

The Gender Equality Strategy and the  
Gender Equality Plan  
2022-2025

of

INCSMPS – National Scientific Research  
Institute for Labour and Social Protection

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## Abbreviations and definitions

GE	Gender equality
GEP	Gender equality plan
HoD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
GD	General Director
SD	Scientific Director
CD	Steering Committee (Comitet de direcție)
CA	Board of Directors (Consiliul de administrație)
Sex	Either of the two major forms of individuals that occur in many species and that are distinguished respectively as female or male especially on the basis of their reproductive organs and structures ( <a href="https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/">https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/</a> )
Gender	The behavioural, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex ( <a href="https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/">https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/</a> )
Sex vs Gender	A clear delineation between sex and gender is typically prescribed, with sex as the preferred term for biological forms, and gender limited to its meanings involving behavioural, cultural, and psychological traits. In this dichotomy, the terms male and female relate only to biological forms (sex), while the terms masculine/masculinity, feminine/femininity, woman/girl, and man/boy relate only to psychological and sociocultural traits (gender) ( <a href="https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/">https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/</a> )

## Introduction

The Gender Equality (GE) strategy for 2022-2025 was developed by **INCSMPS - National Scientific Research Institute for Labour and Social Protection** based on the input from the entire research institute, considering everyone working in our research institute. The GE strategy was built on the provisions of the European Charter for researchers and of the Code of Conduct in the process of the recruitment of researchers<sup>1</sup> 2015-2019, the European Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025<sup>2</sup> and the Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans<sup>3</sup>.

The motivation for developing the GE strategy is to ensure that our research institute is a safe place for everyone, and all activities and processes that take place respect the principles of equality, diversity, inclusiveness and non-discrimination.

Based on the GE strategy, the research institute developed the GE Plan (GEP) for 2022-2025, with concrete actions and measures, as well as indicators for measuring progress of its implementation and revisions (presented below).

Enforcing its mission and values, **the GE strategy and the GEP of INCSMPS - National Scientific Research Institute for Labour and Social Protection** ensure and promote equality and diversity to knowledge and the acquisition of skills to all. The objectives of the GE strategy are implemented through specific actions that aim at safeguarding an equal and inclusive organizational culture and promoting gender-equality at all levels. As such, the GE strategy and the GEP will pro-actively enable, gender equality awareness raising, skills and competences; gender balance in decision-making structures and processes, including recruitment; gender equality in research; and integrating the gender dimension in the entire research process.

## I. Review of requirements, policies and case studies

Prior to developing the GE strategy and the GEP, the management of INCSMPS appointed a working group to conduct a literature review of the existing requirements, policies, recommendations, examples and case studies pertinent to discrimination, inclusiveness and gender equality, with a special focus on research performing organisations (RPOs).

The main resources used in this literature review study are presented in Annex 3.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy\\_library/ttf\\_goal\\_2\\_results\\_v1.0.pdf](https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/ttf_goal_2_results_v1.0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en)

<sup>3</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffcb06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1>

## II. Diagnosis (data collection and analysis)

### II.1. Data collection

The following indicators were selected<sup>4</sup> at INCSMPS as relevant for the discussion on gender equality issues:

- Staff numbers by sex/gender at all levels, by domains, function (including administrative / support staff)
- Numbers of women and men in research and administrative decision-making positions (e.g., top management team, boards, committees, recruitment and promotion panels)
- Numbers of staff by sex/gender applying for/taking parental leave, for how long and how many returned after taking the leave.

### Women and men in leadership positions

**Table 1. Research institute management**

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
President of the Bord of Directors / Administration Council (AC)	W	
- AC structure	4	1
General Director	W	
Scientific Director	W	
President of the Scientific Committee (SC)	W	
- SC structure	6	1
Economic Director	W	
Head of Department 1 (PhD, CS I)	W	
Head of Department 2 (PhD, CS II)	W	
Head of Department 3 (PhD, CS I)	W	
Head of Department 4 (PhD, CS I)		M
Scientific Secretary		M
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1*</b>

\*Note: the same person has the functions of scientific secretary and head of a research department.

<sup>4</sup> See Annex 2 - Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans, list of indicators.

## Women and men – research staff and administrative service in INCSMPS

**Table 2. Number and gender structure of research staff and administrative employees**

Employees of INCSMPS	2021			
	Total	women		men
Average total number of employees, from which:	40	35	87,5%	5
-in R&D activity	33	30	90,9%	3
-experienced researchers (CS I, CS II, CD III)*	28	26	92,9%	2
-in economic-administrative activity**	7	5	71,4%	2

Notes: \* incl. the GD and the SD; \*\* incl. the Economic Director

**Table 3. Total number of research staff per department**

Research department	Experienced researchers (CS I, CS II, CS III)	Early-stage researchers (CS and ACS)	Total women	Total men
Education, life-long learning and School to work transition	7 W	2 W	9	-
	- M	- M	-	-
Social Policies	6 W	1 W	7	-
	- M	- M	-	-
Wages, Fiscality and Income inequalities	6 W	1 W	7	-
	1 M	- M	-	1
Labour Market Policies	7 W	- W	7	-
	1 M	1 M	-	2
<b>Total women</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total men</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>

These data highlight the **predominantly "female" presence among the INCSMPS staff, at all levels.**

Regarding the staff taking parental leave, the cases were quite frequent last years (10-15% of personnel) in INCSMPS (where the average age is 45, mainly women). The institute has a clear

social policy; consequently, demands of maternal leave are legally accepted and mothers are supported for how long they decide taking the leave, working flexible, etc; all returned after that.

