



EURO-ARGO ERIC

EUROPEAN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE CONSORTIUM

Gender Equality Plan 2022-2025

Status: Version 1 final
Approved by: Euro-Argo ERIC Management Board on 14 September 2022
Signed by: Yann-Hervé De Roeck, Programme Manager, Euro-Argo ERIC
on 3 October 2022

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Yann-Hervé De Roeck". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

INTRODUCTION

Euro Argo ERIC is a European Research Infrastructure Consortium set up to coordinate and strengthen the European contribution to the international Argo programme. It is made up of a central infrastructure acting under arrangements with independent distributed national legal entities and facilities. The present Gender Equality Plan (GEP) only applies to the central infrastructure, that is, the office and the governance.

It is always a challenge to define a GEP for a small entity with a very flat hierarchical structure. Moreover, since its establishment in 2014, the majority of Euro Argo ERIC's small staff is female and, until September 2022, its director has also been a woman (see Annex 1). Still, Euro Argo ERIC and its governing bodies are well aware of the necessity to foster and advocate a culture of equality between genders in the management of the office, the conduct of its operations and its activities. The present GEP reflects the actions which are being or will be implemented in the near future to reach this objective. It follows the structure recommended by the European Commission albeit with some deviations, as not all identified areas of actions are relevant for the ERIC.

The philosophy of Euro Argo ERIC's GEP is to prevent rather than cure thanks to awareness raising, clear policies and guidelines, and an early warning system as well as a close monitoring of the GEP implementation. It should be stressed, however, that Euro Argo ERIC will implement a culture of zero tolerance towards psychologic and sexual harassment, and gender-based violence through a code of conduct. The present GEP has been agreed upon by the staff and the management and has been formally endorsed by the Management Board of the ERIC.

METHODOLOGY

Euro Argo ERIC being a private law entity having its seat in France, employment contracts as well as employee rights, obligations and benefits follow the French legislation and regulations. Though the specific laws such as Law 2013-660 of 22 July 2013 which impact public universities, research organizations and funding organizations do not apply to the ERIC, some aspects of these laws have been considered for the definition of Euro Argo ERIC's GEP. This includes, for instance, the obligation to nominate a Gender Officer.

As mentioned above, disaggregated data on the gender of the personnel (Annex 1) indicate that there is no gender bias in the recruitment policy of the ERIC. To address the issues of work-life balance, organizational culture & harassment has been conducted a staff consultation during the summer 2022 (see questionnaire in Annex 2). Though the consultation did not identify urgent and specific challenges that need to be tackled, it revealed an aspiration of the staff for more defined policies regarding work-life balance. This aspiration has been taken into account to design the GEP.

SCOPE OF THE GEP

The GEP of Euro Argo ERIC addresses the five thematic areas recommended by the European Commission:

- 1) Work-life balance and organizational culture
- 2) Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
- 3) Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
- 4) Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content
- 5) Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Specificities of Euro Argo ERIC:

Regarding *thematic area 2, Gender balance in leadership and decision-making*, it must be noted however that the ERIC only has little room for manoeuvre. The ERIC office has only one managerial position, the **Director**, and a flat hierarchical structure. Furthermore, it has no influence on the composition of its governing bodies. The members of the **Management Board**, which supervises the operation of the infrastructure, and of the **Council**, the body having ultimate decision-making authority, are nominated by the countries which are members of Euro Argo ERIC. The ERIC will monitor the gender representation in these two governing bodies.

The **Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG)**, is not, *sensu stricto*, a governing body. However, it plays an important role for the ERIC, as it advises the Council on any scientific or technical matters relevant to the operation, development, and evolution of Euro Argo ERIC, and is responsible for the scientific evaluation of the annual activities of the ERIC. The STAG consists of four independent, international experts. Euro Argo ERIC aims to achieve and maintain the gender parity of the STAG.

Regarding *thematic area 4, Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content*, it should be noted that the scientific scope of Euro Argo ERIC is the monitoring of the state of the ocean by measuring physical and bio-geo-chemical parameters. These activities have no gender dimension. Further, the ERIC is currently not involved in teaching activities. This area will therefore be renamed to focus on activities such as event organization and communication & outreach. Euro Argo ERIC strives for a balanced gender representation among keynote speakers and panellists in the scientific meetings and workshops it organizes, while maintaining the highest scientific standards. In its communication and publication activities, the ERIC aims to use a language that avoids gender-related bias which convey stereotypes.

