

# GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

## Royal Meteorological Institute

### Preliminary remarks on the interpretation of this GEP

This Gender Equality Plan (hereafter 'GEP') is an almost identical replica of the GEP adopted at the level of the FPS Science Policy (hereafter 'BELSPO'). However, it differs from the GEP in some specific aspects.

Adaptations have been made in the original GEP provided by BELSPO. These adaptations aim to bring the expectations expressed by the European Commission as close as possible to the specific nature and functioning of the RMI.

The RMI is thus committed, through this 'customised' GEP, to contribute to the best of its ability to achieve formal and/or substantive gender equality, through an effort made at two levels: internally at the Institute level, and externally through enhanced collaboration and exchanges with BELSPO and the other FSE's.

Therefore, some of the actions included in this GEP will, depending on their nature and scope, be taken on more by the RMI, internally, or by BELSPO and the Gender Mainstreaming network, externally.

This GEP was adopted by the RMI on 23 / 02 / 2022 and will be reviewed annually.

### Introduction

In accordance with the provisions of the European Commission's Horizon Europe Programme, BELSPO and the 10 Federal Science Establishments (FSE's) that fall under the Federal Science Policy recognise the need for a Gender Equality Plan (GEP). They also acknowledge that the GEP is an eligibility criterion for any participation in the Horizon Europe programme.

BELSPO, represented by its President, supports this Gender Equality Plan and commits to pursue its implementation according to the modalities described in this document.

This document follows the framework established by the European Commission and develops the 4 mandatory requirements ("building blocks") for a GEP, as well as the 5 recommended

thematic areas. It is based on the work started during the previous legislature by the Gender Mainstreaming network made up of BELSPO and the 10 FSE's and is in line with a series of commitments made by these same actors.

Because of its curative dimension, the GEP can be linked to the legal provisions aimed at combating discrimination between women and men. Any form of direct discrimination on the basis of gender is prohibited and so-called 'positive actions' can be taken.

## 1

### Dissemination and engagement

The gender dimension as spelled out in this GEP is in line with the political commitments as set out, inter alia:

- [loi de Gender Mainstreaming](#) du 12 janvier 2007, et dans l'arrêté royal du 26 janvier 2010 pris en application de la loi / [wet Gender Mainstreaming](#) van 12 januari 2007, en in het koninklijk besluit van 26 januari 2010 tot uitvoering van de wet,
- [accord du gouvernement fédéral de 2019](#) / [federaal regeerakkoord 2019](#),
- [exposé d'orientation politique du 2 novembre 2020](#) du Secrétaire d'Etat en charge de la Politique scientifique, Thomas Dermine (Chambre, Doc 55 1610/016) / [beleidsverklaring van 2 november 2020](#) van de Staatssecretaris belast met Wetenschapsbeleid, Thomas Dermine (Kamer, Doc 55 1610/16),
- note de politique générale du Secrétaire d'Etat en charge de la Politique scientifique du 30 novembre 2021 / in de beleidsnota van de Staatssecretaris belast met Wetenschapsbeleid, Thomas Dermine, van 30 november 2021,
- [plan fédéral Gender Mainstreaming](#) adopté en Conseil des Ministres le 11 juin 2021 / [Federaal Plan Gender Mainstreaming](#) dat op 11 juni 2021 door de ministerraad is aangenomen,
- [contrat d'administration 2016-2018 du SPP Politique scientifique](#) / de [bestuursovereenkomst 2016-2018 van de POD Wetenschapsbeleid](#),
- contrat d'administration 2021-2025 / bestuursovereenkomst 2021-2025.

The Institute's Gender Equality Plan is public and can be consulted on its [website](#).

