



# Gender Equality Plan 2022-2023

*Central European Initiative – Executive Secretariat*

*Mid-term report*

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## 1. Introduction

The Gender Equality Plan 2022-2023 of the CEI-Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES GEP) entered into force on 1 January 2022, following a thorough audit and planning exercise that was carried out between October and December 2021. In line with the lifecycle of GEPs, the year 2022 was dedicated to Phase 3 (implementation) and 4 (monitoring and evaluation).

The CEI-ES GEP was designed around the Overall Objective *to enhance the impact of the CEI in the field of gender equality*, with two Specific Objectives, namely:

- to promote gender equality in the institutional and individual culture, processes and practices of the CEI-ES,
- to ensure CEI-supported actions implemented by third parties are gender responsive.

To attain the above-mentioned Overall and Specific Objectives, and to address the gaps identified in Phase 1 (audit), a set of 12 Measures (ME) were identified, with related targets and monitoring indicators. These were designed in line with the mandatory and recommended “building blocks” of GEPs, namely:

1. publication (mandatory),
2. dedicated resources (mandatory),
3. data collection and monitoring (mandatory),
4. training (mandatory),
5. work-life balance and organisational culture (recommended),
6. gender balance in leadership and decision-making (recommended),
7. gender equality in recruitment and career progression (recommended),
8. integration of the gender dimension (recommended),
9. measures against gender-based violence (recommended).

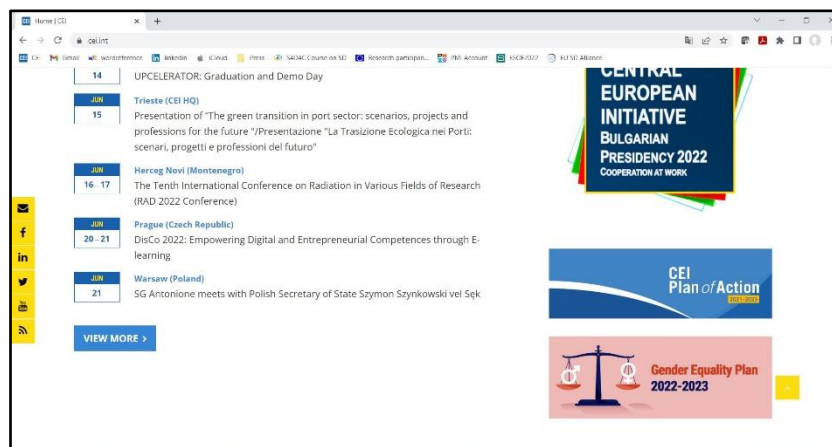
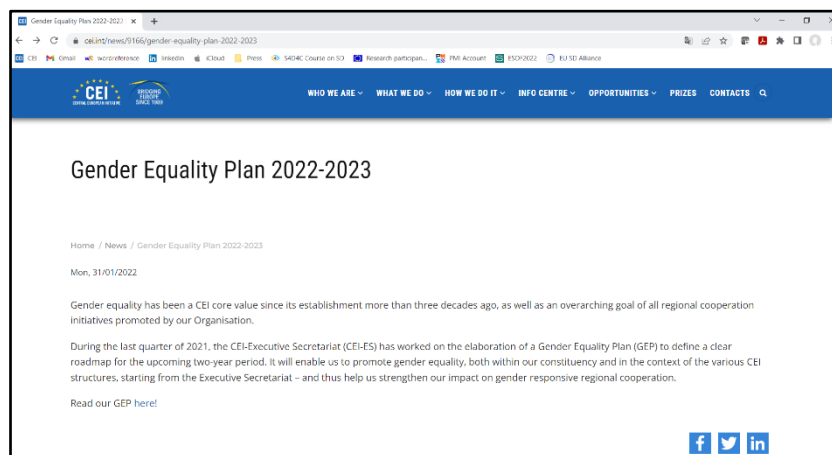
Against this backdrop, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to kick-start the implementation of the CEI-ES GEP, which will continue in 2023 in view of the elaboration of the future GEP.

## 2. Measures vis-à-vis the 4 mandatory process-related requirements

### A. Publication

Measure (what to do)	How	By whom	When	Target	Indicator	Status	Implemented action(s)
ME1 – Publishing the GEP, signed by the CEI-ES Executive Level, on the website	Creation of a dedicated webpage on gender equality on the CEI website	GET, CEI-ES communication manager, IT company	M1	GEP published on the CEI website	Dedicated webpage on gender equality, with GEP available for download, is in place	Done	Dedicated webpage on gender equality on the (new) CEI website

A dedicated webpage on gender equality has been created on the official website of the Central European Initiative, where the CEI-ES GEP is available for download: <https://www.cei.int/news/9166/gender-equality-plan-2022-2023>. This webpage is easily accessible from the homepage ([www.cei.int](http://www.cei.int)).



