

Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

SIR – Salzburger Institut für Raumordnung und Wohnen GmbH

SIR – Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing (SIR)

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1. Introduction

The Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing (SIR) considers the promotion of gender equality a fundamental part of its organizational culture and social responsibility. SIR considers gender equality as a fundamental prerequisite for innovation, quality, and fairness in the workplace. All employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Furthermore, by having an open-minded attitude towards all people, each employee actively contributes to supporting diversity across all areas of work and personal life. At the same time, they have a duty to prevent and refrain from discrimination, harassment and bullying in any form whatsoever. As a research and municipal competence center focused on spatial development, sustainable housing, energy and climate protection, as well as environment and sustainability, we recognize the importance of diverse perspectives for the quality of our work. Only through an inclusive and equitable working environment can innovative and sustainable solutions be developed to address the challenges of spatial planning and municipal development.

For us, gender equality means establishing structural and cultural frameworks that offer all employees—regardless of gender, age, origin, or family situation—the same opportunities for professional and personal development. This includes both the promotion of women in leadership positions and ensuring fair recruitment and career advancement opportunities. At the same time, SIR is committed to gender-sensitive research and consulting by integrating gender aspects into its projects and actively raising awareness. The SIR Works Council promotes and monitors gender equality through its legal tasks. The safety representative also contributes to promoting gender and diversity aspects in occupational health and safety. By taking gender and diversity perspectives into account, occupational health and safety standards can be improved for everyone and equal opportunities in the workplace can be promoted. This means that all three - the SIR management, the Works Council and the safety representative - are actively working to create an inclusive and fair working environment in which diversity is recognized and promoted.

Through this Gender Equality Plan, we commit to specific measures that anchor gender equality in the long term. These include targeted personnel and career development, measures to improve work-life balance, and initiatives to raise awareness of gender-specific challenges in research and practice. This must be ensured in a constructive, fair and motivating way across all functions and all levels of the hierarchy. The goal is to create an inclusive and discrimination-free work environment and to ensure equal opportunities at all levels of the organization. The GEP's measures are regularly reviewed, evaluated, and further developed to track progress and ensure that SIR operates as a modern, inclusive, and fair employer.

By publishing and implementing this plan, we are making a clear statement in favor of gender equality and invite all employees to actively participate in its implementation and further development.

2. Analysis of Gender Distribution at SIR

Currently (Status 02/2025), the Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing (SIR) employs 56 people, of whom 34 are women (61%) and 22 are men (39%). In leadership positions, there are 10 employees, including 5 women (50%) and 5 men (50%). On average, women work 28 hours per week, while men work 30.5 hours per week. Additionally, 46% of men work full-time, compared to 27% of women.

Findings: The SIR workforce has a higher proportion of women than men. While gender representation in leadership roles is balanced, women are underrepresented in leadership positions relative to their overall proportion in the organization. This may be due to the evolving leadership structure at SIR. Women work fewer hours per week on average and are more likely to work part-time than men, which could be due to structural or societal reasons. To ensure equal representation at all levels, targeted career development measures for women could be beneficial. The existing part-time work structure offers flexibility

3. Objectives of the Gender Equality Plan

The composition of teams significantly influences discussion culture, collaboration dynamics, and ultimately, the quality of results. The SIR Gender Equality Plan aims to actively counteract inequalities based on gender, age, origin, or family situation.

Our approach is designed to be as preventative and proactive as possible, ensuring that the diverse interests, needs, and rights of all employees are considered. We strive to involve them in decision-making processes and guarantee fair access to the organization's resources. Another key priority is fostering a work environment that promotes open and transparent communication, rooted in tolerance, appreciation, respect, and mutual support. The main goals of our GEP are:

- Ensuring gender parity in decision-making processes: We strive for balanced representation of all genders in our committees and decision-making bodies.
- Increasing the proportion of women in leadership positions: More women should be qualified and encouraged for leadership roles. Additionally, career development measures should be created to support women in part-time positions, removing structural barriers.
- Integrating the gender dimension into projects and consulting: Gender aspects should be systematically incorporated into all projects and advisory activities.
- Preventing and combating gender-based violence and harassment: Through clear guidelines and training, we aim to ensure a safe and respectful working environment.

4. Measures to Promote Gender Equality

The SIR already offers various measures to promote gender equality and work-life balance:

1. **Part-time work:** Employees have the opportunity to work part-time. Currently, 37 employees work less than the full 39.5 hours per week, with working hours ranging between 5 and 37 hours per week. All women are offered the opportunity for a flexible re-entry after their parental leave.
2. **Flexible working hours (Gleitzeit model):** Employees not bound to fixed opening or consulting hours can use a flexible working model, which allows greater autonomy in work schedules. Currently, 50 employees benefit from this model.
3. **Support for fathers:** Fathers are supported in taking paternity leave, parental leave, and part-time parental work. For example, some fathers have already taken advantage of the 'Papa Month' or have opted for long-term reduced working hours as part of the fathers' part-time scheme.

These existing measures improve work-life balance and contribute to gender equality. They form a solid foundation for future initiatives in gender-sensitive personnel development at SIR. These existing initiatives shall be expanded, and new aspects of gender equality promotion will be introduced. To achieve this, SIR aims to implement the following measures:

4.1. Transparent Communication on Career Development and Gender Equality

Measure: Strengthening open discussions on career opportunities and gender equality through increased communication and awareness within the SIR.

