

Policy Brief

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LifeWatch ERIC Gender Equality Plan (2025-2027)

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LifeWatch ERIC Gender Equality Plan (2025-2027)

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1. Introduction.....	5
2. Gender committee.....	8
3. Main Goal and Objectives	9
4. Elimination of the Pay Gap.....	11
4.1 Objective	11
4.2 Key Actions.....	11
4.2.1 Compensation policy	11
4.2.2 Perform salary audit.....	12
4.2.3 Salary tables publication	13
4.2.4 Salary publication in every job vacancy	14
4.2.5 Develop a performance and capability assessment	15
5. Work-life balance	16
5.1 Objective	16
5.2 Key Actions.....	16
5.2.1 Guidelines for work-life balance.....	16
5.2.2 Digital system for time recording.....	17
5.2.3 Digital system to record and compensate overtime.....	18
5.2.4 Bank holidays common calendar	19
5.2.5 Information about employee availability	19
5.2.6 Working calendar review	20



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

5.2.7	Remote work before and after business trip	21
6.	Gender balance in leadership and decision-making.....	21
6.1	Objective	21
6.2	Key Action.....	21
6.2.1	Gender balance in the Executive Board recruitment process	21
6.2.2	Promote the gender balance at the Officer category	22
6.2.3	Gender balance in committees	23
7.	Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	24
7.1	Objective	24
7.2	Key Actions.....	24
7.2.1	Define inclusive job description	24
7.2.2	Assure gender balance in internal training session for soft skills.....	26
8.	Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content	26
8.1	Objective	26
8.2	Key Actions.....	27
8.2.1	Gender dimension into research projects	27
8.2.2	Gender training for gender committee	27
8.2.3	Gender awareness training for employees	28
9.	Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.....	29
9.1	Objective	29
9.2	Key Actions:.....	29
9.2.1	Review of the Procedure for prevention and action in case of harassment	



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

29

10.	Gender Sensitization in Communication and Branding	30
10.1	Objective	30
10.2	Key actions	30
10.2.1	Balanced social media post and campaigns.....	30
10.2.2	Carry out specific campaigns on anniversaries	31
10.2.3	Gender balance communication materials	32
10.2.4	Gender representation in media and organisation communication	33
11.	Document Revision History.....	34



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

1. Introduction

The adoption of a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) has become a key eligibility requirement for organizations participating in Horizon Europe projects, in line with the European Commission's Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025. Accordingly, the LifeWatch ERIC Executive Board has mandated its People & Culture department to take the necessary steps to establish a GEP.

In line with LifeWatch ERIC Culture Principles, the organisation extends its commitment to equal treatment beyond gender. In particular, when using the concepts Gender equity, equality or gender balance we are considering men and women in all their diversity, as a heterogeneous categories including in relation to their sex, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics as stated in the mentioned strategy.

Furthermore, this Gender Equality Plan is part of a broader effort to ensure that diversity is recognized and valued, and that systemic barriers to participation and advancement for under-represented groups are actively removed within the organization. In short, the organization is dedicated to promoting an inclusive, respectful, and supportive environment for all individuals, regardless of their age, disability, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other personal characteristic.

This Gender Equality Plan (2025-2027) is a revised version of the former Gender Equality Plan of LifeWatch ERIC, first published in 2022, available in our web page in Statutes & Documents section. Building on the foundations established by the former plan, which have been introduced by the European Commission, this revised GEP presents more ambitious and targeted measures aimed at embedding gender **equality** and **equity** within LifeWatch ERIC's organisational culture, policies, and operations.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

Equality refers to ensuring that individuals are given the same opportunities, rights, and resources, regardless of gender.

Equity recognises that different individuals may face different barriers and, therefore, requires fair treatment and support, tailored to their specific needs to achieve truly balanced outcomes.

By integrating both principles, the plan reaffirms the organisation's commitment to fostering an inclusive environment and advancing gender equality and equity across all areas of its activities.

This GEP, adapted to the specific circumstances of LifeWatch ERIC on 1st July 2024, is monitored annually to evaluate progress and propose necessary updates. Once approved by the General Assembly (GA), it will comply with the European Commission's four mandatory process-related requirements:

- Be a public document: Accessible and transparent to all stakeholders.
- Have dedicated resources: Securing sufficient financial and human resources are allocated to implement the plan effectively.
- Include data collection and monitoring processes: Enabling evidence-based organizational decisions and tracking of progress.
- To equip staff with the necessary knowledge and skills to promote and foster gender equality and equity within the organisation.