**Action 1.1.** *Adapt the RMI management contract to include a specific focus on gender equality and gender mainstreaming.*

→ *Deadline: end 2022.*

**Action 1.2.** *Creation of an equal opportunities section on the **RMI** website, including this GEP and gender mainstreaming (cross-referenced).*

→ *Deadline: end 2022.*

**Action 1.3.** *In order to promote better dissemination of the GEP, it will be shared in an internal mailing with all **RMI** staff, and then at the completion of each step in its implementation.*

→ *Recurrence: every 6 months, once in mid-year and once at the end of the year.*

## 2

### Have dedicated structures

Since the adoption of the law of 12 January 2007 and its implementing Royal Decree, the administration has had a legal obligation to integrate the gender dimension into its structures and actions.

A general Gender Mainstreaming (GM) coordinator took office in June 2016. This coordinator is the legal referent for all matters related to gender equality/gender diversity.

Within the FSE's and DGs of BELSPO, contact persons were appointed in September 2016. The result is a BELSPO-FSE network, responsible for Gender Mainstreaming, competent for Diversity and to whom the follow-up of the GEP can be entrusted.

**Action2.1.** *Have a network of Gender & Diversity contact persons to follow up the Gender Equality Plan within **BELSPO and the FSE's**.*

→ *Deadline: by the 4th quarter of 2022.*

**Action2.2.** *Disseminate the composition of the network so that each **RMI** staff member knows who to contact.*

→ *Deadline: once action 2.1. has been completed.*

## 3

## Data collection and monitoring

The gender-disaggregated personnel data is available to the BELSPO P&O departments and the FSE's. They are monitored on an ongoing basis. This monitoring is done globally as well as by qualifications and function levels. As a federal administration, BELSPO and FSE are bound by the language laws, which take precedence (as "public policy"). But a gender-sensitive distribution of posts is also pursued.

By decision of the Secretary of State for Science Policy, BELSPO and the FSE will be asked to publish an annual report on the social responsibility of the organisation, as well as an inter-institutional report of the Gender & Diversity contact persons, as part of the federal Gender Mainstreaming plan.

In its tasks, BELSPO coordinates the permanent inventory of the Belgian scientific potential ([MERI](#)). Data on scientific personnel, Research & Development, of SFEs are collected annually, and transmitted to Eurostat every two years, according to the methodology of the Frascati Manual. These R&D data are published (both on the BELSPO website and in scientific publications) and analysed on a regular basis, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

**Action3.1.** *Collect and analyse **RMI** personnel data, broken down by gender. Taking into account the limitations imposed by the GDPR and subject to prior identification of the latter<sup>1</sup>, disseminate these analyses at various levels and update them regularly <sup>2</sup>.*

- *Deadline: First broadcast by the end of 2022.*
- *Recurrence: annually.*

**Action3.2.** *Through the **GM Network**, identify possible gender imbalances in the staff structure, determine their origin and, if possible, suggest ways to correct them.*

- *Recurrence: annually.*

**Action3.3.** *At the **RMI** level, disseminate analyses of gendered R&D data on FSE's.*

- *Recurrence: continuous.*

<sup>1</sup> Gendered data can indeed be collected and analysed at the RMI level, but their disaggregation may in some cases have the effect of making certain staff members precisely recognisable.

<sup>2</sup> See the summary table in the annex. This table lists the various data that could be collected, analysed and disseminated (1st column), and the scale at which they could be disseminated (1st row). This table will be updated regularly, as is the case for the GEP.

## 4

## Awareness-raising and training activities

Gender awareness is an essential dimension in addressing and correcting discrimination, stereotypes and other prejudices that can plague the working environment. Since its creation, the Gender Mainstreaming network has organised several events to raise awareness among all BELSPO staff and the 10 FSE's. Training days for contact persons, meetings with resource persons (such as the Midis de l'Egalité), cultural events, calls for projects, the means are diverse. The main thing is to encourage interaction and exchanges between participants in a benevolent and mixed framework.

In this idea of exchange and interaction, the use of dedicated spaces, oriented towards well-being and more relaxed, can allow people to speak freely and to organise themselves around related themes during dedicated breaks.