Implementation: Regular information and discussion rounds on career paths, promotion modalities, and gender equality measures.

Target Group: All employees, especially women in career development phases.

Indicators: Participation in events, employee feedback on clarity and perception of career opportunities.

Responsible: Management.

Timeline: Semi-annual exchanges within the next 6 months, utilizing existing formats.

4.2. Raising Awareness for Gender-Sensitive Decision-Making

Measure: Promoting conscious and inclusive decision-making.

Implementation: Reflecting on existing structures as part of the implementation of the new organizational structure and defining necessary adjustments in committees and selection processes. Training for the leadership team.

Target Group: Management, Head of Strategy and Innovation, department heads, HR personnel.

Indicators: Employee satisfaction surveys on fairness in decision-making processes.

Responsible: Management.

Timeline: Implementation within the next 12 months, annual evaluation.

4.3. Promoting an Open Dialogue Culture on Work-Life Balance

Measure: Regular involvement of employees in discussions about existing working time models, remote work regulations, and work-life balance issues.

Implementation: Internal surveys, feedback sessions, and exchange formats to identify work-life balance needs at an early stage. Low-threshold opportunities for discussions with the works council and the safety representative.

Target Group: All employees, particularly parents and caregivers.

Indicators: Participation in feedback formats, satisfaction levels regarding flexibility in work arrangements.

Responsible: HR department

Timeline: Introduction of annual dialogue formats within the next 6 months.

4.4. Strengthening Awareness of Gender-Specific Challenges in Consulting and (Project) Research

Measure: Encouraging a more conscious approach to gender-specific perspectives in projects and consulting.

Implementation: Awareness-building through internal professional discussions and sharing of best practices for gender-sensitive approaches.

Target Group: All employees.

Indicators: Number of discussion rounds held, inclusion of gender aspects in projects and consulting.

Responsible: Project managers.

Timeline: Introduction of initial discussion formats within the next 12 months.

4.5. Promoting a Respectful and Discrimination-Free Work Environment

Measure: Strengthening internal awareness for a respectful and inclusive work environment through targeted communication measures.

Implementation: Open dialogue culture to promote a discrimination-free workplace, communication of existing complaint and support structures, and identification of areas of concern and safety issues.

Target Group: All employees.

Indicators: Awareness of the measures through internal surveys, number of consultation requests to the works council or management, and reports of incidents.

Responsible: Management

Timeline: Establishment of ongoing communication formats within the next 6 months.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation of Measures to Promote Equality in the SIR

5.1. Transparent Communication on Career Development and Equality

Monitoring:

- Recording the number and topics of conducted information and discussion sessions.
- Documenting participation figures and analyzing feedback forms after the events.
- Analyzing career development inquiries addressed to the HR department or leadership.

Evaluation:

- Annual anonymous survey on the perception of career opportunities and transparency in promotion processes.
- Comparison of promotion statistics by gender over two years to identify potential changes.
- Collection and evaluation of improvement suggestions from discussion sessions.

5.1. Transparent Communication on Career Development and Gender Equality

Monitoring:

- Tracking the number and topics of conducted information and discussion rounds.
- Documenting participation numbers and evaluating feedback forms after events.
- Analyzing inquiries on career development directed to HR or leadership.

Evaluation:

- Conducting an annual anonymous survey on the perceived transparency of career paths and promotion processes.
- Comparing promotion statistics by gender over two years to identify potential changes.
- Collecting and analyzing improvement suggestions from discussion rounds.

5.2. Raising Awareness for Gender-Sensitive Decision-Making

Monitoring:

- Documentation of adjustments in committees and selection processes within the new organizational structure.
- Regular internal reflection meetings with decision-makers to assess effectiveness.

Evaluation:

- Conducting an annual employee satisfaction survey on fairness and transparency in decision-making processes.

- Analyzing the development of gender representation in leadership and committees over three years.
- Conducting feedback interviews with managers on challenges and best practices in decision-making.

5.3. Promoting an Open Dialogue Culture on Work-Life Balance

Monitoring:

- Recording the number and content of feedback and inquiries. Documenting expressed needs and challenges from employees in surveys.
- Analyzing the use of existing work-time models and home office regulations.

Evaluation:

- Conducting an annual assessment of employee satisfaction regarding work-life balance.
- Comparing desired vs. actual usage of flexible work models to identify barriers.
- Developing concrete adjustments for HR and work-time management.

5.4. Raising Awareness for Gender-Sensitive Challenges in Consulting and Research

Monitoring:

- Documenting the number, topics, and participants in gender-related professional discussions.
- Assessment of the consideration of gender aspects in internal project reports and advisory processes.
- Collecting data on the integration of gender aspects in internal project reports and consulting processes.

Evaluation:

- Reviewing the systematic inclusion of gender-sensitive perspectives in projects after two years.
- Conducting anonymous surveys among employees on the relevance and feasibility of gender aspects in research and consulting.

5.5. Promoting a Respectful and Discrimination-Free Work Environment

Monitoring:

- Analysis of the number and type of inquiries to advisory services and/or the works council or equality officers.

Evaluation:

- Conducting an annual review of anonymized reports on discrimination or workplace incidents.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of measures through qualitative employee interviews.
- Identifying patterns and areas for improvement to strengthen an inclusive work environment.