In addition to meeting the mandatory criteria set by the European Commission, the revised GEP integrates measures that address the eight recommended thematic areas outlined by the European Commission, along with additional priorities identified by LifeWatch ERIC to further promote gender equality within the organisation:



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

1. **Pay Gap:** Addressing disparities in pay by conducting regular audits, increasing transparency, and implementing corrective measures to ensure equal compensation for equal work.
2. **Work-Life Balance and organisational Culture:** Promoting flexible and supportive working environments to accommodate personal responsibilities and enhance employee well-being.
3. **Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making:** Ensuring fair and balanced representation across all levels of governance to strengthen diversity in decision-making processes.
4. **Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression:** Removing barriers and fostering equal opportunities for all genders throughout the recruitment and career development processes.
5. **Integration of the Gender Dimension into Research and Teaching Content:** Enriching research, innovation, and educational activities by systematically considering gender perspectives to improve outcomes and inclusivity.
6. **Measures Against Gender-Based Violence, Including Sexual Harassment:** Creating a safe and respectful workplace for all employees by implementing preventive measures and clear procedures for addressing incidents.
7. **Gender Sensitization in Marketing and Branding:** Ensuring that marketing materials, campaigns, and branding efforts reflect gender sensitivity and inclusivity by avoiding stereotypes and promoting balanced representation.
8. **Gender Representation in Media and Company Communication:** Enhancing gender representation in internal and external communications by ensuring fairness and inclusivity in visuals, language, and narratives used across all media channels.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

These measures collectively aim to embed gender equality and equity across LifeWatch ERIC's strategies, policies, processes, and practices, fostering a more inclusive and equitable organisational culture.

Gender equality is not only a matter of fairness; it is a key driver of excellence in research and innovation (R&I). By improving the quality and relevance of the R&I process, attracting and retaining diverse talent, and ensuring that everyone can unfold their potential regardless of gender, gender equality strengthens LifeWatch ERIC as organisation and enhances its contributions to society.

For LifeWatch ERIC, this Gender Equality Plan goes beyond simply meeting eligibility or achieving balanced gender ratios. It reflects a deep commitment to fostering institutional and cultural change by embedding gender equality principles into daily practices as well as into the organisation's long-term strategy. This approach aims to create a more inclusive environment that promotes excellence, innovation, creativity, and equality across all areas of activity.

It is important to note that the implementation of this Gender Equality Plan does not rely on the allocation of additional resources. Instead, the measures outlined in this plan are designed to integrate gender equality objectives into existing structures, processes, and resources already made available by the organization. By strategically aligning ongoing activities—such as staff training, recruitment processes, data collection, and performance evaluation—with the principles of gender equality and equity, LifeWatch ERIC aims to maximize the impact of its current capabilities while fostering lasting institutional change.

2. Gender committee

This revision has been carried out with the participation of four volunteering LifeWatch



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

ERIC employees who composed the Gender Committee. The following four members are considered as a typical sample of the organisation as they represent all common facilities, different types of categories and areas, a wide range of ages and are gender balanced.

The members who compose the Gender Committee are:

- María Pérez (SSO)
- Joaquín López (ICT-Core)
- Irene Mateo (Service Centre)
- Koen Greuell (VLIC)

This committee with the support from a gender expert consultant, and the People & Culture (P&C) Manager of LifeWatch ERIC, Elena Delgado, have created the space for the necessary dialogue and the fluid communication, so that all agreements and actions taken throughout the development of the process have been carried out with the consensus from all parties.

The Gender Equality Committee is responsible for supporting and monitoring the following aspects of the GEP:

- The definition of the objectives
- The development of the measures
- Monitoring the implementation

3. Main Goal and Objectives

The main goal of LifeWatch ERIC's Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is to embed gender equality and equity into the organisation's core values, strategies, policies, processes, and daily practices. By removing systemic barriers and promoting equal opportunities for man and women, in all their diversity, the plan aims to foster an inclusive culture where all individuals, regardless of gender, can fully contribute to and benefit from LifeWatch



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

ERIC's research, innovation, and operational activities. This commitment to gender equality does not at all compromise the excellence which is the main goal of the organization's performance but, instead, it enhances it and even strengthens LifeWatch ERIC's ability to make a meaningful impact on science, society and economy. LifeWatch ERIC's Gender Equality Plan (GEP) (2025-2027) has the following objectives (aligned with those of the EU):