As part of data collection and diagnosis, we also conducted institute-wide surveys to determine:

- period needed for women and men to make career advancements (if different)
- cases of women and men candidates applying for higher/management job positions (and winners)
- number of staff (by sex/gender) applying for/taking parental leave, for how long and how many returned after taking the leave
- opinions on the work-life balance in INCSMPS
- perception of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment in INCSMPS
- perception (opinion) regarding inclusiveness and discrimination at the research institute
- integration of the gender dimension into research content (research projects on the topic)

## **II. 2. Data analysis**

We conducted internal analyses of the data collected and reviews of existing policies addressing gender equality and inclusiveness. The analyses took place in meetings and working seminars, with the GE function *assigned* for developing the GEP (to *SD, HR representative, Ethics Commission*) and including the INCSMPS management, researchers and administrative staff. Each and all working group included women and men.

The conclusions of the internal audit were then analysed in the Steering Committee, approved in the Board of Directors, and then communicated to the entire research institute staff.

With mandate from the Board of Directors, *the General Director committed to the development and implementation of the GEP in our institute - INCSMPS, for 2022-2025.*

### **Quantitative analysis of data**

The analysis of numerical data illustrated that in INCSMPS:

- there are more women than men in the leadership positions at institute and departments level, even if leadership means having additional administrative responsibilities and implicitly putting pressure on the work-life balance;

- also, the number of women exceeds men in research positions (experienced researchers early-stage researchers alike) and in administrative-financial functions too; the recruitment practices intent to make the structure by sex/gender more balanced (to even, in time);
- is impressive *the numerical "female" presence among INCSMPS' employees compared to the structure by sex of total workers in whole Romanian R&D activities*<sup>5</sup> (e.g., 90,9% women as research staff, 71,4% as administrative staff of our institute vs 47,25% and 46,9% in the whole national R&D area).

### **Qualitative analysis of data**

The qualitative research showed that INCSMPS' women staff face the same "known problems" as anyone, but they have the advantage of a "feminine" management, that seeks and finds solutions to balance work-family tasks, because they know its vital importance for achieving good results.

So, institute women staff mostly answered / declared that:

- combining work and family life is often challenging, reconciliation of both being difficult to achieve, e.g.:
  - housework and maternal / dependents responsibilities sometimes delay their research work, discourage them from taking up leadership positions, etc
  - international mobility is more difficult, mostly for women with children who do not take longer trips abroad;
  - also, they publish less, and less frequently decide to take up administrative positions;
- the balance work-family and a satisfactory professional development of women are achieved when encouraged and supported by colleagues and managers.
- INCSMPS is perceived as a safe place, inclusive and without gender-violence;
- they are aware that stereotypes and unspoken biases regarding gender still exist in the Romanian R&D environment (such as beliefs that women are less ambitious, less talented, while men are more determined and resistant to stress); and these stereotypes translate into behaviours (such as condescending treatment, refusal to recognise the substantive training of women due to their style of self-presentation, which is less confrontational, for instance);
- however, these attitudes are neither mentioned by staff nor to be accepted in our institute!

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<sup>5</sup> Data from INS - the Romanian National Institute of Statistics show that, at the beginning of 2021, were 45.304 employees working in R&D activities in Romania, of which 21.216 were women, respectively 47,25% of researchers, 44,78% of technicians or assimilated and 46,98% of other categories of employees in R&D.



So, respondents to surveys did not indicate (0,00% from answers) that they had experienced in INCSMPS comments or jokes referring to stereotypical beliefs about gender, inappropriate informal attitudes, derisive comments about the ability to combine professional work with caring for children or some inappropriate violations of personal space, sexual advances, etc.

- The respondents to surveys also mentioned -as an institute's differential- that *the gender dimension is integrated in INCSMPS research plans*.

So, INCSMPS has not only a particularity in the structure by sex of its staff (mainly women – see tab. 1-3) but also in the integration of gender dimension in its research projects; this fact could be mainly due to the specificity of the basic activity of the institute: research and development in social sciences and humanities<sup>6</sup>.

It is also to be specified -in the context of GE- that topics of special interest for the institute's researchers, *consistently found among the research projects carried out by INCSMPS, are those related to women*: the measurement, evaluation and recognition of their activity, the equal opportunities and access to education, on the labour market, the policies balancing work and family life, gender differences on the labour market (employment, unemployment, wages), gender stereotypes in training / professions, discrimination in professional development (women glass ceiling), multiple discrimination, etc.<sup>7</sup>

- There was also mentioned that in INCSMPS *it is not a noticeable lack of procedures and knowledge about the gender equality, inclusiveness and non-discrimination*.

Being aware (from its research topics) of the gender equality importance, INCSMPS management acted consciously, keeping in mind *the GE principles for its own research activity and its staff* - from the employment, career development, incentive/stimulation, to burdensome tasks, seeking to support employees for a balanced professional and family life, avoiding harassment or gender violence of any kind.

