



Fondazione
**ISTITUTO DI RICERCA
PEDIATRICA**

Gender Equality Plan

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Introduction

Gender inequality is evident in science despite the best performances women in studies. In 2020, 41% of the European Union population aged 25 and aged 34 completed a degree course (Eurostat) with a greater share of women female graduates (46%) than men (35%).

At the Italian level, according to ISTAT data ("Levels of education and participation in training". Statistics Report, ISTAT - 8 October 2021), with reference only to the most significant age group 25-64 years at the employment level, the share of the population with a tertiary qualification (degree) is low, being equal to 20.1% against 32.8% in the EU average. In Italy too, there is a gender difference in favour of women graduates who are 23.0% against 17.2% of men, but without this advantage female results in a similar advantage in the workplace ("Levels of education and occupational returns". Statistics Report, ISTAT - 22 July 2020).

During university education, in Italy, women consistently represent well over 50% of the reference population at all levels: they are 55.5% of those enrolled in degree courses; 57.6% of the total number of graduates; 50.0% of those enrolled in PhD courses and 51.8% of the total number of PhDs research. In addition, women with PhDs performed better in previous training course, in terms of graduation grade: 71.4% of women obtained 110 cum laude compared to 64.9% of men (VI AlmaLaurea Survey - Profile of PhDs 2020. Report 2021).

Italy achieves results above the European average both for the percentage of women who finish the PhD program was successful (about 52%), both for the good percentage of attendance of women in the technical-scientific sectors of the STEM areas (44%).

The focus of gender inequalities is the sector represented by the STEM disciplines, in contrast with the trend the growing global demand for STEM professionals (especially in the digital sector). The reduction of gender inequalities in this area could create, as revealed by an EIGE study, positions of work and an increase in gross domestic product of up to 12% by 2050.

To address the situation, the United Nations has adopted the 2030 Agenda. Signed on 25 September 2015 by the governments of the 193 member countries of the United Nations, and approved by the UN General Assembly, the Agenda is made up of 17 Development Goals Sustainable - Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs - framed within a broader action program consisting of 169 targets or goals, associated with them, to be achieved in the environmental, economic, social and institutional spheres by 2030, which is between the objectives the reduction of gender inequalities through the promotion of gender equality with targeted policies at an international, regional and national level, with the aim of promoting the role of women within ESG (Economic, Social and Governance).

The action of the European Commission is part of the EU strategy for gender equality 2020-2025, in which the strategic objectives and actions aimed at achieving were presented significant progress by 2025, towards a Europe that guarantees gender equality.

The main objectives indicated by the Commission are:

- put an end to gender-based violence;
- fight against sexist stereotypes;
- closing the gender gap in the labor market;
- address the problem of the pay and pension gap;
- achieve gender balance in decision-making processes.

Institutions are invited to identify a dedicated structure (GEP Team) for the implementation of the GEP to which the following must belong: President, General Manager, President of the CUG, or their delegates. The European Commission indicates the following 5 priority areas for action to be dedicated to measures specifications:

1. balance of private life / work life and culture of the organization
2. gender balance in top positions and in decision-making bodies
3. gender equality in recruitment and career progression
4. integration of the gender dimension in research
5. tackling gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

The new framework program for research and innovation for the period 2021-2027, Horizon Europe, introduced new provisions to strengthen gender equity in European organizations. In particular, for all research institutions and higher education institutions, the adoption of a gender Equality Plan (GEP) has become a requirement for access to finance.

Also the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) in Italy conditions access to finance for all public and private organizations to adoption of the Gender Budget and the GEP (MUR Guidelines).

Istituto di Ricerca Pediatrica Città della Speranza (IRP)

Istituto di Ricerca Pediatrica Città della Speranza (IRP) is a private research Institute that blends the expertise of 31 different research groups into a unique multidisciplinary approach. IRP hosts 160 researchers whose expertise span from the basic biology and tissue engineering to the clinical setting and comprises of seven main areas of research: Genetics and Rare Diseases, Immunology and Neuroimmunology, Medical Biotechnology, Onco-hematology, Stem Cell Transplant & Gene Therapy, Predictive Medicine, Regenerative Medicine and Experimental Cardiology. IRP aims at contributing toward the fight against pediatric pathologies and strives to become one of the top research centres in Europe and Worldwide. Our researchers work side by side to bring innovative solutions to address the challenges that pediatric pathologies pose to thousands of families every year.

Our commitment to Gender Equality Plan

Since its inception, our Institute has been proudly promoting gender equality across all STEM, hoping to inspire and actively encourage inclusion. It is with great enthusiasm that we have embraced the EU gender equality strategy.