- 1. Eliminate the Gender Pay Gap:** To identify, address, and eliminate any unjustified salary disparities based on gender and other protected characteristics. The purpose of this policy is to establish a fair and transparent compensation structure that rewards employees based on their roles, skills, experience, and performance.
- 2. Promote Work-Life Balance:** To develop and implement specific measures that promote a healthy work-life balance, supporting employees in managing their personal responsibilities alongside their professional commitments. The objective is to create a supportive workplace environment that enhances employee well-being, satisfaction, and productivity.
- 3. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making:** To promote and maintain gender balance across all LifeWatch ERIC Advisory Boards and Committees, ensuring equal representation and fostering diverse perspectives in decision-making processes.
- 4. Gender equity in recruitment and career progression:** To ensure that all individuals, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to join the organisation and advance in their careers, fostering an inclusive workplace where qualifications, talent and performance are the primary criteria for recruitment and progression.
- 5. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content:** To embed gender equality and equity into the organisational culture, research processes, and teaching content, ensuring that gender perspectives are systematically considered in all educational and research activities.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

6. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment: To incorporate effective measures within the LifeWatch ERIC Procedure for Prevention and Action in Case of Harassment, ensuring a comprehensive approach to preventing and addressing gender-based violence and fostering a culture of zero tolerance.

7. Gender Sensitization in communication and Branding: Ensure that marketing materials, campaigns, reflect gender sensitivity and inclusivity, avoiding stereotypes and promoting balanced representation.

4. Elimination of the Pay Gap

4.1 Objective

The objective is to identify, address, and eliminate any unjustified salary disparities based on gender or other potentially discriminatory factors. The purpose of this section is to establish measures for a fair and transparent compensation policy that rewards employees based on their qualifications, roles, skills, experience, and performance. By addressing pay gaps proactively, the organisation fosters a culture of fairness, gains employees trust, and demonstrate its commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion.

4.2 Key Actions

4.2.1 Compensation policy

A well-defined compensation policy is essential to ensure a transparent and equitable salary structure across the organisation. This policy establishes a framework that links compensation with the responsibilities and impact of each position, ensuring that the employees are paid fairly and in consistency with their colleagues. The framework accounts for key factors such as job roles, experience, and performance metrics. The goal is to promote internal equality while remaining competitive in the market. Key elements



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

of the policy include:

- Salary bands for each position level, reviewed annually to reflect industry benchmarks.
- Transparent criteria for salary progression and adjustments, reducing the risk of potential unintended biases.
- The implementation of this policy improves pay equality, enhances employee satisfaction, and strengthen the organisation's commitment to fairness and transparency.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager and Chief Financial Officer.

Timeline: Completion by the 2nd quarter of 2025.

Resources Required: Internal salary data, market benchmarking reports, and time from the HR team.

Indicators / Targets:

- Policy document finalised and published within the specified timeline.
- Annual updates and communication sessions to ensure employees understand the policy.

4.2.2 Perform salary audit

Prior to the annual salary revision, the P&C Manager and CFO conduct a comprehensive annual salary audit to identify any pay disparities or gaps within the organisation. The audit evaluates employee compensation across roles, departments, and gender to ensure that salaries are aligned with organisational pay equality goals.

Any identified gaps are analysed to determine whether they are justified based on factors such as job role, experience, and performance. If a disparity is found to be unjustified,



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

corrective actions are recommended as part of the upcoming salary review process. The results of the initial audit is compared with the final salary adjustments made during the annual salary revision to track progress and ensure continuous improvement in pay equality.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, Chief Financial Officer, and Gender Equality Committee.

Timeline: By the 4th quarter every year, starting from 2026.

Resources:

- Human Resource Information system for data collection and analysis
- Salary benchmarking tools for market comparison
- Internal guidelines on pay structure and policies
- Reports from previous salary audits
- Input from the Gender Equality Committee for additional insights

Indicators / Targets:

- Comparison of the average salaries across categories and genders on a yearly basis
- Tracking of the number of unjustified pay gaps over 5% that were addressed.

4.2.3 Salary tables publication

Objective: To enhance transparency in compensation practices and promote pay equality sharing salary tables with employees annually showing the average and median of the salary as calculated by categories and gender.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager and Chief Financial Officer.

