *Policy Document:* IBG will develop and publish a Discipline Committee Policy to prevent discrimination, harassment, violence, and mobbing and act appropriately in corresponding incidents
- c. *Support Mechanisms:* IBG will develop viable complaint and victim support mechanisms to tackle mobbing, harassment, sexual assault, and violence and make sure its public.
- d. *Contact Point:* One person from GEP team will be appointed for the topics of discrimination and harassment complaints for communication with IBG staff.

SECTIONS	NO	ACTIONS	2022	2023	2024	2025	RESPONSIBILITY
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE& CAPACITY BUILDING	1.1	<i>Data Collection, Monitoring and Reporting</i>	x	x			Human Resources, Management Information Systems Department, GEP Team
	1.2	<i>Capacity Building Trainings</i>	x	x	x	x	Education and Communication Department, GEP Team
	1.3	<i>Use of gender-neutral language</i>	x	x	x	x	Education and Communication Department
	1.4	<i>Resources</i>		x			Director, Board of Directors, GEP Team
	1.5	<i>Networking</i>	x	x	x	x	GEP Team
WORK-LIFE BALANCE	2.1	<i>Survey</i>	x	x	x	x	HR, GEP Team
	2.2	<i>Skills development of evaluators</i>	x	x	x	x	HR, Education and Communication Department, GEP Team
	2.3	<i>Encourage paternity-leave</i>	x				Human Resources, Director
	2.4	<i>Encourage flexible working</i>	x				Human Resources, Director
LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING	3.1	<i>Encourage leadership</i>	x	x	x	x	Human Resources, Director, Program Committee Directors, Business Development and Commercialization Department

	3.2	<i>Capacity Building Trainings</i>	x	x			Education and Communication Unit, GEP Team
	3.3	<i>Gender Dimension</i>	x	x	x	x	Director, Board of Directors,
	3.4	<i>Encourage leadership in R&I</i>	x	x	x	x	Business Development and Commercialization Unit
RECRUITMENT, PROMOTION AND CAREER PROGRESSION	4.1	<i>Gender Dimension</i>	x	x	x	x	HR and Unit Managers
	4.2	<i>HR Recruitment Policy</i>		x			Human Resources, Director and Board of Directors
	4.3	<i>Job Vacancy Advertisements</i>	x	x	x	x	Human Resources, Communication and Education Department
	4.4	<i>Evaluation of achievements</i>	x	x	x	x	Human Resources, Director, Program Committee Directors
	4.5	<i>Education and training of academics</i>	x	x	x	x	Program Committee Directors, Business Development and Commercialization Unit, Communication and Education Department
	4.6	<i>Provide career-support for female academics with caring responsibilities</i>	x	x	x	x	HR, Program Committee Directors, Business Development and Commercialization Unit
	4.7	<i>Follow-up</i>	x	x	x	x	Human Resources
GENDER DIMENSION IN RESEARCH AND TEACHING	5.1	<i>Education and training of ESRs</i>		x	x	x	PIs, GEP Team
	5.2	<i>Raising Awareness</i>	x	x	x	x	PIs, GEP Team

	5.3	<i>Entrepreneurship</i>	x	x	x	x	Business Development and Commercialization Unit
	5.4	<i>Gender Dimension</i>	x	x	x	x	PIs, GEP Team
	5.5	<i>Funding Opportunities</i>	x	x	x	x	Program Committee Directors, Business Development and Commercialization Unit
	5.6	<i>Scientific Events</i>	x	x	x	x	Program Committee Directors, Education and Communication Unit, GEP Team
MEASURES AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	6.1	<i>Awareness Raising</i>	x				Human Resources Education and Communication Unit, GEP Team
	6.2	<i>Policy Document</i>		x			Human Resources, Director, Board of Directors, GEP Team
	6.3	<i>Support Mechanisms</i>		x			Human Resources, Director, Board of Directors, GEP Team
	6.4	<i>Contact Point</i>		x			Human Resources, Director, Board of Directors, GEP Team