

Gender Equality Plan

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Introduction

Transilvania IT Cluster is a connection point among diverse local, regional, national and international actors, interested in digital transformation and enhancing collaboration via creating and consolidating a digital ecosystem, involving start-up communities, the local public authorities, technology companies and universities. At this point, due to the multitude and diversity of members, equity and equality are key principles which lead our activities and projects. In this way, to be in conformity with European standards of work and to increase the well-being of our workers, our cluster promotes equality on every social level, inclusively, gender equality.

Transilvania IT Cluster includes gender equality as an organizational value and approach, recognizing and valuing the diversity of its staff based on language, cultural background, gender, age, religion, geographical region, sexual orientation, functional disability and socio-economic situation. An illustrative argument for this statement is our organizational situation where more than 50% of workers are women. However, even if important progress has been made in recent years towards achieving gender equality, much remains to be done.

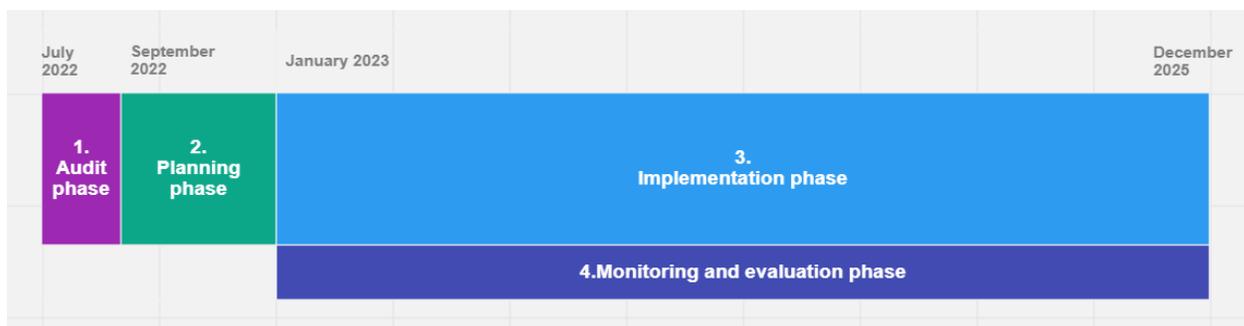
In order to meet European recommendations, Transilvania IT Cluster's Gender Equality Plan is built on the following principles:

1. **Equality** – every person, regardless to his/her provenance, nationality, gender, religion etc., is equal and, therefore, should be treated equally;
2. **Equity** – every person should be treated fairly and impartially;
3. **Responsiveness** – every gender-based problem should be settled as quickly as possible;
4. **Tolerance** – every person or his/her views shouldn't be discriminated;
5. **Transparency** – every information related to gender equality will be addressed to the public and will be easily accessible and easy to understand;



Also, the plan gathers four phases planned for a period of 3,5 years:

1. **Audit phase** (July-August 2022) – the collection of gender-disaggregated data and a review of practices to identify gender inequalities and their causes;
2. **Planning phase** (September-December 2022) – setting objectives and targets for the GEP alongside a roadmap of activities;
3. **Implementation phase** (January 2023-December 2025) – implementing the roadmap of activities;
4. **Monitoring and evaluation phase** (January 2023-December 2025) – analyzing annual reports and the progress of implementation and, at the same time, providing space for learning and feedback to enable adjustments and improvements to interventions.



The structure of the following plan is designed to meet EU Gender Equality Plan standards. In this way, after the introductory part which briefly presents the overview of gender equality situation of Transilvania IT executive team, the GEP reveals the definitions and the principles which were at the center of its creation. Analogically, the first chapter is dedicated to the legislative framework at both European and national level which served as sources of inspiration for plan's drafting. The following parts present the goal and objectives of Transilvania IT's Gender Equality Plan, as well as, the activities which will be implemented in order to reach them. Finally, there is a chapter assigned to monitoring implementation of GEP which will represent an assurance that assumed responsibilities are respected and that suitable conclusions are drawn.