Timeline: By the 1st quarter every year.

Resources:



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

- Approximately 4 hours of the P&C Manager's time for preparing and disseminating the salary tables.
- Human Resource Information system to extract and compile salary data.
- Internal communication tools for distributing the document to employees.

Indicators / Targets:

- Timely Publication of Salary Tables: Ensure that the tables are published and distributed to all employees by the end of 1st quarter each year, differentiating job categories and gender classifications.

4.2.4 Salary publication in every job vacancy

Objective: To promote transparency and fairness in recruitment practices by including the salary range for each job vacancy, ensuring that candidates have a clear picture of the compensation. For every job vacancy posted, the corresponding salary range is included based on the level of the position. The final salary offer shall be determined by considering the candidate's qualifications, experience, skills, and the value they bring to the organisation. This approach aims to:

- Ensure transparency in the hiring process
- Align recruitment practices with pay equality principles
- Attract qualified candidates by providing clear compensation values

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager.

Timeline: Whenever there is a job vacancy.

Resources:

- Approximately 1 hour of the P&C Manager's time to ensure the salary range is accurately included in job postings.
- Human resource information system and job evaluation tools to determine



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

appropriate salary ranges.

Indicators / Targets:

- Ensure salary ranges are included in all job vacancies at the time of publication.

4.2.5 Develop a performance and capability assessment

Objective: To establish a standardised procedure for objectively evaluating employee performance and capabilities, ensuring that salary adjustments and career progression decisions are based on measurable contributions. A performance and capability assessment framework is developed to evaluate the individual contributions of employees across various roles and functions. This procedure provides objective insights into employee performance, helping to:

- Support fair and transparent salary increases
- Identify high-potential employees for career progression
- Align individual performance with organisational goals
- Provide clear guidelines on performance incentives and bonuses

The framework includes clear criteria for performance evaluation, capability assessment, and feedback mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, and Chief Financial officer.

Timeline: By the 4th quarter 2025.

Resources:

- Approximately 40 hours of the P&C Manager's time for developing the assessment framework and related documentation.
- Internal tools and systems for performance tracking and evaluation.
- Input from department heads to tailor the assessment criteria to different roles.

Indicators / Target:



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

- Ensure the performance and capability assessment framework is developed including comprehensive evaluation criteria covering both performance outcomes and individual capabilities and finalised by 4th quarter 2025.

5. Work-life balance

5.1 Objective

To develop and implement specific measures that promote a healthy work-life balance, supporting employees in managing their personal responsibilities alongside their professional commitments. The objective is to create a supportive workplace environment that enhances employee well-being, satisfaction, and productivity.

5.2 Key Actions

5.2.1 Guidelines for work-life balance

Objective: To promote a healthy work-life balance framework for all employees by providing clear guidance on available rights and organisational measures that support personal and professional well-being.

A comprehensive set of Work-Life Balance guidelines is developed and published in each Common Facility. The guidelines outline the rights recognised by local laws in each country as well as additional organisational initiatives aimed at enhancing work-life balance for all employees regardless of their personal conditions. The document is included in the Welcome Package for all new employees upon joining the organisation.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager.

Timeline: By the 1st quarter of 2025.

Resources: 10 hours of the P&C Manager.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

Indicators / Targets:

- Ensure the set of guidelines for each common facilities are finalised and distributed by the end of Q1 2025.
- Include the guidelines in all Welcome Packages provided to new employees.

5.2.2 Digital system for time recording

Objective: To implement a digital system for time recording that aligns with legal requirements and supports the organisation's flexible working policy, thus enabling employees to better balance work and personal responsibilities.

Where time recording is mandatory, such as Italy and Spain, a digital time recording system is utilised to ensure compliance. This system allows employees to log their working hours, providing flexibility to adjust their schedules within predefined margins to accommodate personal responsibilities. Additionally, the system tracks extended working hours, which can be compensated during periods of lower workload or when personal needs arise. This approach aims to promote a healthier work-life balance while meeting organisational requirements.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, the employees and Managers

Timeline: By the 2nd quarter of 2025.

Resources:

- Approximately 15 hours of the P&C Manager's time for system implementation and training.
- Digital time recording tools and software.

Indicators / Targets:

- Ensure that all employees are using the time recording system in the countries with this obligation.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

- Deviation of less than 15% in hours worked recorded at two points in the year (at 30 June and 31 December).

