Let Her In International

Gender Equality Plan

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1. INTRODUCTION

Let Her In is committed to embedding gender equality as a core organisational principle and operational priority. This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) reflects our proactive stance in promoting equal opportunities, dismantling structural barriers, and fostering an inclusive, respectful, and motivating work environment.

Gender equality is not treated as a discrete or symbolic concern but is integral to our internal practices and external initiatives. As a multidisciplinary organisation engaged in national and European cooperation projects, research, education, and civic engagement, we recognise the transformative role that gender-sensitive approaches play in shaping equitable societies.

Our GEP is grounded in a comprehensive understanding of our institutional context, characterised by a diverse and gender-balanced workforce (currently comprising 26 women and 19 men), a collaborative organisational culture, and strong commitments to transparency, open communication, and work-life balance. These values are reinforced through flexible working arrangements and inclusive policies, ensuring that parental responsibilities and individual well-being are not obstacles to professional development.

In line with our involvement in initiatives such as Just Her and the Let Her In network, we aim to advance not only gender equality but also broader social inclusion. Our Plan integrates this perspective into practical objectives and targeted measures across five thematic areas:

1. Work-life balance and organisational culture
2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
4. Integration of the gender dimension into projects and research
5. Prevention of gender-based violence and promotion of an inclusive environment

The GEP will be implemented through a series of time-bound actions supported by dedicated governance mechanisms and regular monitoring. It is both a strategic roadmap and an institutional commitment, ensuring accountability while allowing space for ongoing reflection and adaptation.

Through this Plan, Let Her In aims not only to comply with European standards but to act as a reference point for gender mainstreaming within the third sector, contributing to systemic change in our national context and beyond.

2. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 European and International Frameworks

Let Her In aligns its gender equality strategy with the key directives and policy instruments of the European Union and broader international frameworks, including:

- **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)** – Article 157 establishes the principle of equal pay for equal work and empowers the EU to adopt measures ensuring gender equality in employment and occupation.
- **Directive 2006/54/EC** on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation.
- **Directive (EU) 2019/1158** on work-life balance for parents and carers, which promotes gender equality by encouraging shared responsibility in caregiving roles.
- **EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025**, which provides a roadmap for achieving a Union of equality and prioritises combating gender-based violence, closing gender gaps in the labour market, and mainstreaming gender in all policy areas.
- **UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5)** – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

In addition, Let Her In recognises and supports the gender equality requirements outlined in **Horizon Europe**, including the mandatory institutional GEP as a prerequisite for eligibility in research funding.

Our Plan meets all formal requirements, including:

- Public availability of the GEP;

- Dedicated resources for implementation;
- Data collection and monitoring;
- Training and capacity building;
- Commitment to gender equality in institutional practices and content.

2.2 National Legislation (Spain)

This Plan is also governed by the national legal framework established by Spanish legislation, particularly:

- **Ley Orgánica 3/2007**, for effective equality between women and men, which defines principles and mechanisms for achieving substantive equality across public and private sectors.
- **Royal Decree 901/2020** regulating gender equality plans and their registration, and **Royal Decree 902/2020** on equal pay between women and men.
- **National Strategic Plan for Effective Equality between Women and Men 2022–2025**, which provides a coordinated approach to advancing gender equality across institutions and sectors.

These instruments establish the legal obligation for gender equality in employment, pay transparency, inclusive hiring practices, and balanced participation in decision-making bodies.

3. Organisational Context and Gender Baseline

3.1 Organisational Profile

Let Her In is an independent organisation engaged in the design and implementation of educational, cultural, and research-based initiatives at both national and European levels. Its operational focus spans Erasmus+ projects, capacity-building programmes, training delivery, and community-based actions.

With a staff of **45 employees—26 women and 19 men**—Let Her In is characterised by a flat organisational structure and a collaborative working culture. The association operates from a central office in Reus, Spain, with

increasing adoption of remote and hybrid working models to ensure accessibility and flexibility for all staff members.

Diversity and inclusion are central to the organisation's identity, which is further reflected in its long-standing commitment to international mobility, intercultural dialogue, and social justice. Let Her In is also a founding member of several European networks promoting gender equality and human rights.

3.2 Gender Composition and Work Environment

A preliminary gender diagnosis reveals the following:

- **Overall workforce**: Women constitute the majority (58%), while men represent 42%.
- **Management roles**: Women are equally represented in coordination and leadership positions.
- **Workplace dynamics**: Professional interactions are governed by mutual respect, non-discrimination, and a strong ethic of care.
- **Decision-making**: Key decisions are made collaboratively, with a conscious effort to ensure inclusive participation.

The organisation maintains an internal culture in which **gender has no bearing on authority, visibility, or access to opportunities**. Colleagues are recognised based on merit and contribution, and the association's small scale enables direct communication and transparent governance.