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of IRP is the first of many steps we wish to undertake to promote gender balance across research groups, internal committees and in decision-making processes in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda SDGs.

In the three-year period 2022-2025, IRP will appoint a GEP committee which will include at least 1 representative for each category (undergraduate, postgraduate, early to mid-career researchers, established PI, administrative staff, management) and that will be in charge of redacting a 3-year plan of positive actions.

The committee will provide a list of objectives and milestones to: *(i)* critically evaluate the current situation and identify areas of improvement, *(ii)* implement critical changes and *(iii)* planning of a series of actions to monitor progression.

As such, in the three-year period 2022, IRP will appoint a committee, which will be responsible for:

- assessing the current situation and identifying key areas of improvement;
- redacting a triennial plan of positive actions to promote gender balance among research groups and committees at all levels;
- implementing a plan to monitor progress and assess yearly whether further actions are needed.

Area 1. Work-life balance and organisational culture.

Children and their families are the reason why our researchers and clinicians work tirelessly to find novel potential therapies; it is only natural that as employers, we value the work of every single one of our employees and as such, we wish to help them in balancing a demanding career, while providing for their families. These past 2 years have demonstrated how a flexible working arrangement can visibly improve work/life balance, boosting employee's satisfaction and productivity; we are therefore supportive of transitioning to a hybrid work model and in the upcoming months, we will trialling different hybrid working models so to design a customized model that works for our research Institute.

Researchers

Our Institute is a proud equal opportunity employer and complies with Article 22 of the Italian law No. 240/2010 and the guidelines of the European Charter for Researchers that is a set of general principles and requirements, which specifies the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers as well as of employers and/or funders of researchers.

Parental leave

In accordance with Italian law on parental leave:

For those on a fixed-term contract the suspension of the contract for maternity and serious and documented illness is foreseen and the aforementioned causes for suspension determine, if it is not otherwise defined by the contract, the extension of the contract for a period equal to the duration of the suspension.

Mandatory maternity leave is paid in full for 5 months. Paternity leave is allowed for a max of 10 days with 100% salary. There is an optional 6 months parental leave that can be requested by either parent and that provides 30% of the salary.

After maternity leave, female researchers will be offered a **Career Restart Training** to allow them to restart up-to-date in their work.

Target: Female researchers/administrative staff

Indicator: percentage of maternity leave

Strengthen the use of conciliatory tools: allow the transformation of the part-time employment contract. As part of the opportunities offered by the law, maximum availability for the transformation of the full-time to part-time employment relationship even for limited periods.

Target: administrative staff

Indicator: percentage of part-time applications accepted

The IRP thus aims to achieve:

-SDGs 5 on gender equality

-SDG 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

-SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities

Area 2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making.

The Board of Directors (CdA) comprises of 7 members: 4 are named by the founder Fondazione Città della Speranza Onlus (one of which also serving as CEO), 2 are named by the University of Padua and 1 by the Azienda Ospedale di Padova. Members of the committee remain in charge for 5 years.

Today the Board of Directors is made up entirely of men, but this is not really a choice of the Institute, as in total 3 members are appointed by the Azienda Ospedale di Padova and by the University of Padua. As an objective for the next three years, we hope to balance the members elected by the Fondazione Città della Speranza by promoting gender equality and encouraging a more incisive presence of female professionals also in management bodies as well as in research.

Scientific Advisory Committee: is elected by the CdA and comprises of the Scientific Director, who also presides all meetings, 1 member nominated by the University of Padua, 1 member nominated by the Department of Woman's and Child's Health (UniPD) and by all Principal Investigators. The scientific committee liaise with the Scientific Director to coordinate and supervise all research activities within the Institute, identifying new collaborative opportunities, as well as advising and drafting the 3-year strategic research plan. The Scientific Advisory Committee currently consists of 29 professionals of which 16 are women.

Scientific Advisory Board: The Scientific Advisory Board is made up of 8 professionals including 3 women and 5 men. The goal that the Institute has set itself for the next few years is to further rebalance the small gap between genders in the Board.