5.2.3 Digital system to record and compensate overtime

Objective: To implement a digital system for accurately recording and managing overtime hours, ensuring that employees are compensated fairly in accordance with legal requirements and organisational policies.

A new digital system is introduced to improve the management of overtime worked during weekends, public holidays, or beyond standard working hours. This process is integrated in the existing Guideline for Leave Management through the LifeWatch ERIC Operational System (LwOS; Zoho platform People function). This system ensures that all overtime hours are recorded and compensated according to the applicable labour regulation. The employee can accumulate overtime hours as credits, which can then be used to take time off whenever agreed with the manager or during periods of reduced workload.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, Employees and Managers.

Timeline: By the 2nd quarter of 2025.

Resources:

- Approximately 5 hours of the P&C Manager's time for system setup and communication.
- LwOS (Zoho People function) for time tracking and overtime management.

Indicators / Targets:

- Overtime Compensation Rate: Ensure that at least 95% of recorded overtime hours are compensated within the designated period.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

Bank holidays common calendar

Objective: To ensure efficient meeting and event planning across different facilities by providing employees with a shared digital calendar that includes bank holidays for all locations.

A shared Bank Holidays Common calendar is set up in Zoho Calendar and made accessible to all employees. This calendar displays the bank holidays specific to each facility, allowing employees to take these into account when scheduling meetings or events across different locations. The calendar is reviewed and updated annually to ensure accuracy.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, Employees and Managers.

Timeline: By the 2nd quarter of 2025.

Resources:

- Approximately 2 hours of the P&C Manager's time for calendar setup and annual updates.
- LwOS (Zoho Calendar function) for maintaining and sharing the calendar.

Indicators / Targets:

- Ensure the calendar is updated by the beginning of each year and employees are informed.

5.2.4 Information about employee availability

Objective: To improve internal communication and collaboration by configuring LwOS (Zoho People function) to display the availability status of employees, including holidays and other paid leaves. This measure helps to avoid interactions with colleagues who are unavailable.

Zoho People is configured to show real-time availability status for employees, indicating



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

whether a colleague is on holiday or other forms of paid leave. This system ensures that employees and managers can easily check the availability of their colleagues before scheduling meetings or assigning tasks. Regular updates are performed to maintain accuracy.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, Employees and Managers.

Timeline: by the 2nd quarter of the 2025.

Resources:

- Approximately 3 hours of the P&C Manager's time for initial setup and periodic updates.
- LwOS (Zoho People function) for tracking and displaying employee availability.

Indicators / Targets:

- Ensure the availability status is updated for 100% of employees in Spain and Italy.
- Provide a brief guide to employees on how to check availability in Zoho People.

5.2.5 Working calendar review

Objective: To review the working calendar to redistribute (if necessary) working hours along the year following the applicable regulations.

An *ad-hoc* committee for each common facility in collaboration with the P&C Manager analyses if there is a more suitable distribution of hours along the year rather than 40 hours a week in Italy or Spain and 38 in the Netherlands.

Responsible Parties: *ad-hoc* committee and People & Culture Manager.

Timeline: by the 3rd quarter of the 2025.

Resources:

- Approximately 3 hours of the P&C Managers and committees.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

Indicators/Targets:

- Committee approval of an agreed working calendar.

5.2.6 Remote work before and after business trip

Objective: Allow more flexibility during the days before and after the trip, including extra days for remote working in order to compensate for the time out from home.

Resources:

- No particular resources are necessary.

Indicators/Target:

- Inclusion of this measure in a new version of the guideline for Work-Life Balance.

6. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

6.1 Objective

To promote and maintain gender balance across the LifeWatch ERIC Advisory Boards and Committees, and fostering diverse perspectives in decision-making processes.

6.2 Key Action

6.2.1 Gender balance in the Executive Board recruitment process

Executive Board members play a critical role in the planning, supervision, monitoring, and implementation of LifeWatch ERIC activities, including the execution of the Strategic Working Plan and decisions made by the General Assembly. They are responsible for ensuring the smooth operation of the organisation across all business areas.

Starting from the upcoming vacancy for the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) position in 2025, the recruitment process prioritises gender balance by actively promoting the role



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

of the gender less represented in the Executive Board. The goal is to ensure that at least one man and woman, in all their diversity, are included among the finalists. In cases where candidates have equal qualifications, preference is given to the less represented gender to support gender balance within the Executive Board.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, and Executive Board.

