

**PRESENTED BY BRUSSELS L.A.C.**

**LEGAL ASSISTANCE & CONSULTANCY**

Excelsiorlaan 13, 1930 Zaventem

[office@brusselslac.com](mailto:office@brusselslac.com)

+32 471 12 32 44

# **GENDER EQUALITY PLAN (GEP)**

# GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

*Brussels LAC Legal Assistance & Consultancy affirms its strong commitment to advancing gender equality within the organisation and across all areas of its professional activity. As a Brussels-based legal assistance and consultancy company working with European institutions, NGOs, and international partners, we recognise that gender equality is both a legal obligation and an essential component of organisational integrity, high-quality service delivery, and inclusive governance.*

*This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) has been developed in line with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) GEAR guidelines and fully meets the requirements set by the European Commission. The plan establishes a structured approach to promoting equal opportunities, preventing discrimination, and integrating gender perspectives into our internal policies, human resources management, and external consultancy work.*

*The GEP outlines our commitments, identifies priority areas, and presents concrete measures that guide our efforts to create a safe, respectful, and empowering work environment for all employees, irrespective of gender. It also sets out mechanisms for data monitoring, capacity building, transparency, and accountability, ensuring that gender equality is systematically embedded in our daily operations and long-term strategic planning.*

*Through this plan, Brussels LAC aims not only to comply with EU standards but also to model good practice in gender-responsive organisational governance. The plan will be monitored annually and updated every two years to reflect progress, challenges, and emerging needs.*

## PLAN OVERVIEW

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The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of Brussels L.A.C. (Legal Assistance & Consultancy) provides a structured framework for promoting gender equality across all aspects of our organisation. It sets out our core commitments, identifies key priority areas, and outlines concrete actions designed to ensure equal opportunities, prevent discrimination, and support an inclusive work culture. The plan covers leadership, recruitment, career development, work-life balance, pay equity, workplace safety, and gender mainstreaming in the services we provide.

The GEP is based on four mandatory elements required by the European Commission: public availability, dedicated resources, sex-disaggregated data collection, and staff training. It also incorporates additional good-practice measures inspired by EU strategies and the EIGE GEAR framework.

The plan applies to all employees, consultants, and collaborators of Brussels LAC, and is embedded into our internal policies, organisational procedures, and project management practices. It is reviewed annually through structured monitoring and is updated every two years to reflect organisational developments, data insights, and evolving EU standards.

## LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

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This plan is guided by

- The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU
- EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025

- Belgian federal and regional anti-discrimination laws
- The Horizon Europe Gender Equality Plan requirements
- The EIGE GEAR tool for gender mainstreaming

Brussels LAC aligns its internal practices with these frameworks and implements them across its operational and strategic activities.

## **ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY**

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Brussels LAC leadership affirms its institutional commitment to advancing gender balance, preventing discrimination, and integrating gender perspectives in all activities.

The management endorses this GEP, ensures adequate resources for implementation, and monitors progress annually.

The GEP is publicly accessible on our company website and is updated every two years.

## **MANDATORY REQUIREMENT 1: PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

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This Gender Equality Plan is published on the Brussels LAC website, accessible to employees, clients, and partners. It is approved and signed by the company leadership.

## **MANDATORY REQUIREMENT 2: DEDICATED RESOURCES**

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To implement the GEP, Brussels LAC allocates:

- A Gender Equality Focal Point (part-time role) responsible for coordination and monitoring
- Annual internal hours for staff training and gender awareness activities
- A dedicated internal budget line for training, data monitoring
- Access to external gender experts when needed,

## **MANDATORY REQUIREMENT 3: DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING**

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Brussels LAC commits to collecting and analysing sex-disaggregated data annually in areas such as:

- Recruitment and hiring patterns
- Career progression, promotions, and training access
- Salary structure and pay equality
- Staff turnover
- Work-life balance indicators

Annual data reports will be reviewed by management and inform the next cycle of GEP actions.

## **MANDATORY REQUIREMENT 4: TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

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Brussels LAC organises mandatory gender equality and anti-discrimination training for all staff at least once a year. Training will include:

- Gender mainstreaming in legal and consultancy work
- Unconscious bias
- Inclusive communication
- Prevention of sexual harassment

New employees receive basic gender equality and diversity awareness training within their first three months of employment.

## **PRIORITY AREA 1: GENDER BALANCE IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING**

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Objective: Promote balanced gender representation in leadership roles and decision-making processes.

Actions:

- Ensure balanced representation in senior roles, advisory groups, and project teams
- Include gender equality criteria when selecting external experts or partners

- Conduct annual reviews of gender distribution at all hierarchical levels

Indicators:

- Share of women/men in leadership positions
- Gender balance in project leadership roles

## **PRIORITY AREA 2: RECRUITMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

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Objective: Ensure equal opportunities in recruitment, promotion, and professional development.

Actions:

- Use gender-neutral language in vacancy announcements
- Guarantee balanced gender presence on recruitment panels
- Apply transparent and bias-free assessment criteria
- Support professional development equally, including access to EU project roles

Indicators:

- Gender distribution in recruitment shortlists
- Training participation rate disaggregated by sex
- Promotion rates by gender

## **PRIORITY AREA 3: WORK–LIFE BALANCE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING**

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Objective: Support employees with caregiving responsibilities and improve work–life balance.

Actions:

- Provide flexible working arrangements (remote work, flexible hours)
- Encourage uptake of parental leave by all genders
- Avoid scheduling mandatory meetings outside core hours
- Provide return-to-work support after long leave

Indicators:

- Uptake of parental leave by gender
- Use of flexible measures
- Staff satisfaction surveys

## **PRIORITY AREA 4: GENDER PAY EQUALITY**

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Objective: Prevent pay inequality and ensure transparency.

Actions:

- Conduct annual pay gap analysis
- Ensure equal pay for equal work across comparable roles
- Review compensation procedures to minimize bias
- Introduce corrective measures where imbalances are detected

Indicators:

- Gender pay gap levels
- Adjustments made after internal audits

## **PRIORITY AREA 5: SAFE AND INCLUSIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT**

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Objective: Prevent gender-based violence, harassment, and discrimination.

Actions:

- Maintain a clear anti-harassment policy and confidential reporting mechanism
- Establish a zero-tolerance policy for gender-based discrimination
- Provide confidential support channels
- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns annually

Indicators:

- Number of reported cases (without identifying data)
- Resolution time for reported issues
- Staff awareness survey results

## COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS

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Brussels LAC promotes a culture of gender equality through:

- Internal newsletters
- Awareness campaigns
- Sharing gender equality resources from EIGE and EU institutions
- Highlighting key dates such as International Women's Day

## MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND REPORTING

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The Gender Equality Focal Point prepares an annual GEP Monitoring Report including:

- Assessment of actions taken
- Analysis of sex-disaggregated data
- Recommendations for adjustments

The report is reviewed by management. The GEP is revised every two years based on monitoring results.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

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Managers are responsible for implementing GEP measures within their teams.

The Gender Equality Focal Point reports progress and challenges directly to senior leadership.

Any form of non-compliance with equality measures is addressed through established HR mechanisms.

## **VALIDITY AND UPDATES**

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The Gender Equality Plan is valid from its approval date and remains in force until a revised version is issued. Updates occur at least every two years.