



MIO-ECSDE's GENDER POLICY

The Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (hereby referred to as MIO-ECSDE), acknowledges that Gender equality is intrinsically linked to sustainable development and it will guide MIO-ECSDE to achieve its mission to protect the Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage and promote Sustainable Development in a peaceful Mediterranean.

RATIONALE

- 1- MIO-ECSDE's scope of work reaches **28 Euro-Mediterranean countries** with projects, capacity building and advocacy activities and therefore, it can act as a powerful driver of gender equality and women's empowerment in the region through a gender-oriented programme planning.
- 2- Increased commitment to gender equality is needed to fully realize the Sustainable Development Goals, the Aichi Targets and post 2020 biodiversity framework, the Paris Agreement and the post 2020 climate change framework, among others, to which MIO-ECSDE abides.

OBJECTIVES

This harmonized policy represents the first step of MIO-ECSDE to take a cohesive and coordinated approach to gender. The policy defines MIO-ECSDE's explicit commitments to support gender equality and women's empowerment within its own operations.

GENDER EQUALITY IN MIO-ECSDE'S OPERATIONS

This policy explains how MIO-ECSDE promotes Gender Equality as a key cross-cutting issue in its different areas of work, namely:

- 1- MIO-ECSDE's Secretariat
- 2- Project portfolio
- 3- Event planning
- 4- Knowledge communication
- 5- Participation in the decision making

1- MIO-ECSDE's Secretariat

- The employment of new staff members, under the current legislation, is not subject to discrimination (gender, race, nationality, religion) and ethnic and racial characteristics of the employees are not taken into consideration.
- Wages and social security coverage are related to the level of experience and knowledge of staff for the realization of MIO-ECSDE's projects, eliminating therefore any pay gap between genders.
- Employees who perceive acts of sexual harassment or abuse or acts of any discrimination can report directly to their line manager or anonymously by sending a disclosure to the legal advisor in accordance with MIO-ECSDE's Whistleblower policy.



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- MIO-ECSDE believes that maintaining a proper work-life balance helps to minimize stress levels in the workplace and helps working parents to achieve their career goals. MIO-ECSDE therefore commits to prioritizing work-life balance by facilitating a smooth return to the office after maternity/paternity leaves and by allowing working from home, when and if needed.
- Staff members are encouraged to engage and coordinate with partners, civil society organizations, governments and funders in order to consider gender equality at the operational level and in project implementation.

2- Gender mainstreaming in the project approach

- MIO-ECSDE commits to design and execute gender sensitive projects where, in the design phase, a gender specific target group and beneficiaries are identified and where the evaluation phase includes gender-disaggregated data collection and gender performance indicators.
- MIO-ECSDE considers and integrates, as possible, support mechanisms to parents in project submissions.

3- Event planning

- MIO-ECSDE commits to ensure that the events it hosts are as inclusive and gender-equitable as possible to women/girls, working mothers and pregnant women. This can be achieved by facilitating Gender equity in the panels, equal participation in meetings, seminars and conferences. The location of events is carefully chosen to ensure minimal risk (safety, distances, etc.).
- MIO-ECSDE conducts on-going mapping of women's networks in the Mediterranean working towards sustainable development and ensures their participation in the events it hosts, when meaningful and applicable.

4- Knowledge communication/educational materials

- Communication and educational materials are developed in such a way that the language, the messages and the images used are carefully chosen to avoid gender bias/stereotypes.

5- Participation in the decision making

- The MIO-ECSDE Executive Bureau has the authority to make decisions on each issue of policy or operation, governing and management of MIO-ECSDE. These are proposed to the Annual General Assembly of the member organisations of MIO-ECSDE which is the highest decision-making body of the Federation. The Members of the Executive Bureau are elected by the Annual General Assembly of MIO-ECSDE amongst its full member NGOs for a term of two years. MIO-ECSDE commits to accounting for the gender distribution in its governing bodies, as far as applicable, while ensuring equal Euro-Mediterranean presentation as per its [Statutes](#).
- MIO-ECSDE commits to encouraging the participation of women Members of Parliament in the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development (COMPSUD) and



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strengthen their role as elected representatives of their National Parliaments in promoting Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean region. MIO-ECSDE also commits to ensure Gender Equality, as much as possible, in the Board of COMPSUD. A similar approach is followed in the other networks that MIO-ECSDE supports.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The **Human resources team** updates and ensures that key organizational policies, systems and practices including but not limited to human resource recruitment, training and management, decision-making, project planning and Goal setting, support women's rights and gender equality.
- The **MEdIES Secretariat** ensures that all educational/training material accounts for gender mainstreaming in the design of its educational and training materials.
- **MIO-ECSDE officers** adhere to this policy in the design and execution of projects and in the elaboration of communication and awareness materials.

REVIEW AND REPORTING

MIO-ECSDE tracks annually the gender balance in its staffing and governance structures as well as in its projects and events. It will be reported in its annual Report of Activities (RoA) and Accountable Now report. Both reports are accessible electronically on [MIO-ECSDE's website](#).

UPDATE

This policy may be periodically updated. The latest version is available on [this page](#) and was published in December 2020. Any changes made are posted here and are effective immediately.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Gender equality: The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) defines gender equality as 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 Mainstreaming: According to EIGE, Gender mainstreaming involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination.

Sexual harassment or abuse: According to EIGE, it is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature occurs, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.