3.3 Existing Practices Supporting Gender Equality

Let Her In has already embedded several gender-sensitive practices into its daily operations:

- **Flexible working hours and remote work** available for staff with caregiving or health-related needs;
- **Equal access to training and mobility opportunities**, regardless of gender;

- **Support for parenting**, including when returning from leave or managing work-life transitions;
- **Promotion of gender-balanced teams** in all Erasmus+ projects and external activities;
- **Commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion** and participation in relevant advocacy and awareness-raising projects.

These practices have evolved organically but are now being consolidated into a more structured and systematic approach under this Gender Equality Plan.

3.4 Limitations and Areas for Further Action

While the organisation demonstrates strong informal mechanisms supporting equality, certain areas require further development:

- **Systematic collection of gender-disaggregated data** across recruitment, training, and decision-making processes;
- **Formalisation of internal policies** on harassment prevention and inclusive communication;
- **Integration of the gender dimension** into project content and research where applicable;
- **Improved visibility of gender-sensitive practices** in public-facing documents and reports.

This baseline assessment forms the foundation for the development of measurable objectives and targeted actions, ensuring that gender equality is not only protected but proactively advanced within the organisation.

4. Objectives and Priority Areas

Based on the organisational analysis and in alignment with national and European frameworks, Let Her In has identified five priority areas for intervention. These areas reflect both internal development needs and external obligations, and they are designed to ensure the full and equitable participation of all staff, regardless of gender or personal circumstances.

Each priority area is supported by specific, measurable objectives to be pursued through concrete actions detailed in the implementation section of this Plan.

4.1 Work-Life Balance and Organisational Culture

Objective:
To strengthen a workplace culture that supports work-life balance, recognises caregiving responsibilities, and promotes mutual respect, psychological safety, and professional wellbeing.

Focus Areas:

- Promote flexible and hybrid work arrangements for all staff.
- Encourage practices that reduce gendered assumptions regarding availability or commitment.
- Foster awareness around implicit bias, inclusive communication, and non-discriminatory behaviour.
- Maintain a supportive environment for parenting and caregiving across all genders.

4.2 Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making

Objective:
To maintain and reinforce gender balance in all management and coordination roles, ensuring equitable participation in formal and informal decision-making bodies.

Focus Areas:

- Monitor gender representation in strategic and project leadership.
- Promote balanced gender representation in steering groups, project consortia, and public events.
- Facilitate leadership training and mentoring for underrepresented groups.
- Encourage shared leadership practices and team-based decision-making.

4.3 Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression

Objective:
To ensure equal access to employment, mobility, and promotion opportunities, and to address any potential bias in recruitment, evaluation, or retention processes.

Focus Areas:

- Apply inclusive and transparent recruitment procedures.
- Standardise selection criteria to ensure fair assessment of all candidates.
- Monitor gender balance in applications, interviews, and appointments.
- Ensure equal access to continuing professional development, training, and mobility opportunities.

4.4 Integration of the Gender Dimension into Projects and Research Content

Objective:
To promote the consideration of gender as a cross-cutting issue in the organisation's project development, research, and educational activities.

Focus Areas:

- Include gender-sensitive analysis in project design and implementation.
- Encourage project partners to consider intersectional and inclusive perspectives.
- Develop guidelines or reference materials to support gender integration in outputs.
- Showcase good practices and gender-aware methodologies in dissemination materials.

4.5 Measures Against Gender-Based Violence and Harassment

Objective:

To prevent, identify, and respond effectively to any form of gender-based violence, harassment, or discrimination in the workplace and in the context of organisational activities.

Focus Areas:

- Establish a formal anti-harassment policy and reporting procedure.
- Designate a confidential contact person or team trained in gender-sensitive case handling.
- Conduct training on recognising and addressing harassment and microaggressions.
- Promote a zero-tolerance approach in all internal and external communication.
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5. Actions and Measures

Priority Area	Action	Target	Responsible Unit	Timeline
Work-life balance and organisational culture	Formalise and expand flexible work policies for all staff	All staff eligible for hybrid/flexible work by Q4 2025	Management Board	Q2 2025 Q4 2025
Work-life balance and organisational culture	Introduce periodic workshops on inclusive communication and wellbeing	Two workshops per year from 2025	Training & Wellbeing Unit	Q1 2025 – ongoing
Leadership and decision-making	Track and report gender balance in internal committees and management	Annual gender balance report starting 2025	Executive Director	Q1 2025 – annually