Definitions

- **Equality between women and men (gender equality):** refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.¹
- **Gender:** refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context.²
- **Gender-Based violence:** refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender.³
- **Gender sensitive:** to understand and give consideration to socio-cultural norms and discriminations in order to acknowledge the different rights, roles & responsibilities of women and men in the community and the relationships between them.⁴

¹ UN Women, „Concepts and definitions”, <https://www.unhcr.org/gender-based-violence.html#:~:text=Gender%2DBased%20violence%20refers%20to,of%20power%20and%20harmful%20norms>, accesat în 21.08.2022.

² Ibidem.

³ UNHCR, Gender-based Violence, <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>, accesat în 21.08.2022.

⁴ UN-REDD Programme, Gender sensitive, <https://www.un-redd.org/glossary/gender-sensitive>, accesat în 14.09.2022.

1. Legislative framework

A key factor for the successful implementation of Gender Equality Plan represents the creating of an effective and favorable legislative framework at both European and national level. Therefore, in order to have a better result regarding respecting and promoting gender-equality values, all activities and projects implemented by Transilvania IT Cluster are based on the strategies, policies and recommendations adopted by European and Romanian decision-making bodies.

1.1. European approach on gender equality

At European level, mostly, the main sources of inspiration for our GEP are the following documents:

1.1.1. EC's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025

The EU Gender Equality Strategy is a multianual pathway for achieving a Union of Equality by 2025. The main goal of strategy is represented by a Union where everybody are free to pursue their chosen path in life, have equal opportunities and can equally participate in and lead European society. In terms of objectives, the European Union propose an active fight against gender-based violence, challenging gender stereotypes, closing gender gaps in the labour market etc.⁵

⁵ European Commission, „Gender Equality Strategy”, https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en, accesat în 17.08.2022.

1.1.2. European Pact for Gender Equality

Originally being adopted in 2006, European Pact for Gender Equality was adapted to actual gender-based challenges and updated in March 2011. The document focuses on addressing contemporary problems related to gender equality via ensuring equal participation of women in decision-making, strengthening the prevention of violence against women and protection of victims, improving the supply of affordable and high-quality childcare services etc.⁶

1.2. National approach on gender equality

In the same way, at national level, mostly, the main sources of inspiration for our GEP are the following documents:

1.2.1. Romania's National Strategy for Equality of Chances between men and women

Romania's National Strategy for Equality of Chances between men and women is based on a long-term approach focusing on changing mindset of citizens, especially of young people in order to build an equal and tolerant community in the future. At this point, the main objectives of strategy are: introducing the concept of „gender equality” in school curriculum, encouraging women participation in decision-making processes, promoting a balance between professional and private life etc.⁷

⁶ EurWORK, „European Pact of Gender Equality”, *Eurofound*, 31 August 2017, <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/industrial-relations-dictionary/european-pact-for-gender-equality>, accesat în 17.08.2022.

⁷ Agenția Națională pentru Egalitatea de Șanse între Femei și Bărbați, „Strategia națională privind promovarea egalității de șanse și de tratament între femei și bărbați și prevenirea și combaterea violenței domestice pentru perioada 2018-2021”, 2018, <https://anes.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Strategia-Nationala-ES-si-VD.pdf>, pp. 19-20.

2. Goal

The main goal of this plan is to reach a complete organizational gender equality situation and to encourage an analogical direction for cluster-members companies and our partners. In order to achieve this aim, the plan is built on three different, but interconnected dimensions: equal opportunities, fighting against gender-based violence and raising awareness on gender issues.

3. Objectives and measures

Objective 1. Improve the dimension of gender-sensitivity and gender equality across Transilvania IT programmes, projects and activities

A.1.1. Include gender equality principles in all projects and programmes planning.

A.1.2. Use gender equality research methodologies and practices in research and survey methodologies.

A.1.3. Include workshops/presentations/research on gender in/and tech issues among Transilvania IT activities



Objective 2. Raise awareness on gender issues and gender equality practices among Transilvania IT executive team

A.2.1. Institutionalize the mechanisms of gender equality implementation through appointing a special person for a two-year term, with the possibility of renewal once, responsible for preventing, addressing and solving gender-based problems who, also, will be in charge with holding a special training every year which is aimed to promote gender-equality, equity and multiculturalism as a part of our organizational culture. Appointment will be undertaken by Executive Manager after consultation of entire cluster team (January-February 2023).