Timeline: By the 4th quarter of 2025.

Resources:

- Approximately 15 hours of the P&C Manager's time for recruitment planning and candidate outreach.
- External recruitment platforms and professional networks to promote the vacancy to a diverse candidate pool.

Indicators /Targets:

- Guarantee that the pool of finalists in the recruitment process includes at least one man and one woman, in all their diversity

6.2.2 Promote the gender balance at the Officer category

Objective: To promote gender balance within the Officer category by ensuring fair representation and reviewing the roles, responsibilities, and contributions of Officers as part of the organisation's compensation policy.

The Officer category plays a key role in defining the strategy within their areas of expertise, leading and planning activities and processes to achieve short, medium, and long-term results. Officers bring their specialized knowledge to decision-making processes that significantly impact the organisation.

A thorough review of the positions within this category is conducted to assess their contributions and ensure the roles are appropriately classified and compensated. This



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

review includes an analysis of gender representation to promote a balanced and diverse leadership team.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, and Executive Board.

Timeline: By the 2nd quarter of 2025.

Resources:

- Approximately 10 hours of the P&C Manager's time for position analysis and policy review.
- Internal data on current Officer roles and gender representation.

Indicators / Targets:

- Achieve a gender proportion of at least 40% to 60% within the Officer category. Follow-up on an annual basis.

6.2.3 Gender balance in committees

Objective: To promote gender balance within the organisation's Committees by introducing gender quotas, aligned with national laws and best practices in diversity and inclusion.

Gender balance is ensured across key Advisory Boards and Committees by proposing and implementing gender quotas. This initiative aims to create a more diverse and inclusive decision-making process, enhancing the quality and breadth of perspectives in organisational governance. Committees covered by this initiative include:

- Financial Committee (FINCOM)
- In-Kind Contribution Committee (IKCC)
- Scientific and Technical Advisory Board (STAB)
- Research Infrastructure Committee (RIC)

The proposed gender quotas aims for a minimum representation of 40% for either gender,



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

taking into account any applicable national laws and guidelines.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, and Executive Board

Timeline: By the 2nd quarter of 2025

Resources:

- Ongoing Monitoring: Annual reviews to ensure committees maintain the minimum gender balance targets. Financial Resources/Training Budget: For workshops and training sessions to educate committee members on the importance of gender balance and inclusion.

Indicators / Targets:

- Achieve a minimum gender proportion of 40% to 60% within each committee.
- Conduct annual reviews to track progress and maintain balance over time.

7. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

7.1 Objective

To ensure that all individuals, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to join the organisation and advance in their careers, fostering an inclusive workplace where qualification, talent and performance are the primary criteria for recruitment and progression.

7.2 Key Actions

7.2.1 Define inclusive job description

Objective: To attract and retain diverse talent by ensuring that all job descriptions are written in an inclusive language and reflect the organisation's commitment to diversity



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

and equal opportunity.

Job vacancies are to be described using inclusive language to avoid any biases and ensure that all qualified candidates feel encouraged to apply. Each job description includes the following statement:

"LifeWatch ERIC is an equal opportunity employer and encourages all qualified candidates to apply, regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, or sexual orientation."

During the recruitment process, the following measures are to be implemented:

- Guarantee that the pool of finalists in the recruitment process includes at least one man and one woman, in all their diversity, who meets the job requirements.
- If no candidates from the under-represented gender groups meet the initial requirements, an active search is conducted on professional platforms to invite qualified from these groups candidates to participate in the recruitment process.

These measures aim to promote gender balance and ensure equal opportunities for all candidates.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager.

Timeline: 1st quarter of the 2026.

Resources: Approximately 20 hours of the P&C Manager's time for drafting and updating job descriptions and conducting active searches.

Indicators/Targets:

Gender Balance: Achieve a target of at least 80% of recruitment processes that include one man and one woman, in all their diversity, in the interview stage.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

7.2.2 Assure gender balance in internal training session for soft skills

Objective: To promote gender balance and equal participation in internal training sessions focused on soft skills development, ensuring that all individuals have equal opportunities to enhance their leadership and interpersonal skills.