The cross-cutting objectives relating to this theme will be included in the evaluation of staff with decision-making functions (these objectives can be found in the management contract).

**Action4.1.** *At the initiative of the **GM Network**, organise regular events, general or targeted at certain categories of staff or themes, to reinforce a decompartmentalized vision, free of clichés and stereotypes.*

→ *Recurrence: annually.*

**Action4.2.** *Provide training on discrimination prevention and gender issues to **RMI** staff (including staff in decision-making positions).*

→ *Deadline: end 2022.*

**Action4.3.** *Disseminate the webinars and tools developed by the **EURAXESS** portal to **RMI** researchers on careers and gender.*

→ *Recurrence: continuous.*

## 5

**Work/life balance and organisational culture**

Data on part-time work, parental leave, teleworking, etc. and more generally on working time arrangements are available to the BELSPO P&O department and the FSE's. These data are monitored regularly.

As administrations, BELSPO and FSE are bound by a legal framework. This legal basis forms the basis for BELSPO's and FSE's action in the field of staff working time.

Nevertheless, adjustments should be evaluated in the work rules in order to increase the well-being of the staff. This includes taking better account of alternating custody of children, single-parent families, etc. It should therefore be possible to incorporate greater flexibility into fixed and mobile working hours.

The issue of teleworking, following the experience of the pandemic, also deserves to be reconsidered.

**Actions 5.1.** *Collect and analyse **RMI** personnel data, related to work arrangements, and broken down by gender. Taking into account the limitations imposed by the GDPR and subject to prior identification of the latter<sup>3</sup>, disseminate these analyses at various levels and update them regularly<sup>4</sup>.*

- ➔ *Deadline: First broadcast by the end of 2022.*
- ➔ *Recurrence: annually.*

**Actions 5.2.** *Through the **GM Network**, identify possible gender imbalances related to staff working time arrangements, determine their origin and, if possible, suggest ways to correct them.*

- ➔ *Recurrence: depending on the GM Network agenda.*

<sup>3</sup> Gendered data can indeed be collected and analysed at the RMI level, but their disaggregation may in some cases have the effect of making certain staff members precisely recognizable.

<sup>4</sup> See the summary table in the annex. This table lists the various data that could be collected, analysed and disseminated (1st column), and the scale at which they could be disseminated (1st row). This table will be updated regularly, as is the case for the GEP.

## 6

## Gender balance in management and decision making

As with the previous point, the legal framework must be respected. BELSPO and the 10 FSE's have a very 'flat' hierarchical structure. Overall, this structure tends to respect a gender balance in decision-making positions. Similarly, when it comes to the composition of committees, gender balance is still a concern.

While this applies to BELSPO as a whole, there may be imbalances at the level of a particular FSE.

**Action6.1.** *Through the **GM Network**, identify imbalances in the representation of women and men in decision-making positions, determine their origin and suggest ways to correct them.*

→ *Deadline : end 2022.*

## 7

## Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

As for the two previous points, BELSPO, as a federal administration, and the FSE's are bound by a legal framework.

BELSPO is certified (by FPS BOSA/SELOR) to compose selection juries and acts in partnership with the FSE's during (scientific) selections. This certification includes diversity and discrimination training for P&O staff. Recruitment is carried out by SELOR, in compliance with the language laws, which has a [gender policy](#) that is integrated into BELSPO's approach to recruitment.

Nevertheless, the composition of scientific juries (during selection in the FSE) is hampered by a relative lack of experts, which makes it difficult to respect a strict gender balance when making decisions on recruitment and promotion. To remedy this, care should be taken to exploit the various existing databases.