These principles are included -more or less explicitly- in the medium and long-term *Development Strategies* of INCSMPS (in force is the Strategy for 2018-2025; ref. chapters regarding HR) and reflected by the selected *social policies* implemented in the institute, with positive results, through activities / measures that address particular social protection.

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<sup>6</sup> CAEN 7220; respectively, UNESCO code 53 - economic sciences, 5302.02 - econometric projections, etc.

<sup>7</sup> Our institute has been interested in gender issues since its creation in 1990. Thus, its researchers realised the National Report on Women and were an active part of the national delegation at the UN Conference in Beijing, 1995, as well as in its preparation, militating especially to multiply research on gender issues, to develop statistics, specific complex indicators, more data by sex, in evolution and able for international comparisons. INCSMPS supported the creation of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). The interest for the topic continued and amplified in the over 3 decades of institute's activity (thus, dozens of research projects, in national and European research programs, hundreds of publications / articles, participation in seminars and conferences were done by INCSMPS researchers).

INCSMPS also created and is applying its own **Code of Ethics and Professional Deontology**, based on Law no. 206/2004 on good conduct in scientific research, technological development and innovation. This Code provides, together with the fundamental principles underlying the activity of the R&D staff, also mandatory norms of good conduct established by other normative acts valid at national or international level. Among them, it should be mentioned as referring specifically to Gender Equality (GE) the mandatory norms on "*equal opportunities and non-discriminatory attitudes, as well as positive discrimination of disadvantaged groups*" - in this case, *the women*. (Art. 6, Chapter 3 - Annex 1. *Code of ethics and professional deontology of the R&D staff of INCSMPS*). Additionally, an *Ethics Commission*, in charge to monitor and evaluate the good conduct of our institute staff was established by the Decision of the General Manager No. 157/22 November 2018 and is consistently functioning.

By acting in this way, it could be said that INCSMPS has created its *own long-standing and effective Gender Equality Strategy*. And the existing development strategies, plans and policies in INCSMPS could be equivalent to the requirements of the GE eligibility criteria, established by the European Commission.

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To summarize the results of the studies, it may be noted that all situations mentioned by the respondents and analysed could be always, to some extent, factors of discrimination or manifestations based on gender.

The main conclusions of the internal analysis at the research institute INCSMPS are:

- the need to revisit the existing policies and procedures, to make gender even more relevant, and develop new ones covering all identified areas of intervention
- the necessity to continuously train and educate all staff on gender-equality
- the need to actively and efficiently communicate gender relevant actions and measures

So, resuming, the development of a gender strategy and a GEP for 2022-2025, with clear actions and targets, and responsible persons, is required.

### **III. GE strategy and GEP**

Based on the internal review and the national and European policies and requirements, the Board of Directors and the General Director of INCSMPS *committed* to developing ***the institute strategy for gender equality for 2022-2025 and the corresponding GEP - to be published on the research institute website, respectively on its Facebook page.***

The National Scientific Research Institute for Labour and Social Protection decided on *creating the function of GE officer at the institute plus one GE delegate in each department* - with a proactive, respectively a consultant, role in implementing and monitoring the GE strategy.

Considering that *The INCSMPS Ethics Commission*, created in 2018 and working well since then, consists of 7 members from all departments of the institute and is led by the scientific director/SD<sup>8</sup>, there was proposed, discussed, voted and accepted that *the GE delegates of each (research and economic-administrative) department to be the current members of the Ethics Commission - EC. And the President of EC to have the function of GE officer of INCSMPS, working closely also with the HR department.*

Specifically, the GE officer and GE delegates contribute to setting up, implement, monitor and evaluate the GEP; provide practical support and tools to the actors involved in the GEP implementation; cooperate with and engage stakeholders at all levels in order to ensure the implementation of the GEP's actions; raise awareness about the benefits of gender equality in the research institute; assess the progress towards gender equality in the institute.

The institute management mandated the GE functions (officer and delegates) at the institute and a dedicated working group to develop the GE strategy and the GEP 2022-2025. The GE working group included women and men representatives of research institute leadership, researchers, and economic-administrative staff representatives too; and also one external advisor (from UEFISCDI – the Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding).

INCSMPS interest is to have a wide comprehensive GE strategy and an efficient GEP, so the working group was consulting a large bibliography on the topic (mainly support documents of the European Institute for Gender Equality – EIGE and UEFISCDI<sup>9</sup>; see Annex 3 and 4).

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<sup>8</sup> <https://new.incsmps.ro/despre-noi/#1618525214228-f58fadd7-7384>

<sup>9</sup> <https://eige.europa.eu/>; <https://uefiscdi.gov.ro/plan-egalitate-de-gen-uefiscdi>

### III.1. GE Strategy 2022-2025

The INCSMPS' GE Strategy comprises the following areas of intervention and objectives for 2022-2025:

Area of intervention <sup>10</sup>	Objective(s)
<b>1. Work-life balance and organisational culture</b>	Continually promoting the integration of work with family & personal life
<b>2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making</b>	Constant promotion of gender equality in the institutional culture, processes and practice
<b>3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression</b>	Promoting processes to favour and support gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments
<b>4. Integration of the gender dimension into research content</b>	Further promote a gender and sex perspective in research process Promoting incessantly the integration of a sex and gender perspective in research activity
<b>5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment</b>	Raising awareness about the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity – in all areas

<sup>10</sup> Areas recommended by Horizon Europe for GEP/ GE criteria.