The 2025 employees training plan ensures balanced gender representation in internal training sessions, particularly in programs that focus on soft skills such as Leadership Development, Negotiation Skills, Training of Trainers and Presentation, and Public Speaking Skills. The goal is to provide all individuals with equal access to development opportunities that enhance their interpersonal and leadership capabilities.

Efforts are made to encourage balanced participation by identifying potential participants from under-represented genders and ensuring that training invitations are extended equitably.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager.

Timeline: By the 4th quarter of 2025.

Resources: €20,000 allocated from the training plan budget for 2025.

Indicators/targets:

- Achieve a minimum of 40% of either gender participation in each training session focused on soft skills.

8. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

8.1 Objective

To embed gender equality into the organisational culture, research processes, and



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

teaching content, ensuring that gender perspectives are systematically considered in all educational and research activities.

8.2 Key Actions

8.2.1 Gender dimension into research projects

Objective: To ensure that the gender dimension is systematically integrated into research projects which LifeWatch ERIC coordinates by including specific actions, analyses, or considerations related to gender equality.

Each research project includes a dedicated section addressing the gender dimension, detailing specific actions or analyses to promote gender balance and consider gender perspectives in project objectives, methodologies, and outcomes. The Project Managers ensure that gender considerations are embedded in the project design and implementation phases.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, Project Managers.

Timeline: 4th quarter of the 2025.

Resources: Approximately 10 hours of the Project Manager's time per project to include and monitor the gender dimension.

Indicator/Target:

- Achieve gender integration in at least 80% of research projects.

8.2.2 Gender training for gender committee

Objective: To enhance the Gender Committee's understanding of gender-related issues by conducting a dedicated gender awareness training session. This training provides the committee members with the knowledge and tools needed to analyse the current Gender Equity Plan and propose meaningful improvements.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

A gender awareness training session is organised for all members of the Gender Committee. The training is facilitated by a gender expert, with qualification and experience working with organisation and institution across Europe. It covers key concepts, challenges, and best practices in promoting gender equity, and provides practical guidance on identifying gaps and opportunities in the organisation's Gender Equality Plan.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, Gender Expert.

Timeline: By the 1st quarter of 2025.

Resources:

- Gender expert: External facilitator to deliver the training session.
- Financial resources: at the scale of 1,000 €.

Indicator/Target:

- Conduct the gender awareness training session ensuring 100% of the participation of all four members of the Gender Committee.

8.2.3 Gender awareness training for employees

Objective: To promote a culture of gender equality across the organisation by providing regular gender awareness training to all employees. The training covers key concepts of gender equality, potential unconscious bias, and the specific measures outlined in the organisation's Gender Equity Plan.

A comprehensive gender awareness training session is conducted for all employees every two years. The training addresses various aspects of gender equality, including organisational policies, best practices, and the measures mentioned in this document. It is facilitated by a gender expert to ensure the content is relevant and impactful.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, and Gender Expert.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

Timeline: Every two years.

Resources: Gender Expert: External facilitator to deliver the training session.

Indicator:

- Training Completion: Conduct the gender awareness training session, achieving an attendance rate of at least 90% of employees for each training session.

9. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

9.1 Objective

To incorporate effective measures within the LifeWatch ERIC Procedure for Prevention and Action in Case of Harassment, ensuring a comprehensive approach to preventing and addressing gender-based violence and implementing a culture of zero tolerance.

9.2 Key Actions:

9.2.1 Review of the Procedure for prevention and action in case of harassment

Objective: To revise the Procedure for Prevention and Action in Case of Harassment, originally defined in 2023, ensuring it remains comprehensive and effective in addressing harassment issues. The review focuses on behaviours, reporting mechanisms, investigation processes, support for victims, disciplinary measures, and prosecution. Input from the gender expert is incorporated to identify potential improvements.

The revision process includes:

- A thorough review of the existing document to ensure clarity and completeness.
- Input from a Gender Expert to evaluate the procedure's effectiveness and



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

alignment with best practices.

- Updates to enhance the procedure's comprehensiveness, particularly regarding gender-based violence and victim support.
- Release of the updated procedure in the organisation's Document Management System (DMS) for easy access by all employees.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager, and Gender expert.

Timeline: 1st quarter of the 2026.

Resources: Gender expert: External consultant to provide specialized input.

Indicators/ Targets: The document released in LifeWatch ERIC Document Management System.