The CEI-ES GEP was signed by the CEI Secretary General, i.e., the head of the CEI-Executive Secretariat, and actively disseminated within the organisation, thus ensuring broad awareness and common understanding of its objectives and support to its implementation.

## B. Dedicated resources

<i>Measure (what to do)</i>	<i>How</i>	<i>By whom</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Implemented action(s)</i>
ME2 – Establishing the Gender Equality Team (GET)	Establishing the GET with CEI-ES staff members having clear tasks and division of responsibilities in view of GEP implementation	CEI-ES Executive Level	M2	A dedicated gender equality structure is established within the CEI-ES	Internal note on the establishment of the GET is signed by the CEI-ES Executive Level	Done	Internal note on the establishment of the GET signed by CEI Secretary General

A Gender Equality Team (GET) was established within the CEI-Executive Secretariat by means of an internal note signed by the CEI Secretary General. This entered into force on 1 June 2022 and will be in place until 31 December 2023, in line with the duration of the current GEP. Its main task is the implementation of the Measures included in the CEI-ES GEP. Dedicated resources appointed under the GET are grouped into two Working Groups (WG), namely:

- the WG on monitoring and administration (3 units: 1 male, 2 female), which will focus on internal issues such as: data collection and monitoring; training; work-life balance and organisational culture; gender balance in recruitment and career progression; measures against gender-based violence;
- the WG on gender mainstreaming (5 units: 1 male, 4 female), which will focus on the external dimension of gender equality, i.e., the integration of the gender dimension into CEI-supported actions implemented by third parties, with the final goal to increase the number of actions addressing gender issues and, more generally, to ensure that all actions are gender responsive.

<i>Measure (what to do)</i>	<i>How</i>	<i>By whom</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Implemented action(s)</i>
ME3 – Allocating resources for training on gender equality	Exploring the possibility of allocating resources for training on gender equality when drafting CEI-ES provisional budgets 2022 and 2023	CEI-ES Executive Level, GET	M3, M15	Resources for training on gender equality are allocated	CEI-ES budget	To be done	

ME3 could be carried out in 2023, following the implementation of specific actions under mandatory process-related requirement 4 (training).

## C. Data collection and monitoring

<i>Measure (what to do)</i>	<i>How</i>	<i>By whom</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Implemented action(s)</i>
ME4 – Monitoring data on gender equality	Monitoring data on gender equality according to the indicators listed in chapter 2	GET	M12, M24	Data on gender equality are monitored regularly	Mid-term report on GEP implementation; Final report on GEP implementation	Done	Data on gender equality updated to 2022

Data on gender equality were monitored during 2022 vis-à-vis the set of indicators identified in Phase 1 (audit) and 2 (planning), namely:

- staff distribution by gender,
- wage distribution by gender,
- gender distribution by type of contract and type of position,
- number of female and male candidates applying for job positions and training opportunities,
- share of men and women in recruitment committees.

Overall, the situation looks very similar to that of 2021, notwithstanding some changes occurred to the CEI staff: one retirement (female); expiration of two collaborators' contracts (1 male, 1 female); expiration of one employee's contract (female). Some minor differences are, therefore, reported in the following table.

Indicator	2021		2022	
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
staff distribution by gender	32	68	33.3	66.7
wage distribution by gender	30.5	69.5	33.4	66.6
gender distribution by type of contract (employees)	27.8	72.2	35.3	64.7
gender distribution by type of contract (collaborators)	42.9	57.1	25	75
gender distribution by type of position (Professional Service Positions)	35	65	35.3	64.7
gender distribution by type of position (General Service Positions)	20	80	25	75
number of female and male candidates applying for job positions and training opportunities (2017 onwards)	34	66	*	*
share of men and women in recruitment committees (2017 onwards)	44.2	55.8	*	*

\* No recruitment processes carried out in 2022.

Measure (what to do)	How	By whom	When	Target	Indicator	Status	Implemented action(s)
ME5 – Expanding the data baseline	Expanding the data baseline by identifying additional indicators on gender equality related to CEI-supported actions	GET	M12, M24	Additional indicators on gender equality are identified	Mid-term report on GEP implementation; Final report on GEP implementation	Partial	Data on maternity leave (and return from maternity leave) collected

Additional data were collected regarding maternity leave (and return from) of both employees and collaborators of the CEI-Executive Secretariat in the timeframe 2003-2021.