SUMMARY OF THE GE ACTION PLAN

Goal 1. Work-life balance and organizational culture

- 1.1 Appointment and training of a GE Officer
- 1.2 Appointment of an ombudsperson
- 1.3 Policy regarding workload management, working time arrangements and home office
- 1.4 Policy for parental leave
- 1.5 Policy for caring responsibilities
- 1.6 Annual gender equality awareness raising

Goal 2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

- 2.1 Monitoring of the gender composition of the Management Board and the Council
- 2.2 Gender parity in the Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG)

Goal 3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

- 3.1 Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Recruitment
- 3.2 Ensuring gender neutrality of the vacancy advertisement
- 3.3 Ensuring gender parity of the interview panels
- 3.4 Onboarding gender equality training
- 3.5 Enshrining the gender dimension in staff appraisal
- 3.6 Formalization of a mechanism of appeal to the ombudsperson

Goal 4. Integration of the gender dimension into event organization, and publication and communication activities

- 4.1 Monitoring of speakers and panellists at Euro Argo meetings
- 4.2 Development of guidelines for Euro Argo ERIC meeting organizers including recommendations on the use of inclusive language and gender representation
- 4.3 Organization of gender-related training for the communication officer
- 4.4 Development of guidelines on gender-sensitive publications and communication for internal and external use

Goal 5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

- 5.1 Adoption of a Code of Conduct
- 5.2 Provision of online education about sexual and gender-based harassment
- 5.3 Inclusion of the issues of harassment and violence in the annual staff consultation
- 5.4 Provision of counselling and support measures to victims
- 5.5 Delegation of investigation and disciplinary powers as well as the obligation to initiate legal prosecution to the ombudsperson, to whom incidents can be reported

RESSOURCES

The GE Officer is expected to dedicate half a person/month per year on gender-related activities.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The GE Officer will collect monitoring data annually and prepare a report on the various actions to be reviewed by the Management Board at its first meeting of the following year. The ombudsperson will prepare an annual report to be presented to the Management Board. The Management Board may recommend correcting measures and/or additional monitoring indicators activities as well as appropriate actions. These recommendations are binding.

Annex 1. Gender-disaggregated statistics on employment and composition of the Euro Argo ERIC Governing Bodies & Advisory Board (2018-2022)

	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Director	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	0.66	0.17
Staff	26.8 PM	24 PM	47.8 PM	24 PM	49.8 PM	29 PM	46.8 PM	25.5 PM	46.8 PM	26 PM
Management Board	2	10	4	8	4	8	4	8	5	8
Council	0	14	3	10	3	10	3	10	4	10
STAG	2	3	2	3	2	4	2	4	2	4

Annex 2. Questionnaire for the Staff Consultation on Work-life balance, organizational culture & harassment

1. Does your job enable you to have a career and grow professionally, leaving you free to establish how much time to devote to the working activities involved in your post? Please comment.
2. Are your job and commitment acknowledged and appreciated? Please comment.
3. Do you have the opportunity to make your voice heard in the work place? Please comment.
4. Are you satisfied with workload management, including how different tasks are allocated and distributed? Please comment.
5. Are you satisfied with the way in which your time is distributed between your work and your private life? Please comment.
6. Are you satisfied with the flexible working time arrangements? Please comment.
7. Are you satisfied with the parental leave policies, support for caring responsibilities, including childcare, and the reintegration of staff after career breaks? Please comment.
8. Are you satisfied with the spaces where you do your work (natural light, office space, noise, IT) and that you have access to all the means you need to do it properly? Please comment.
9. Thinking about your situation in your workplace, please indicate how much you agree/disagree/irrelevant with each of the following statements:

My colleagues help me and give me advice	
My work gives me the feeling of a job well done	
I can apply my ideas in my job	
I am emotionally involved in my job	
I experience some stress in my work	
I can influence decisions that are important to my work	
I feel "at home" in my working environment	
My current situation at work encourages me to do my best	

10. On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate whether you have experienced or consider that there is a gender bias in the management of the Office. Please comment.
(1 indicates no risk, 10 a systematic risk)

11. On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate whether you have experienced or consider that there is a gender bias in the operations of the Euro Argo ERIC. Please comment.
(1 indicates no risk, 10 a systematic risk)

12. On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate whether you have experienced or consider yourself at risk of psychological harassment at your workplace
(1 indicates no risk, 10 a systematic risk exposure)

Definition of psychological harassment: by psychological harassment we mean any repeated, protracted and systematic, physically or psychologically harassing, hostile behavior directed against a person and likely to create an atmosphere that is disrespectful, humiliating or harmful to the person's psychological or physical wellbeing

13. On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate whether you have experienced or consider yourself at risk of sexual harassment at your workplace.
(1 indicates no risk, 10 a systematic risk exposure)

Definition of sexual harassment: Sexual harassment is any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature or any other kind of gender-related discrimination that offends the dignity of women or men in the place where they work or study, including physical, verbal or non-verbal attitudes.

14. On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate whether you have experienced or consider yourself at risk of mobbing at your workplace.
(1 indicates no risk, 10 a systematic risk exposure)

Definition of mobbing: Mobbing is the systematic persecution of a person by colleagues or superiors in the workplace, consisting mainly of small daily acts of social exclusion, psychological violence or professional sabotage, but that may even involve physical aggression.

15. On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate whether you have experienced or consider yourself at risk of gender-related discrimination at your workplace.
(1 indicates no risk, 10 a systematic risk exposure)

Definition of gender-related discrimination: By gender-related discrimination we mean any form of discrimination based on sex, such as the tendency to consider men and women on the basis of gender stereotypes and the related preconceptions.