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Gender Equality Plan

The Institute of Photonics and Electronics (ÚFE) is a public research Institution of the Czech Academy of Sciences, and as such it has accepted the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers including the rules and plans for gender equality embodied in these documents. Consequently, this Gender Equality Plan has been introduced as a tool for human resources planning and development in the area of gender. By this document the Management states that the principles of equal treatment and gender equality are followed in all institutional activities and applied to all positions, nomination to professional bodies, remuneration, and the recruitment process. The Institute strives to identify and hire the most qualified candidates and, at the same time, it seeks to bring people of different ages, ethnic backgrounds, or cultures into the Institute, so that the diversity of the community is being developed. The procedures adopted by the Institute in the area of human resources are open, transparent, and merit-based. Since ÚFE is aware of the importance of organizational culture and work-life balance, it has implemented several measures to support the employees on maternity/paternity leaves and to facilitate their return to the workplace.

The management of the Institute has also established a working group responsible for implementation of the principles included in the Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and the Gender Equality Plan (hereinafter only GEP Working Group). Appropriate financial and human resources have been dedicated for introduction of the Gender Equality Plan; annual collection of data of the employees (including students) disaggregated on their gender; as well as for organization of relevant training to raise awareness of gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers, e.g. the event "Women in Optics".

The working group evaluated the thus far implemented activities / measures and defined following priorities in the monitored areas:

Reconciling personal and professional life and organizational culture:

- Further support for employees returning from parental leave through individual consultations.
- Support for pre-school children's parents and persons as caring for the closely related person (possibilities of part-time work, home office, flexible working conditions, children's groups possibilities e. g. at nearby workplaces of the Czech Academy of Sciences etc.)

Gender balance in management and decision making:

- Monitoring of the share of women at commissions and committees, support for the balanced access to / participation in the leadership while maintaining its professional level.

Gender equality in recruitment and career

- Raising awareness of the possibilities for career growth.
- Consideration of gender sensitivity in job advertisements, internal competitions, and job interviews.

Integration of gender dimension into research and tuition

Research in the field of photonics and electronics is not directly related to gender issues; therefore, it is usually not relevant to integrate the gender dimension into the subject of research. However, given that the results of research and innovation can affect society and the quality of life also regarding the gender dimension, these aspects must be consistently identified and subsequently taken into account when planning and carrying out research tasks.

- Offer of gender-related issues within the planned training courses or workshops (Identification of gender-related issues in the research, Work-life balance, etc.)
- Increase attractiveness of the fields represented at the ÚFE for women candidates in cooperation with secondary schools and universities.

Company culture against gender-based violence

- Strict intolerance of all morally unacceptable forms of behaviour, including sexual harassment.

Evaluation of the current situation and action plan for the upcoming period 2026-2027:

As to the tasks related to the support of employees with young children, since the relevant nationwide subsidy for financing children's groups in 2024 were exhausted ahead of time, the intention to establish an own children's group at ÚFE was abandoned. However, cooperation was established with other nearby institutions that already run children's groups (specifically with the Institute of Physics of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic) so that, in coordination with the Centre of Administration and Operations Czech Academy of Sciences to provide a children's group also for ÚFE employees.

In 2024, the management was provided with the Final Report of the investigation of the prevalence of gender-based violence in the Czech academic environment, which was carried out by the The Centre for Gender and Science. In this context it was appreciated that at the end of 2025, the position of ombudsperson of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic was established. ÚFE employees can address her if they witness situations that conflict with the Code of Conduct of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, including cases of suspected gender-based violence. The employees of the ÚFE were informed about this possibility by an email from the Director of the ÚFE dated November 11, 2025.

The ratio of men and women in individual positions within the departments is regularly monitored and reflected in all relevant constitutional documents, including annual reports. Monitoring will continue, the ÚFE Personnel Department is responsible for it, and its results will be continuously

provided to the ÚFE management. The management of the Institute was also strengthened by a female colleague in the position of financial manager, head of the Economic Department.

In 2025, the ÚFE was awarded the OP JAK (Operational program Jan Amos Komenský) project with the title: *Improvement of the research environment at the ÚFE* – acronym HRA, the aim of which is to win the European HR award. The focus of the project is closely related to the gender agenda. Subsequently, the ÚFE subscribed to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and officially started the process to obtain the HR award. In this context, the HR working group and the Steering Committee were established, which directs and controls the activities of the working group.

In the coming period, close cooperation and coordination of the activities of the GEP working group with the newly established HR working group is planned, with an emphasis on the gender dimension within Key Activity 2 of the project: *Improving the strategic procedures of the ÚFE due to activities related to obtaining and maintaining the European HR award*. Mainly it concerns the setting of the gender equality principles in the ÚFE in accordance with the conditions of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R - Human Resources Strategy for Researchers). Furthermore, it is necessary to ensure that the gender dimension is adequately assessed, especially in the planned training, which is the direct responsibility of the GEP working group and the HR working group, which personally overlap to a certain extent.

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