Number of maternity/paternity leaves	18
Number of working units on maternity/paternity leave	13
Total months of maternity leave (compulsory according to the relevant legislations)	85
Total months of maternity leave (facultative, up to 6 months, according to the relevant legislation)	42
Number of working units returned from maternity/paternity leave	13

#### D. Training

<b>Measure (what to do)</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Implemented action(s)</b>
ME6 – Developing expertise on gender equality	Identify training opportunities on gender equality to increase the internal knowledge	GET	M4-M24	Knowledge on gender equality within GET is increased	Mid-term report on GEP implementation; Final report on GEP implementation	Done	Preliminary list of training opportunities drawn

A preliminary list of training opportunities on gender equality has been drawn, provided by institutions such as, inter alia, the UN Women Training Centre and the European Institute for Gender Equality.

This is the first step towards increased knowledge on gender equality within the CEI-ES, which shall make a strong contribution to the attainment of Specific Objective 1 (*to promote gender equality in the institutional and individual culture, processes and practices of the CEI-ES*).

<b>Measure (what to do)</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Implemented action(s)</b>
ME7 – Ensuring knowledge circulation	Expertise acquired by GET members through training is transferred to the whole CEI-ES staff	GET, CEI-ES staff	M4-M24	Knowledge on gender equality is transferred to CEI-ES staff	Mid-term report on GEP implementation; Final report on GEP implementation	To be done	

ME7 will be implemented in 2023, as it follows the implementation of ME6 in 2022. Nevertheless, a preliminary action has been undertaken, with the participation of CEI-ES staff in the Training Course “I Know Gender 7: Gender Equality in the World of Work”, provided by the UN Women Training Centre. This course provides an introduction to the concepts, international framework, and methods for working toward gender equality and women’s empowerment. Further actions supporting the internal transfer of acquired expertise will be carried out in 2023.

### 3. Measures vis-à-vis the 5 recommended content-related (thematic) areas

With the aim to highlight the importance of, and alignment to, gender equality principles in the organisational culture of the CEI-ES, the following sentence has been included under section 2 “General Provisions” of the CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations: “Gender Equality represents a core value of the Central European Initiative. Therefore, employees’ conduct shall respect the provisions of the Gender Equality Plan of the CEI-ES (CEI-ES GEP), contribute to its implementation and to the promotion of a gender responsive institutional and individual culture within the CEI-ES”.

Other initiatives have been undertaken vis-à-vis the 5 recommended content-related (thematic) areas, namely:

#### E. Work-life balance and organisational culture

<b>Measure (what to do)</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Implemented action(s)</b>
ME8 – Updating the CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations	CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations will be revised and integrated in line with the objectives of the GEP, including specific policies to promote work-life balance	CEI-ES Executive Level, GET	M4-M11	Gender equality principles related to the administration of CEI-ES staff are clarified through explicit references	CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations; Mid-term report on GEP implementation	Done	Article 3.5.2 of the CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations modified

Although the CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations had already envisaged a “flexible working time” arrangement, this aspect has been made more explicit in article 3.5.2, aimed at stressing that the CEI-ES policy is meant to support employees in achieving a satisfactory work-life balance.

#### F. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

<b>Measure (what to do)</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Implemented action(s)</b>
ME9 – Encouraging a reflection on gender equality within the CEI Committee of National Coordinators (CNC)	Measures to ensure gender balance in leadership and decision-making positions are to be agreed upon by the CEI Member States. As a first step, an initial reflection could be encouraged in the context of GEP implementation	CEI-ES Executive Level, GET, CNC	M8-M24	Member States are informed about the GEP and involved in an open discussion on the gender equality related to CEI-ES leadership and decision-making	Minutes of the CNC meetings; Mid-term report on GEP implementation; Final report on GEP implementation	Done	New article 22 included in the updated CEI Guidelines and Rules of Procedure

In line with section 3.1 of the CEI-ES GEP (“Gender issues related to CEI-ES Executive Level”), a reflection has been encouraged on gender balance in leadership and decision-making, involving both the CEI-ES and the Member States. This has led to an important decision reached by consensus in April 2022, i.e., the revision of the CEI Guidelines and Rules of Procedures. A new article 22 has been added, focused on the criteria for the selection of decision-making positions within the CEI-ES Executive Level: “[...] The procedures will take into account the following aspects: rotation of Member States on the relevant positions in the Executive Level of the CEI-ES; candidates’ professional experience in multilateral affairs and its relevance in regard to the vacant position; geographical balance (presence of representatives of EU and non-EU CEI Member States); gender balance”.