Leadership and decision-making	Introduce mentoring scheme for staff from underrepresented genders	Mentorship pilot launched by Q3 2026	HR & Equality Officer	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026
Recruitment and career progression	Revise job advertisements to use inclusive, gender-neutral language	100% inclusive language in job ads by Q4 2025	HR Department	Q3 2025 Q4 2025
Recruitment and career progression	Standardise interview and evaluation criteria to mitigate bias	All recruitment processes using revised criteria by Q1 2026	HR Department	Q4 2025 Q1 2026
Gender in projects and research	Include gender dimension in all new project applications	100% new projects include gender analysis from 2025	Project Development Team	Q1 2025 – ongoing
Gender in projects and research	Produce a guideline on gender-sensitive content and evaluation	Guideline disseminated internally by Q2 2026	Quality Assurance & Impact Unit	Q3 2025 Q2 2026
Gender-based violence and harassment	Develop and implement anti-harassment policy and reporting mechanism	Policy and protocol adopted and published by Q1 2026	Management & Legal Advisor	Q4 2025 Q1 2026
Gender-based violence and harassment	Appoint trained contact person(s) for confidential support and complaints	Contacts publicly listed and trained by Q2 2026	HR & Equality Officer	Q1 2026 Q2 2026

6. Governance and Accountability

Effective governance and sustained leadership commitment are essential to the success of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP). Let Her In adopts a decentralised but coordinated governance model to ensure that gender equality is embedded into its operational structures, policy decisions, and institutional development.

6.1 Oversight and Governance Structure

A dedicated **Gender Equality Officer** will be appointed to oversee the implementation, coordination, and monitoring of the GEP. This officer will be supported by a cross-functional **Gender Equality Working Group (GEWG)** composed of representatives from management, human resources, project development, and training units.

Functions of the GEWG include:

- Coordinating actions across departments;
- Ensuring alignment with EU and national policy developments;
- Proposing updates or corrective measures based on monitoring data;
- Facilitating internal dialogue and awareness-raising;
- Reviewing and validating progress reports before submission to leadership.

6.2 Role of Leadership

The **Executive Director and Management Board** hold institutional responsibility for the Gender Equality Plan.

Their roles include:

- Formally endorsing the GEP and communicating its relevance;
- Ensuring that gender equality is integrated into strategic priorities and resource planning;
- Monitoring the allocation of human and financial resources to support GEP implementation;

- Supporting a culture of accountability and inclusion at all levels.

The leadership team will review GEP progress twice annually and provide strategic direction to ensure continuity and relevance.

6.3 Reporting and Internal Accountability Mechanisms

Accountability is ensured through clear reporting lines and regular progress tracking:

- Each responsible unit identified in the Actions and Measures table is required to submit brief implementation updates every six months to the Gender Equality Officer.
- A consolidated **Annual GEP Progress Report** will be produced and presented to the Management Board and published internally.
- Deviations from targets will trigger consultations between the relevant units and the Gender Equality Officer to adjust timelines or approaches.

Confidential feedback channels will also be maintained to allow staff to report barriers or concerns related to gender equality.

6.4 Integration with Strategic Planning and Evaluation

The Gender Equality Plan is embedded in Let Her In 's wider **organisational development strategy** and forms part of its quality assurance and risk management framework.

Key linkages include:

- Incorporation of GEP actions into the organisation's **annual work plans** and internal audits;
- Inclusion of gender indicators in **project evaluation templates** and monitoring reports;
- Use of GEP progress as a criterion in the periodic review of staff development plans, organisational performance, and external funding applications.

In this way, gender equality is not treated as an isolated initiative, but as a cross-cutting priority embedded in the institution's overall performance and accountability systems.

7. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting

A robust monitoring and evaluation system is essential for ensuring that the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) remains responsive, measurable, and aligned with institutional goals. Let Her In commits to evidence-based oversight through a combination of quantitative indicators, periodic reviews, and qualitative feedback mechanisms.

7.1 Key Performance Indicators and Data Collection

Monitoring will focus on a set of **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**, aligned with the priority areas outlined in the Plan. These include:

Area	Indicator
Work-life balance	% of staff using flexible work options
Organisational culture	Staff feedback on inclusion and respect (via surveys)
Leadership and decision-making	Gender distribution in management and coordination roles
Recruitment and progression	Gender breakdown in applications, interviews, appointments
Project content	% of projects with explicit gender-sensitive objectives
Harassment prevention	Existence and awareness of anti-harassment policy

Data Collection Methods:

- Internal HR and project management records;
- Anonymous staff surveys (annually);
- Workshop and training attendance logs;
- Documentation reviews (job ads, project proposals, policy texts);

- Feedback from the Gender Equality Working Group and individual staff.

7.2 Baseline and Target Values

Baseline values will be defined during the **first annual reporting cycle (2025)** using disaggregated data. Example targets include:

- Achieve 100% inclusive job advertisements by Q4 2025;
- At least 40% representation of each gender in leadership roles by end of 2026;
- At least 75% of project proposals to include gender considerations by 2026;
- Implementation of anti-harassment protocol and full staff awareness by mid-2026.