### **III.2. GE Plan 2022-2025**

The GE Plan at the research institute INCSMPS comprises areas of intervention, objectives, key measures, target audience, timeline, responsible persons and indicators to measure progress – as presented below.

## Area 1. Work-life balance and organisational culture

**Objective: Continually promoting the integration of work with family & personal life**

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2022	2023	2024	2025		
1. Availability of policies, procedures and structures at the research institute for promoting integration of work with family and personal life	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	Policies, procedures and services for work and personal life integration	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
2. Feasibility plans for the creation of new welfare services (e.g., arrangements of INCSMPS with service suppliers for family care duties and house chores to child- or/and elderly-care, in case of international mobility need)	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	Procedures, and services for work and personal life integration	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
3. Development/continue updating of ICT-based systems for enhancing flexibility and improving a better planning of working meetings accordingly to work-life balance needs (e.g., management and communications of the meeting schedule/timing)	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Standard procedure for ICT-based systems promoting work and personal life integration	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer, IT services
4. Continue the availability of flexible working times arrangements, part-time or remote working (sharply developed in the last two years)	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Policies, procedures and services for work and personal life integration	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer

**Area 2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making**

**Objective: Constant promotion of gender equality in the institutional culture, processes and practice**

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2022	2023	2024	2025		
1. Appointing delegates in departments, with a proactive and/or consultant role to be responsible for monitoring and ensuring that workplace procedures and practices respect gender equality	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X			Gender equality policy and structures	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer, GE delegates
2. Routine revision of any text, communication, images, from a gender equality and diversity standing point	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Policies, procedures and services for work and personal life integration	GE officer, GE delegates
3. Promotion of initiatives to facilitate a widespread gender competence at all institute's levels with provision of training to staff and researchers	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Awareness training on gender equality issues	GE officer, GE delegates

### Area 3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

**Objective: Promoting processes to favour and support gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments**

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2022	2023	2024	2025		
1. Carrying out gender awareness initiatives, briefings and creating guidelines for gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments	Research institute management	X	X	X	X	Gender awareness initiatives and guidelines	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
2. Courses and training on gender equality	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Courses and training for recruitment Courses and training for career progression Courses and training for leadership	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer, GE delegates
3. Disseminate and communicate career good practices - role models for women (scientists, researchers, academics)	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	Initiatives for raising awareness on gender diversity in research teams	GE officer, GE delegates, HoDs



#### Area 4. Integration of the gender dimension into research content

##### Objectives:

- Further promote a gender and sex perspective in research process
- Promoting incessantly the integration of a sex and gender perspective in research activity

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2022	2023	2024	2025		
1. Internal training seminars on the use of sex and gender perspective in research, to foster the acknowledgment of its economic, social and innovation value – in all areas	Researchers, scientific community	X	X	X	X	Participation in training seminars on integrating sex/gender analysis methods, by gender and field of research	SD, Researchers, GE officer
2. Development, communication and implementation of standards for the incorporation of the sex and gender variables into research	Researchers		X	X	X	Participation in training seminars on integrating sex/gender analysis methods, by gender and field of research  Perception of the gender/sex variables in research contents	SD, Researchers, GE officer

3. Institutional recognition within the research institute of those projects that have taken the gender dimension into account. (e.g., prizes)	Researchers, scientific community		X	X	X	Awarded projects	GD, HoDs, Researchers
4. Disseminate and communicate career good practices - role models for women (scientists, researchers and academics)	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	Good practices for raising awareness on female role models  Initiatives for raising awareness on gender diversity in research teams	GE officer, GE delegates, HoDs
5. Workshops on the integration of gender equality and diversity issues in research activity, as support for research staff	Researchers		X	X	X	Training seminars or guidelines on integrating sex/gender in research activity	SD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
6. Courses and training tools in all departments and at all levels (experienced or early researchers) on sex and gender variables	Researchers		X	X	X	Courses on specific gender dimensions, per research activity (department)	SD, HR, HoDs, GE officer

**Area 5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment**

**Objective: Raising awareness about the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity – in all areas**

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2022	2023	2024	2025		
1. Training on discrimination phenomena (including discriminatory language), violence (including that based on prejudice or gender), harassment, and sexual harassment	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	Participation in training, per categories  Skills acquired in relation to identifying and responding to discrimination and violence phenomena	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
2. Reinforce de Code of Ethics of the institute with more clear provisions against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	New provisions in INCSMPS' Code of Ethics to raise awareness on female role models and in teams gender diversity	GD, HoDs, HR, GE officer
3. Awareness campaign highlighting diversity and inclusiveness in the scientific community and encouraging prevention of discrimination in all areas	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Awareness campaign	GE officer

## IV. Monitoring and evaluation of the GEP

The implementation of the GEP at the research institute INCSMPS, the progress in reaching the GE strategy aims and objectives should be regularly assessed, through periodic meetings.