- Document Release: Ensure the updated procedure is released in the Document Management System and communicated to all employees

10. Gender Sensitization in Communication and Branding

10.1 Objective

Ensuring that communication outputs and activities reflect gender sensitivity and inclusivity, avoiding stereotypes and promoting balanced representation.

10.2 Key actions

10.2.1 Balanced social media post and campaigns

Objective: Promote balanced representation in social media posts and campaigns by ensuring diverse and inclusive content that reflects gender balance and avoids reinforcing stereotypes.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

It should be brought in mind that the most exposed positions in the media are mainly occupied by men.

The Communication Department ensures that social media posts and campaigns, telling LW ERIC own stories, feature balanced representation in their messages, images, and videos. This includes:

- Ensuring campaign messaging is inclusive and promotes equality.
- Starting monitoring social media content to establish the baseline, track progress and make necessary adjustments.
- Monitor own contents and the presence of LW ERIC Staff members in social posts. Group pictures or data coming from events organised by other organisations are excluded.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager and Chief Communication Officer.

Timeline: Throughout the year from 1st quarter of the 2026.

Resources:

- Photo reports from own events to ensure diverse representation.
- 5% of the Communication Officer for content creation and review.

Indicators/Targets:

- At least 35% female centred posts against 65% male centred posts. Also gender neutral and gender balanced posts will be counted. Follow-up on an annual basis.

10.2.2 Carry out specific campaigns on anniversaries

Objective: demonstrate the organisation's commitment to gender equality by celebrating key dates through specific awareness campaigns that highlight the contributions and achievements of women.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

The Communication Department and People and Culture Manager, plans, and executes specific campaigns to mark important gender-related anniversaries such as International Day of Women and Girls in Science (11th February) and International Women's Day (8th March).

These campaigns includes digital materials, social media posts, and internal communications to raise awareness and reinforce the organisation's commitment to gender equality.

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager and Chief Communication Officer.

Timeline: By 1st quarter of 2026.

Resources:

- 5% of the Communication Officer: For coordinating and managing the campaigns and creating visual content.

Indicators/ Targets:

- Ensure at least two specific campaign's annually.

10.2.3 Gender balance communication materials

Objective: Design and produce communication materials that reflect gender awareness and inclusivity by avoiding stereotypes and promoting balanced representation.

The Communication Department ensures that all promotional materials, including brochures, videos, merchandising, and digital content, are gender inclusive or neutral. The design process prioritises:

- Avoiding gender stereotypes in visuals and language.
- Ensuring balanced representation of all genders in imagery and messaging.
- Using inclusive language in all written content.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

Responsible Parties: People & Culture Manager and Chief Communication Officer.

Timeline: throughout the year.

Resources:

- 5% of the Communication Officer: For coordinating and managing the product creation and creating visual content.
- Budget for the production of merchandising.

Indicators/ Target:

- All promotional materials produced are gender inclusive or neutral. Follow-up on an annual basis.

10.2.4 Gender representation in media and organisation communication

Objective: Enhance balanced gender representation in internal and external communications by ensuring fairness and inclusivity in visuals, language, and narratives across all media channels. This includes pro-active engagement in ensuring balanced gender representation when organising own events, both for what concerns invited speaker, as well as participants, when their costs are covered by LifeWatch ERIC itself (i.e. Conferences, Workshops, Summer Schools).

The Communication Department collaborates with the Executive Board reviews and updates communication practices to ensure that all content reflects gender balance. This includes:

- Ensuring that images, videos, and promotional materials feature diverse and balanced representation.
- Using inclusive language in all internal and external communications.
- Creating narratives that avoid gender stereotypes and promote equality.



Document Number: LW-00044-2

Release Date: 11-06-2025

Revision: 2

Confidentiality: Public

Document Type: Strategy

Document State: Released

- Balanced Gender representation is ensured on the occasion of events organised by LifeWatch ERIC.

Responsible Parties: Chief Communication Officer, People & Culture Manager and Executive Board.

Timeline: 4th quarter 2026.

Resources: 5% Communication Officer.

Indicators/ Target:

- All media and communication materials are gender inclusive or neutral. Follow-up on an annual basis.
- At least 80% of balanced Representation in LifeWatch ERIC's events guests.

11. Document Revision History

Revision	Reason for and description of change	Author	Date
1.	First issue	Africa G. Zanella	19-09-2022
2.	New revision of the Gender Equality Plan	Elena Delgado Rivera	11-06-2025