7.3 Frequency and Responsibility

- **Quarterly tracking** of selected indicators by the **Gender Equality Officer**.
- **Biannual updates** from responsible units to the **Gender Equality Working Group**.
- **Annual progress review**, consolidated into a report presented to the **Management Board**.

All relevant units are expected to cooperate in providing timely and accurate data.

7.4 Reporting Mechanisms

- Internal reports are shared with all staff and made available on the intranet.
- A **summary of annual progress** will be published on the organisation's website to ensure transparency.
- Where applicable (e.g. Horizon Europe), results will be included in **external evaluation reports** or **project deliverables**.

7.5 Review and Adaptation Procedures

The GEP will be subject to **regular review** to ensure its relevance and effectiveness:

- Annual reviews may result in adjustments to actions, targets, or indicators based on evidence and feedback.
- A **mid-term review** will be conducted in 2026 to assess strategic alignment and identify any systemic challenges.
- Revisions will be proposed by the Gender Equality Officer and validated by the Gender Equality Working Group before formal approval by the Management Board.

This process ensures that the Plan remains both dynamic and grounded in real organisational conditions.

8. Awareness, Training, and Capacity Building

Fostering a culture of equality requires more than structural reforms; it also depends on shared values, institutional awareness, and the continuous development of staff competencies. Let Her In is therefore committed to investing in awareness-raising, targeted training, and inclusive practices that strengthen gender equality throughout the organisation.

8.1 Awareness and Internal Communication

A key component of the Gender Equality Plan is ensuring that all employees understand its relevance, content, and implications for their roles.

Measures include:

- Publication and dissemination of the GEP to all staff in both English and Spanish;
- Visual summaries (e.g. infographics, posters) shared internally and included in onboarding packs;

- Periodic internal campaigns focusing on key dates (e.g. International Women's Day, Pride Month, etc.);
- Open discussion sessions or "gender cafés" to promote informal learning and dialogue.

These activities will contribute to the normalisation of inclusive language, equitable behaviour, and mutual respect in daily operations.

8.2 Gender Equality Training

Regular, structured training will be provided to ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge and tools to contribute to gender equality, regardless of their position.

Training priorities:

- **Unconscious bias and inclusive leadership** for senior staff and coordinators;
- **Gender-sensitive project design and evaluation** for project managers;
- **Non-discrimination, diversity, and intersectionality** for all staff;
- **Procedures for recognising and reporting harassment** across all departments.

At least **one compulsory training module per year** will be delivered, either in person or online, with optional thematic sessions offered in collaboration with external experts.

8.3 Capacity Building Through Networks and Partnerships

Let Her In benefits from active participation in European networks such as *Let Her In*, and project-based cooperation with organisations specialising in gender equality and social inclusion.

Planned actions:

- Exchange of tools, methodologies, and case studies with network partners;

- Joint workshops and study visits;
- Hosting of external experts for seminars and public events;
- Promotion of peer learning through inter-organisational working groups.

These actions will strengthen institutional capacity, while amplifying the organisation's role as a multiplier of gender mainstreaming in the third sector.

8.4 Tools and Resources

To support the implementation of this strand, Let Her In will develop and maintain:

- A centralised **repository of gender equality resources** (guidelines, toolkits, policy briefs);
- A dedicated intranet section for updates and materials;
- Monitoring tools to track training participation and staff feedback.

The organisation will also allocate **annual budget lines** to cover external trainers, learning materials, and development of internal content.

9. Annexes

The annexes provide supporting documentation, templates, and references that ensure transparency, operational clarity, and alignment with relevant legal and policy frameworks.

Annex 1. Glossary of Terms

A set of key terms used in the GEP to ensure shared understanding across the organisation:

- **Gender Equality**: The absence of discrimination based on sex or gender identity, ensuring equal access to opportunities, resources, and participation.
- **Gender Mainstreaming**: The systematic integration of gender perspectives in all policies, programmes, and organisational practices.

- **Intersectionality**: The recognition of how various forms of inequality (e.g. gender, race, disability) intersect and compound one another.
- **Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**: Any act of violence or harassment directed at an individual based on their gender or perceived gender identity.
- **Unconscious Bias**: Social stereotypes about certain groups that individuals form outside their conscious awareness.

Annex 2. Legal and Policy References

- Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) – Article 157
- EU Directives 2006/54/EC and 2019/1158
- EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025
- Ley Orgánica 3/2007 (Spain)
- Royal Decrees 901/2020 and 902/2020 (Spain)
- Horizon Europe Gender Equality Plan eligibility requirements
- UN Sustainable Development Goal 5