**Action7.1.** *Conduct a reflection and monitoring of the scientific career within the **RMI** to establish recommendations.*

→ *Deadline: end 2023.*

**Action7.2.** *At the initiative of the **GM Network**, monitor the composition of scientific juries (BELSPO and FSE) in order to identify gender imbalances and propose corrective measures (in particular through the use of alternative databases, such as Expertalia).*

→ *Deadline : end 2023.*

## 8

### Integration of the gender dimension in the content of the research

The gender dimension is explicitly present in the multi-annual BRAIN-be 2.0 and DRUGS programmes. This ranges from the strict parity in the advisory committees to the integration of the gender dimension in the proposals and their evaluation. In addition, specific attention has been paid to the composition of expert panels.

The [BRAIN-be 2.0](#) and [DRUGS](#) programs have paved the way for a better (and broader) integration of the gender dimension in research programs. This experience will be repeated and could be extended to other programs within BELSPO, and in the FSE's (via the management contract).

**Action8.1.** *Extension of the procedure developed for BRAIN-be 2.0 to other calls or programmes at BELSPO and FSE level.*

→ *Deadline: end 2022.*

**Action8.2.** *Raise the gender awareness of panel and jury members at BELSPO and **RMI** level, and ensure that there is sufficient relevant gender expertise for the discipline.*

→ *Deadline : end 2022.*



## 9

## Measures against gender-based harassment

All federal administrations and institutions are required to comply with a legal framework that addresses harassment (as defined by the [Loi bien-être / Welzijnswet](#)) in all its forms, regardless of who the victim or perpetrator is. BELSPO and the FSE have set up trusted persons. They have been trained beforehand and undergo a mandatory annual "refresher course".

The persons of trust, training and retraining are monitored (via the Prevention Adviser) by [EMPREVA](#), the central unit of the joint internal service for prevention and protection at work of the Belgian Federal Public Administration. Empreva's actions go beyond harassment and consider the well-being of the worker in a global way.

All the work carried out in the field of psycho-social risks (including harassment) is subject to a double reporting, on the one hand by the internal Service for Prevention and Protection at Work and on the other hand by the external Service for Prevention and Protection ([Cohezio](#)). The annual reports are available. They contain general statistics on the cases handled by the persons of trust.

In addition to Empreva and Cohezio, who are privileged partners, it is possible to benefit from the participation of associations specialised in this field in order to organise events or orchestrate a prevention campaign.

**[Action9.1.](#)** *Within the **RMI**, place signs with essential information in high-traffic areas to maintain awareness.*

→ *Deadline: mid-2022.*

**[Action9.2.](#)** *At the initiative of the **GM Network** and the **RMI**, take advantage of specific occasions (e.g. International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women), to raise awareness among **RMI** staff on this theme.*

→ *Recurrence: annually.*

**[Action9.3.](#)** *Communicating essential information about harassment in all its forms via mailings at the **RMI** level, in order to maintain awareness.*

→ *Recurrence: twice a year.*

## Annex 1 – Summary table on the collection, analysis and publication of gendered RMI data

This table lists the various data that could be collected, analysed and disseminated (1st column), and the scale at which they could be disseminated (1st row). This table will be updated regularly, as is planned for the GEP.

Taking into account the obligations imposed by the GDPR, some data sets will be too detailed to be shared, as they make the staff members concerned too easily recognisable. It is not excluded that, following an analysis of compliance with the GDPR, the dissemination of certain data sets will ultimately be prohibited. Boxes marked in blue indicate that a compliance analysis has yet to be carried out.

Distribution of staff members - M / F	Accessible and analysable at RMI level	Access for P&O	Intranet access for staff members	Access for BELSPO	Access for public on request	Free access to the public
...within the RMI	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
...by services	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
... by current hierarchical level (A, 1, 2, 3, B,C,D)	YES	YES	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd
... by hierarchical level at the time of entry into service	YES	YES	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd
... shift to higher level/grade (statutory) from 2021	YES	YES	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd
... by hourly regime (FTE)	YES	YES	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd
... by parental leave; teleworking ratio	YES	YES	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd
... by length of career in the RMI	YES	YES	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd
... who have attended training courses on gender mainstreaming and gender equality	YES	YES	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd	Tbd