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Gender Equality Plan

The Institute of Photonics and Electronics (ÚFE) is a public research Institution of the Czech Academy of Sciences, and as such it has accepted the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers including the rules and plans for gender equality embodied in these documents. Consequently, this Gender Equality Plan has been introduced as a tool for human resources planning and development in the area of gender. By this document the Management states that the principles of equal treatment and gender equality are followed in all institutional activities and applied to all positions, nomination to professional bodies, remuneration, and the recruitment process. The Institute strives to identify and hire the most qualified candidates and, at the same time, it seeks to bring people of different ages, ethnic backgrounds, or cultures into the Institute, so that the diversity of the community is being developed. The procedures adopted by the Institute in the area of human resources are open, transparent, and merit-based. Since ÚFE is aware of the importance of organizational culture and work-life balance, it has implemented several measures to support the employees on maternity/paternity leaves and to facilitate their return to the workplace.

The Institute has also established a working group responsible for implementation of the principles included in the Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and the Gender Equality Plan (hereinafter only GEP Working Group). Appropriate financial and human resources have been dedicated for introduction of the Gender Equality Plan; annual collection of data of the employees (including students) disaggregated on their gender; as well as for organization of relevant training to raise awareness of gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers, e.g. the event "Women in Optics".

The working group evaluated the thus far implemented activities / measures and defined following priorities in the monitored areas:

Reconciling personal and professional life and organizational culture:

- Further support for employees returning from parental leave through individual consultations;
- Support for pre-school children's parents and persons as caring for the closely related person (possibilities of part-time work, home office, flexible working conditions, children's groups possibilities e. g. at nearby workplaces of the Czech Academy of Sciences etc.)

Gender balance in management and decision making:

- Monitoring of the share of women at commissions and committees, support for the balanced access to / participation in the leadership while maintaining its professional level.

Gender equality in recruitment and career

- Raising awareness of the possibilities for career growth.
- Consideration of gender sensitivity in job advertisements, internal competitions, and job interviews.

Integration of gender dimension into research and tuition

Research in the field of photonics and electronics is not directly related to gender issues, therefore it is usually not relevant to integrate the gender dimension into the subject of research. However, given that the results of research and innovation can affect society and the quality of life also regarding the gender dimension, these aspects must be consistently identified and subsequently taken into account when planning and carrying out research tasks.

- Offer of gender-related issues within the planned training courses or workshops (Identification of gender-related issues in the research, Work-life balance, etc.)
- Increase attractiveness of the fields represented at the ÚFE for women candidates in cooperation with secondary schools and universities.

Company culture against gender-based violence

- Strict intolerance of all morally unacceptable forms of behaviour, including sexual harassment.

We are proud that the international evaluation board appreciated our efforts in creating work-life balance conditions, organizational culture and approaches towards possible gender issues stating: *“The institute endorses the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, and works to ensure that the HR policies and procedures of the institute are developed and applied in accordance with these standards. In addition, a truly international work environment has been achieved with postdocs from abroad bringing stimulating ideas and extending the professional network. The institute employs a rather high percentage of females and part time employment is possible. This all is very satisfying.”* As this evaluation is binding for us, we further intend to support the development of human resources and to promote gender related issues.

In the coming period of 2024-2025, in addition to continuous monitoring of the priorities set above, the ÚFE will mainly focus on the following specific points:

- 1) Support of parents of children in preschool age, namely by further steps aimed at establishing a children's group at the workplace. This activity is carried out by the Department of Services, it is assumed that by the end of 2024 the Feasibility Study of the Implementation of the Children's Group at the Institute of Photonics and Electronics will be prepared. The person responsible for the performance of the task is the deputy director for technical issues.
- 2) In 2023, the ÚFE participated in a large-scale investigation of the prevalence of gender-based violence in the Czech academic environment, which was carried out by the NKC Gender and Science. Its results and possible recommendations will be summarized in an institutional report and provided to the management of the ÚFE during 2024. The conclusions of the report will be treated by the GEP Working Group, including the possible implementation of relevant measures. The results will also be presented at the 8th National conference on gender and science organized by the NKC – gender and science at the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic on Tuesday, September 10, 2024. Representatives of the ÚFE will also participate in this conference. The GEP Working Group is responsible for assessing and implementing any measures, ideally by the end of 2024.
- 3) Monitoring the ratio of men and women at the workplace within departments and work groups. The personnel of the ÚFE is responsible for monitoring whose results will be provided to the management during January 2025 and, depending on them, appropriate measures will be taken.

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