A.2.2. Organize trainings for staff and collaborating specialists twice a year, on gender-related topics, such as „Factors which contributes to gender-based violence”, „Gender equality – challenges and opportunities”, “ Gender sensitivity in professional environments” etc. (April; October 2023-2025);

A.2.3. Monitor and evaluate implementation of training recommendations and conclusions in internal organizational ecosystem. At this point, special-appointed person will be responsible for preparing every year a report related to internal gender equality situation (December 2023-2025).

A.2.4. Participate and contribute to 4 relevant industry events, such as “Women in Tech” conferences, in a period of three years (January 2023 – December 2025).

Key Performance Indicators:

No. of special-appointed persons on gender equality issues: 1;

No. of trainings: 6;

No. of reports: 3;

No. of participations and contributions to relevant industry events: 4.



Objective 3. Ensure equal opportunities for potential and actual workers of Transilvania IT executive team

A.3.1. Create a recruitment methodology (responsible for the activity– special-appointed person) which will contain a relevant grading system for being employed at Transilvania IT Cluster. At this point, the received grades will constitute the base of competition among candidates and will represent the proof which demonstrates that employers were selected according to their skills, not their gender (March - August 2023);

A.3.2. Upload recruitment methodology on social-media and website of Transilvania IT Cluster. In this way, a public recruitment methodology will be an assurance for potential candidates that they will not be discriminated on the basis of gender, religion, nationality etc. (September 2023).

A.3.3. Revision of internal working regulations via updating key indicators which permit to every worker to achieve a managerial position or, generally, a decision-making position in cluster (April-September 2023);

A.3.4. Inform actual workers regarding to revision of internal working regulations (October 2023).

Key Performance Indicators:

No. of created methodologies: 1;

No. of revised internal regulations: 1.



Objective 4. Elimination and prevention of gender-based violence in the Transilvania IT working process

A.4.1. Develop a mechanism of prevention of gender-based violence (responsible – special-appointed person) which will be revised every year by the Executive Manager of Transilvania IT Cluster (September – December 2023);

A.3.1.2. Monitor and evaluate implementation of the mechanism of prevention of gender-based violence via presenting annual reports by special appointed person (December 2024-2025);

Key Performance Indicators:

No. of developed mechanisms: 1;

No. of annual reports: 2.

5. Monitoring, learning and capacity development

In order to achieve a better impact of Gender Equality Plan, the implementation of GEP will be monitored by the special-appointed person on gender issues and by Executive Manager of Transilvania IT Cluster. At this point, every December, the special-appointed person will present two reports (the first with regard to gender equality situation in cluster and the successfulness of implemented actions, and the second referring to the implementation of the mechanism of prevention of gender based violence) which will be discussed by all members of team and will serve as an valuable experience for gender equality plans or strategies. Also, due to annual meetings between Transilvania IT Cluster and its member-companies, there will be created a necessary ecosystem of sharing knowledge and experiences, which will contribute to a better development of gender situation, not only in our association, but in the whole its network.

In the same way, if the activities achieve proposed aim and objectives, this Gender Equality Plan will be revised as soon as possible. At this point, the next GEP will take in consideration successes and failures of previous version and, probably, will address a bigger number of challenges and will involve more partners, in order to have an impact not only on local or regional level, but also on a national and, even, international one.



6. Bibliography

1. Agenția Națională pentru Egalitatea de Șanse între Femei și Bărbați, „Strategia națională privind promovarea egalității de șanse și de tratament între femei și bărbați și prevenirea și combaterea violenței domestice pentru perioada 2018-2021”, 2018, <https://anes.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Strategia-Nationala-ES-si-VD.pdf>.
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3. EurWORK, „European Pact of Gender Equality”, *Eurofound*, 31 August 2017, <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/industrial-relations-dictionary/european-pact-for-gender-equality>.
4. UN Women, „Concepts and definitions”, <https://www.unhcr.org/gender-based-violence.html#:~:text=Gender%2DBased%20violence%20refers%20to,of%20power%20and%20harmful%20norms>.
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