The implementation of the GEP will be *permanently monitored by the GE functions* (officer and delegates) at the institute. The GE officer together with the GE delegates within each department are responsible with collecting data and input. They will perform a first analysis of the progress of the GEP (against the indicators), gather knowledge and feedback.

The GE functions at the institute will conclude findings reports (once a year), which are then presented to the research institute management (GD, HoDs) and discussed. These meetings will provide valuable conclusions on the implementation of the GEP; and also comments and recommendations that will enable adjustments and improvements to interventions on the GEP for the following year.

The periodic reports allow the continuous review of the impact of the GEP as well as keeping the wider community informed and engaged in the progress towards gender equality. The review of progress reports should include qualitative information as well as quantitative data, such as updates on human resource data disaggregated by sex, monitoring data to keep track of the implementation of key actions.

After their conclusion and adoption by the research institute management (Board of Directors, GD, HoDs), *the periodic (annual) GE progress report will be published on the research institute website, respectively on its Facebook page, and communicated to the entire scientific community.*

For all these activities, *specific material, financial and human resources will be made available at INCSMPS.*

## **Annexes**

# Annex 1. Code of ethics and professional deontology of the research and development staff of INCSMPS

## THE CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL DEONTOLOGY of THE RESEARCH and DEVELOPMENT (R&D) STAFF of I.N.C.S.M.P.S.

### CHAPTER 1. General Provisions

Article 1. The Code of Ethics and Professional Deontology of the R&D staff of INCSMPS represents a set of principles and rules of mandatory moral and professional conduct, which must govern the activity of the personnel who carry out their activity in the field of scientific research, technological development and innovation, based on Law no. 206/2004 on good conduct in scientific research, technological development and innovation.

Article 2. The Code of Ethics aims to define the ethical and deontological framework so that the R&D personnel to fulfill with professionalism, objectivity, honesty and loyalty their attributions in accordance with the requirements of the European Research Area and with the ethical principles accepted by the international scientific community.

Article 3. In the exercise of its profession, the R&D staff of INCSMPS has the obligation to respect the fundamental principles and professional standards of good conduct, presented in this Code of Ethics and also those contained in the national legislation, in the regulations of the European Union and in the University Charter.

### CHAPTER 2. BASIC TERMS

Article 4. For the purposes of this Code, the basic terms are defined as follows:

- (a) inquiry - the second stage of fraud investigation, which follows the examination, and which is based on evidences;
- (b) arbitration - the process of analysis and decision on a complaint regarding deviations from professional ethics and deontology;
- (c) arbitrator - the person with appropriate qualifications, who analyzes and informs about the degree of culpability of the person accused of deviation from the good conduct in R&D;
- (d) good conduct - a set of ethical and professional rules to be applied in order to carry out specific R&D actions;
- (e) data "creation" - the recording and presentation of data from imagination that are not obtained by the working methods used in scientific research;
- (f) confidentiality - keeping the secret of the scientific research in progress or recently completed, on the evaluation of the projects, as well as on the person accused of fraud and on the person making an intimation/complaint;
- (g) conflict of interests - the incompatibility situation of a legal or physical person who has a personal interest that influences the impartiality and objectivity of its activities in the evaluation, monitoring, realization, reporting of R&D activities and obtaining grants or research contracts; personal interest includes any advantage for the person concerned, spouse, relatives up to and including the fourth degree, or for the R&D unit or institution of which it is a member;

- (h) scientific community - a group of scientific researchers of R&D units or institutions. In a broad sense, the totality of scientific researchers in a country, in an area of the world or around the world;
- (i) error - unintentional mistake, due to insufficient information, insufficient professional practice, or exaggerated scientific enthusiasm;
- (j) evaluation - appreciation of project proposals, projects and scientific research results, as well as of human resources and research entities, by using qualitative and quantitative criteria;
- (k) fraud - the deliberate action of "creating" data and results, the falsification, plagiarism, illicit alienation of scientific research results, or other processes that deviate from good practices accepted by the scientific community and which aim to obtain advantages such as scientific prestige, financing, project management or acceptance of research reports;
- (l) integrity - a feature of the R&D personnel that implies respect for human dignity and moral values, intrinsic to science and research;
- (m) examination - the initial stage of the investigation over the fraud in R&D, which has the role of verifying whether the complaint/intimation has a real basis;
- (n) notification - written communication made to a person, accused of fraud in R&D;
- (o) paternity - the authorship of a scientific product;
- (p) plagiarism - the assimilation of ideas, methods, procedures, technologies, results or texts of a person, regardless of the way in which they were obtained, presenting them as a personal creation;
- (q) scientific product - publication, patent, industrial or agricultural product, technology, computer program, and the like, obtained from the R&D activity and which may be the object of intellectual property;
- (r) responsibility - attitude by which the R&D person assumes the obligation to maintain integrity in R&D, as well as the consequences of non-observance of this obligation;
- (s) professional standard - the norm or set of norms regulating the good conduct of R&D personnel.