## G. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Measure (what to do)	How	By whom	When	Target	Indicator	Status	Implemented action(s)
ME10 – Developing an internal policy to ensure gender balance in recruitment	CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations will be integrated with specific provisions to ensure gender balance in recruitment, and in the establishment of recruitment committees	CEI-ES Executive Level, GET	M4-M11	Specific provisions to promote gender balance in recruitment are in place	CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations; Mid-term report on GEP implementation; announcements for job/training opportunities; procurement notices	Done	Article 3.1 of the CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations integrated

To express more explicitly that gender equality principles are taken in serious consideration in any recruitment process carried out by the CEI-ES, article 3.1 of the CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations has been integrated with the following sentence: *In line with the CEI-ES GEP, any recruitment, selection and career progression measure undertaken at the CEI-ES will comply with the principles of gender equality, thus ensuring that women and men Employees enjoy equal opportunities and get equal chances to develop and advance their careers.*

## H. Integration of the gender dimension

Measure (what to do)	How	By whom	When	Target	Indicator	Status	Implemented action(s)
ME11 – Gender mainstreaming in CEI-supported actions	A strategic approach will be designed to pursue the integration of a gender dimension into CEI-supported actions implemented by third parties, to increase the number of actions addressing gender issues and, more generally, to ensure that all actions are gender responsive	CEI-ES Executive Level, GET	M6-M24	More CEI-supported actions addressing gender issues are implemented by third parties. Gender responsiveness of CEI-supported actions is increased	Mid-term report on GEP implementation; Final report on GEP implementation; text of the calls; application packages; templates for reporting; procurement notices	Done	Call 2022 of the CEI Cooperation Fund 2022  Information to successful applicants of KEP Call 2022

Section 1 of the CEI-ES GEP indicates that [...] *when it comes to gender equality related to the CEI, there are two dimensions to consider. First, an internal one connected to the CEI-ES, with particular reference to the administration of human resources (CEI-ES staff) and the implementation of recruitment processes. Second, an external dimension, which refers to the activities financed by the CEI and implemented by third parties. [...] As to the latter, the main objective is to promote gender mainstreaming by integrating a gender perspective into the preparation, design, realisation, monitoring and evaluation of the CEI-supported actions implemented by third parties. A more gender-equal distribution of financial resources provided by the CEI will also contribute to raising awareness on gender equality in the Member States.*

As a first step in this direction, a clearer reference to gender equality was included in the text of the Call for Proposals 2022 of the CEI Cooperation Fund. Under the *eligibility criteria*”, more specifically under criterion “participation of CEI Member States, the following instructions to applicants were added: *Please note that the CEI is encouraging gender responsive conduct and gender equality awareness and representation in the activities co-financed with its Funds and Instruments. Applicants*

are requested to implement gender responsive measures in their proposals. If being awarded of a CEI contribution, as Organisers, they are kindly requested to embrace this CEI policy and apply it to the maximum extent possible in the implementation of the CEI Cooperation Activity, i.e., by trying to include a gender perspective in the concept and outlines of meetings and panels and by encouraging an inclusive participation of attendees. The CEI Gender Equality Plan 2022-2023 is available for consultation on the CEI website at <https://www.cei.int/news/9166/gender-equality-plan-2022-2023>.

A similar sentence was included in the information sent to successful applicants of the last call (spring 2022) of the CEI Know-how Exchange Programme. Indeed, they were notified with the following: *Please note that the CEI is encouraging gender responsive conduct and gender equality awareness and representation in the activities co-financed with its Funds and Instruments. KEP grantees are warmly invited to implement gender responsive measures by embracing the CEI policy and apply it to the maximum extent possible in the project implementation i.e. by encouraging an inclusive participation in project activities. The CEI Gender Equality Plan 2022-2023 is available for consultation on the CEI website at <https://www.cei.int/news/9166/gender-equality-plan-2022-2023>.*

#### I. Measures against gender-based violence

<b>Measure (what to do)</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Implemented action(s)</b>
M12 – Developing an internal policy to prevent gender-based violence	CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations will be integrated with specific provisions to prevent gender-based violence within the CEI-ES	CEI-ES Executive Level, GET	M4-M11	Specific provisions to prevent gender-based violence are in place	CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations; Mid-term report on GEP implementation	Done	Article 3.7.1 of the CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations integrated

Article 3.7 of the CEI-ES Staff Rules and Regulations specifies the disciplinary measures that can be put in place in case of Employees' misconduct or failure in duty. Article 3.7.1 was integrated with an explicit reference to gender-based violence: *The measures set out below may be imposed with respect to any misconduct or failure in duty by the Employee, including any form of gender-based violence.*