Target: research staff

Indicator: increase in female representation with a view to bringing the ratio closer to 1: 1

The IRP thus aims to achieve:

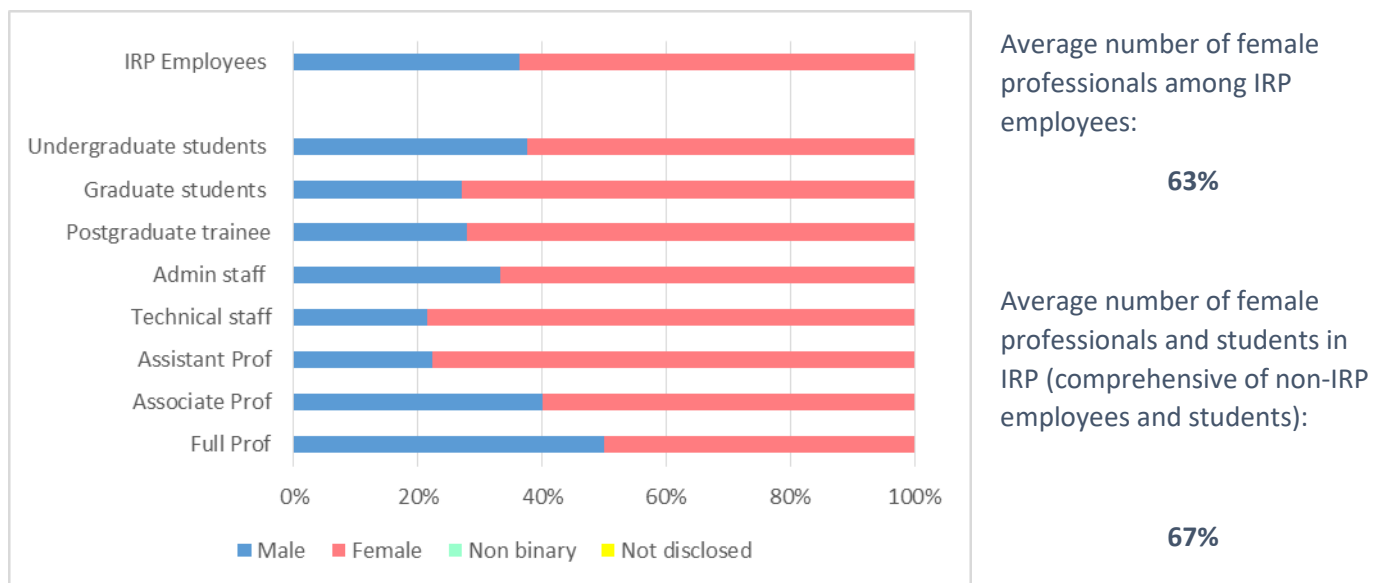
-SDGs 5 on gender equality

-SDG 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

-SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities

Area 3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression.

A preliminary survey conducted at the end of 2021 revealed that IRP has a substantial female presence across all categories, with an average percentage of 67% among all employees and students. Most notably, even



among the most critical categories which are notoriously male-led (e.g. from Assistant Professors and above), IRP has proved to have an even-balanced representation of both genders, if not a slight predisposition toward favouring the career of female-scientists.

The IRP aims to monitor the application of existing regulations for the recruitment of female researchers, researchers and teachers regarding gender balance in the committee's competition, with the possible preparation of guidelines for a free approach stereotypes / biases at the various stages of recruitment.

Target: all staff

Indicator: number of female researchers / number of researchers, number of research projects

The IRP thus aims to achieve:

-SDGs 5 on Gender Equality

Area 4. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content.

Monitoring of the female component within the research teams both in quality as Principal Investigator and as a member of the group.

The aim is to raise awareness of the scientific, social and economic value represented by the introduction of the gender dimension in research to obtain, in the long run period, an increase in the number of research projects that include the gender dimension.

Researchers will be informed, through specific awareness-raising activities, about their rights deriving from maternity in relation to the research grants they are applying for and of which they are successful.

Target: researchers

Indicator: number of female researchers / number of researchers, number of research projects presented by women as PI, number of research projects that include women within working groups

The IRP thus aims to achieve:

SDGs 4 Quality Education

SDGs 5 on Gender Equality

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

Employers and employees will not discriminate against any individual in any way on the basis of gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, social or economic condition.

As employers, we do not collect any data related to gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, race and ethnicity unless specifically asked to do so. We respect the privacy of our employees/students and value their right to disclose sensitive personal information. All personal data are handled according to the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 is a regulation in EU law on data protection and privacy in the European Union and the European Economic Area.

Choose a language that does not favor gender discrimination (both in the "verbal" that "visual", the latter used in particular in the publication or updating of Institute web pages).

Promote gender-based violence awareness events to display a cultural campaign to raise awareness of the entire IRP community against violence gender.

Target: all staff

Indicators: Awareness raising events including the World Day against Violence Against Women

The IRP thus aims to achieve:

-SDGs 5 on Gender Equality

-SDG 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

-SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities

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