### **CHAPTER 3. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES**

Article 5. The activity of the R&D personnel must be governed by the following fundamental principles:

- a) The principle of Dignity: the R&D personnel has the obligation to carry out the R&D activities, showing respect for the living beings and in particular for the human as a rational being, never treating them only as a means, but always as a supreme value.
- b) The principle of Autonomy: the R&D staff should be free to have their own choices, to develop their skills, to do researches with respecting the legal rules in force and to comply with this principle also for its collaborators.
- c) The principle of Integrity: the R&D personnel will act always with honesty, fairness and team spirit, fully concurring with the other ethical principles, without outside interferences.
- d) The principle of Benevolence: the R&D staff has the obligation to promote those R&D activities that produce social or economic benefits, balancing the benefits, damages and risks in order to obtain an optimal result, without ignoring the individual interest.
- e) The principle of Precaution: the R&D personnel has the obligation to clarify the degree of precision, respectively of risk that characterizes the results of R&D. In carrying out the R&D activities, all the consequences that can be predicted (foreseen, anticipated) based on scientific

data will be taken into account, along with those whose probability cannot be denied even if it is not scientifically proven.

**Article 6.** To the fundamental principles underlying *the activity of the R&D personnel* are added *the mandatory rules of good conduct* established by other normative acts valid at national or international level regarding:

a) the human rights;

**b) the equal opportunities and non-discriminatory attitude (by age, sex, religion, disability, etc.<sup>11</sup>, as well as the positive discrimination of disadvantaged groups;**

c) freedom of expression and information;

d) freedom of research;

e) respect for property in general and intellectual property in particular;

f) consumer protection;

g) protection of personal data, including genetic data;

h) environmental protection;

i) the protection of animals.

#### CHAPTER 4. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

**Article 7.** (1) The observance of the professional standards is an obligation and a guarantee of the good conduct of the R&D personnel.

(2) Professional standards shall exclude:

a) concealment or removal of undesirable results;

b) the “creation” of results;

c) replacement of the results with fictitious data;

d) deliberately distorted interpretation of the results and distortion of the conclusions;

e) plagiarism of results or publications;

f) deliberately distorted presentation of the results of other researchers;

g) failure to correctly assign the paternity of a work;

h) introducing false information in grant or financing applications, as well as in the reporting of research results;

i) non-disclosure of conflicts of interest;

j) misappropriation of research funds;

k) non-registration and/or non-allocation of results, as well as the erroneous recording and/or storage of results;

l) lack of information of the research team, before starting the activity at a research project, about: salary rights, responsibilities, co-authorship, rights over research results, funding sources and associations;

m) lack of objectivity in evaluations and non-observance of confidentiality conditions of evaluation reports, complaints, research reports, etc.;

n) publishing or repeatedly financing the same results as elements of scientific novelty, without mentioning the initial source and / or with insignificant additions;

o) failure to recognize the methodologies and results of other researchers as a source of information;

p) non-recognition of own errors;

q) disseminating its own results in an irresponsible manner, with exaggerations and repetitions;

r) non-compliance with the clauses of grants, contracts, protocols, etc.;

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<sup>11</sup>As stated in the Romanian legislation - see <https://www.cncd.ro/ce-este-discriminare/>



- s) preventing some researchers from working or favoring others;
- t) undeserved assimilation of authorship.

Article 8. (1) The progress of knowledge is based on the freedom of conducting the R&D activities way. This freedom must not affect:

- a) the respect for dignity and human rights;
- b) the protection of animals;
- c) protecting the environment.

(2) The way of conducting the R&D activity is based on the respect for individual integrity, cultural diversity and diversity of opinions that appears in science.

Article 9. The R&D staff should not reallocate parts of R&D projects from other countries, considering that those countries ethical standards may be more reduced compared to those of the host country.

Article 10. The freedom of the way of carrying out the R&D activity is ensured by:

- a) the free access to information sources;
- b) the free exchange of ideas;
- c) the non-interference of the political factor in the R&D activity;
- d) the non-censorship of R&D products.

Article 11. (1) The honor of the researcher towards himself/herself and towards the other researchers, constitutes a basic element for the good conduct in scientific research. Dishonesty leads to an inappropriate picture of science and can alter the mutual trust of researchers.

(2) The honesty of the scientific researcher shall ensure the observance of the contributions of the predecessors, competitors and partners and shall lead to the reduction of the number of errors and exaggerations.

(3) The R&D staff behavior should lead to building, keep and strengthen the public trust in their honesty, correctness and impartiality in unfolding R&D activities or other activities which involucrate the research and development. So, they should not accept gifts, services, advantages -material or personal, other improper benefits. Of likewise, the R&D personnel should reject any influence attempt to deviate from the good conduct.

(4) The R&D personnel shall avoid any activity that could affect their credibility, objectivity and impartiality.

Article 12. The R&D Staff should reject and not accept possible conflicts of interest. For avoiding those situations, the R&D personnel has the following obligations:

- a) to provide information related to the financial interests relevant for the R&D activities;
- b) to provide, upon request, information on involvement in organizations based on religious or political values that could influence the R&D activity;
- c) to immediately declare the conflict of interest in which they may find themselves at a certain moment and to clarify their position on this situation.

Article 13. (1) The cooperation and collegiality in R&D groups represents a protection against scientific errors and fraud, ensuring the transparency of the results and leading to the increase of the value of scientific products.

(2) Cooperation shall allow the exchange of ideas, constructive mutual criticism and mutual verification of results.

Article 14. The pressure negatively exerted on researchers to increase their number of scientific products is unacceptable. The pressure of this kind can be reflected in the decrease in the quality of scientific research and its products (results).

Article 15. (1) The R&D Staff should clarify the degree of doubt or of risk regarding the result of research, respectively to evaluate possible consequences on health, society or environment and to provide relevant information for taking into discussion the principle of Precaution.

(2) The R&D Staff is responsible for ensuring a correct frame of deliberation regarding the application of the Principle of Precaution.

Article 16. (1) The data that led to the exit on the market of the scientific product must be kept, in safe conditions, for the entire period established by the R&D unit or institution.

(2) The data shall allow the reproducibility of the scientific product in other research groups, except for secret data or protected by intellectual property instruments as well as by regulations specific to classified information.

Article 17. (1) Contradictory data, differences in experimental or practical conception, differences in data interpretation, differences in opinion are factors specific to R&D and do not constitute deviations from good conduct in research.

(2) Doubting one's own results may lead to the elimination of errors.

Article 18. (1) The R&D personnel must comply exactly with the experimental protocols and legislation and act in accordance with the requirements of the profession.

(2) The research and development shall not lead to social or individual damage or damage to the environment.

Article 19. The R&D staff has the duty to notify the management of the institution of which belongs when it finds that the results of the R&D have a negative effect on the society, or deviations from the moral norms are found.

Article 20. Sabotage in scientific research is an institutional or individual crime and is punishable according to the legislation in force.

## **CHAPTER 5. RESPONSIBILITIES**

Article 21. The relationships that are established in the exercise of R&D activities:

(1) Relationships established between R&D staff should be based on fairness, collaboration, reciprocal respect and professional solidarity.

(2) The R&D staff recognizes and respects the professional competences in order to ensure a good collaboration.

Article 22. At all career stages, the R&D staff has the responsibility to continuously improve its professional training, regularly updating and developing the capacities and competences in its scientific field, as well as in the interdisciplinary ones.

Article 23. (1) The R&D personnel must know the objectives stipulated in the National Strategy for R&D, in the mission of INCSMPS and to contribute to their achievement.

(2) The R&D personnel shall know the regulations regarding the intellectual property right and the requirements and conditions of any sponsor or financier, regardless of the nature of their contract.

Article 24. The R&D staff should have a proactive attitude to the society and to act for the application of R&D results in the society benefit.

Article 25. The authors of a scientific product are jointly or individually responsible, as the case may be, for the scientific results. The quality of honorary author is not accepted.

Article 26. The responsibility for the correct use of research funds lies with both the R&D staff and I.N.C.S.M.P.S..

## CHAPTER 6. PROCEDURES FOR SETTLING DISPUTES

Article 27. Deviations from good conduct are found in two successive stages of investigation, by examination and inquiry.

Article 28. (1) The investigation represents the first stage (examination) and has the role of ascertaining the facts regarding the deviations from the good conduct.

(2) The investigation shall be initiated within a maximum of 7 working days by receiving an intimation/complaint, after informing in writing the person(s) suspected of misconduct from the good conduct, regarding this situation.

(3) The investigation shall be carried out starting from the presumption of innocence of the person(s) suspected of inappropriate scientific conduct, with the assurance of the protection of the person who made the notification.

(4) The investigation shall be concluded within a maximum of 30 days, with a report of the investigation committee, which must indicate whether the complaint is based or not. The report shall be submitted to the management of the R&D unit or institution, which shall send it to the Commission of Inquiry.

Article 29. (1) The inquiry shall be initiated within a maximum of 7 working days from the approval of the investigation commission's report, by the management of the R&D unit or institution.

(2) The inquiry, which lasts a maximum of 30 days, shall be carried out on the basis of hearings, evidence records and other specific means.

(3) The inquiry shall be carried out ensuring the protection of the person/persons suspected of inappropriate scientific conduct and of the person who submitted the complaint/intimation, aiming at the protection of the prestige of the R&D unit or institution.

(4) The investigation shall end with a report of the Commission of Inquiry, which shall be transferred to the management of the INCSMPS. For cases of proven improper scientific conduct, the report must contain recommendations and proposals for sanctioning.

(5) The management of the R&D unit or institution shall communicate to the person/persons suspected of inappropriate scientific conduct the result of the investigation and, as the case may be, the proposed sanctions, within maximum 3 days from the approval of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry.

(6) The person found guilty may address to the National Council of Ethics, which verifies the complaint and makes, within 30 days, recommendations for solving and/ or applying solutions, which it shall transmit to the petitioner, the management of the R&D unit or institution.

Article 30. Any non-compliance with the fundamental norms and professional standards of good conduct of the R&D personnel constitutes a deviation from this Code.

Article 31. (1) The sanctions shall also have the role of preventing the cases of deviation from the improper scientific conduct, of preserving the prestige of the scientific research and of the R&D units and institutions.

(2) The sanctions are:

A. Morals:

- a) - the interdiction of participation in the competition for obtaining research projects financing;
- b) - the interdiction to be part of various committees (evaluation, granting funds, etc.).

B. Disciplinary:

- a) stipulated in Law no. 206/2004 on good conduct in scientific research, technological development and innovation, with subsequent amendments and completions;
- b) stipulated in Law no. 53/2003 - Labor Code, with subsequent amendments.

(3) For found and proven deviations from the good conduct in research, development and innovation, the INCSMPS management may apply the following sanctions:

- a) removal of the person(s) from the project team;
- b) change of the project manager;
- c) withdrawal and /or correction of all published works by violating the rules of good conduct;
- d) written admonishment;
- e) demotion from office/function;
- f) suspension from office/function;
- g) dismissal.

(4) All sanctions applied for non-compliance with good conduct and violation of ethical norms shall be made public, by written or electronic means.

Article 32. The sanctions stipulated in Article 31. do not absolve those guilty for deviations from the good conduct in research, to bear the application of other sanctions / provisions of the legislation in force.

## Annex 2. Horizon Europe recommended indicators for data collection and analysis<sup>12</sup>

Relevant data on gender equality for all organisations can include:

- Staff numbers by sex/gender at all levels, by disciplines, function (including administrative / support staff) and by contractual relation to the organisation;
- Average numbers of years needed for women and men to make career advancements (per grade and by discipline);
- Wage gaps by sex/gender and job;
- Numbers of women and men in academic and administrative decision-making positions (e.g. top management team, boards, committees, recruitment and promotion panels);
- Numbers of female and male candidates applying for distinct job positions;
- Numbers of women and men having left the organisation in past years, specifying the numbers of years spent in the organisation;
- Numbers of staff by sex/gender applying for/taking parental leave, for how long and how many returned after taking the leave;
- Number of absence days taken by women and men and according to absence motive;
- Number of training hours/credits attended by women and men.

Specific data on gender equality relevant to research performing organisations (RPOs) may include:

- Number of female and male students at all levels and for all disciplines, and academic and employment outcomes;
- Share of women and men among employed researchers;
- Share of women and men among applicants to research positions, among persons recruited and success rate, including by scientific field, academic position, and contract status;
- Share of women and men in recruitment or promotion boards, heads of recruitment or promotion boards and share of decision-making bodies, including by scientific field.

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<sup>12</sup> Sources: Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffc06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1> Box 8 – list of indicators adapted from *Science Europe's Practical Guide to Improving Gender Equality in Research Organisations* [https://www.scienceeurope.org/media/ubblodu/se\\_gender\\_practical-guide.pdf](https://www.scienceeurope.org/media/ubblodu/se_gender_practical-guide.pdf) and the *GEAR tool* <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear/step-step-guide/step-1> - proposed by EIGE.

### Annex 3. List of sources used for the literature review (in alphabetic order)

Council of Europe Gender Equality Commission,

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/gender-equality-commission>

EU FESTA - Gender Issues in Recruitment, Appointment and Promotion Processes – Recommendations for a Gender Sensitive Application of Excellence Criteria,

[https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/festa\\_gender\\_issues\\_recruitment\\_appointment\\_promotion.pdf](https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/festa_gender_issues_recruitment_appointment_promotion.pdf)

EU Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025, [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en)

EUA - Universities' Strategies and Approaches towards Diversity, Equity and Inclusion,

<https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/universities-39-strategies-and-approaches-towards-diversity-equity-and-inclusion.pdf>

EUCEN - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in European Higher Education Institutions,

[https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/web\\_diversity%20equity%20and%20inclusion%20in%20european%20higher%20education%20institutions.pdf](https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/web_diversity%20equity%20and%20inclusion%20in%20european%20higher%20education%20institutions.pdf)

European charter & code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers,

[https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy\\_library/ttf\\_goal\\_2\\_results\\_v1.0.pdf](https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/ttf_goal_2_results_v1.0.pdf)

European Institute for Gender Equality, <https://eige.europa.eu>

GARCIA – Mapping organizational work-life policies and practices,

[https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/garcia\\_report\\_mapping\\_org\\_work-life\\_policies\\_practices.pdf](https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/garcia_report_mapping_org_work-life_policies_practices.pdf)

Guidelines for using gender-sensitive language in communication, research and administration,

[https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/reutlingen\\_university\\_guidelines\\_for\\_using\\_gender-sensitive\\_language.pdf](https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/reutlingen_university_guidelines_for_using_gender-sensitive_language.pdf)

Horizon Europe General Annexes, [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2021-2022/wp-13-general-annexes\\_horizon-2021-2022\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2021-2022/wp-13-general-annexes_horizon-2021-2022_en.pdf)

Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffc06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1>

LERU - Equality, diversity and inclusion at universities: the power of a systemic approach,

<https://www.leru.org/publications/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-at-universities>

Science Europe - Practical Guide TO Improving Gender Equality in Research Organisations,

[https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/se\\_gender\\_practical-guide.pdf](https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/se_gender_practical-guide.pdf)

Student evaluations of teaching (mostly) do not measure teaching effectiveness,

[https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/science\\_open\\_research\\_student\\_eval\\_teaching\\_effectiveness.pdf](https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/science_open_research_student_eval_teaching_effectiveness.pdf)