



ENSEMBLE³

Centre of Excellence

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN FOR THE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE ENSEMBLE³

President of Ensemble3 Ltd.

Prezes
[Signature]
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Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Diagnosis.....	3
2.1. Women in the exact science and natural science	3
2.2. A qualitative analysis of factors shaping gender equality in learning environments.....	4
2.3. Analysis of equal opportunity in employment policies	7
2.4. Equal opportunity analysis of remuneration policies	13
3. Goals of the Plan and methods of their implementation	15

1. Introduction

One of the most important horizontal policies of the European Union is the policy of promoting equality between men and women and counteracting discrimination. This policy aims to ensure that every member of Europe's diverse society has equal opportunities and possibilities in achieving their life goals. These policies are implemented using a variety of instruments and implemented at multiple levels. In particular, EU funds are made available to beneficiaries on condition that in their activities financed from these funds they respect the principles of equality and anti-discrimination policy and take active measures to contribute to the achievement of its objectives.

ENSEMBLE³ is a newly established Centre of Excellence implementing an ambitious programme of research and development in the field nanophotonics, advanced materials and modern technologies based on crystal growth. The main part of the funding under which our Centre of Excellence was established comes from the European Union, both granted directly by the European Commission under Horizon 2020 and made available through the Polish authorities under the Intelligent Development 2014-2020 operational programme. This circumstance obliges us to actively implement EU equality and anti-discrimination policies.

However, the formal reasons presented above are not the most important reason why this document was created. The specific nature of the activities of our Centre of Excellence, focusing on science and engineering research runs the risk of creating a deep and lasting gender imbalance resulting in the loss of the benefits of diversity and comprehensive analysis of phenomena from multiple viewpoints that is so important in scientific work.

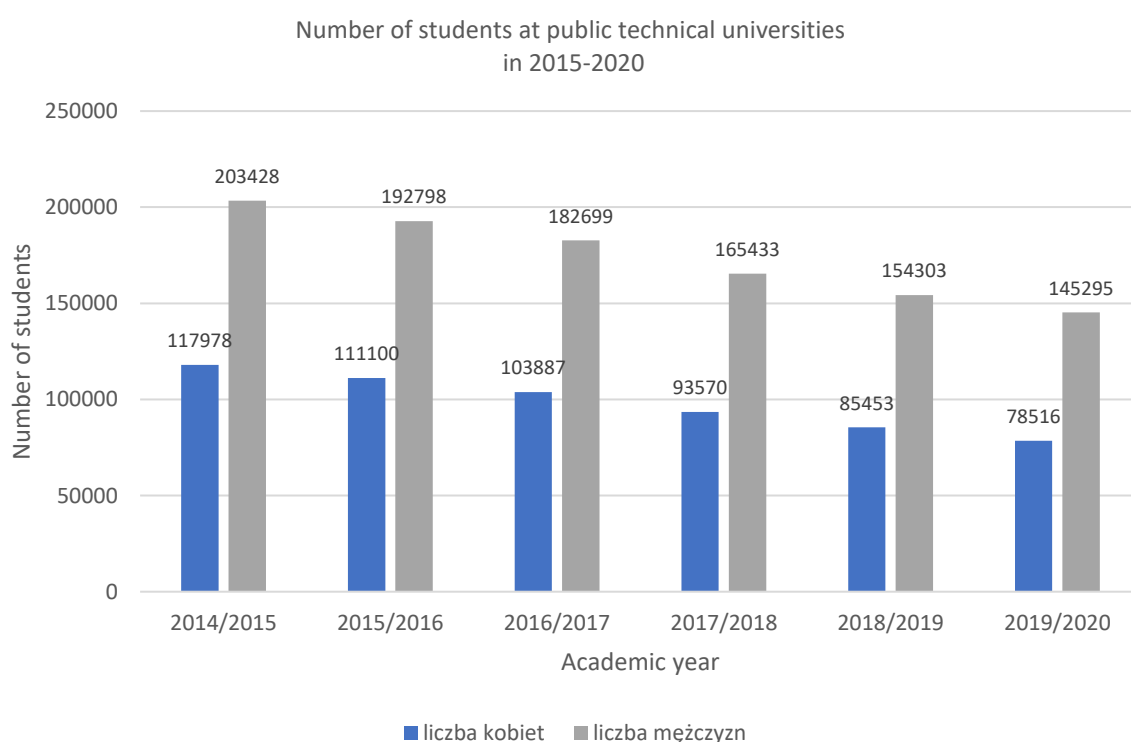
That is the reason why this Gender Equality Action Plan was developed. It establishes the framework for a support system for women employed in ENSEMBLE³ to enable them to have equal access to jobs, to be treated fairly, to prevent unwanted discriminatory behaviour, to facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life, e.g. through help with returning to work after a long break, assistance with childcare, flexible working hours, remote working, or personal development. It is an open document that will be systematically updated in response to the changing external environment and the evolution of the situation inside our organization.

2. Diagnosis

2.1. Women in the exact science and natural science

The world of science and technology has historically "always" been male-dominated. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the field of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)¹, where, despite many measures taken, the share of women still does not exceed 25 percent. (Women in Technology, 2020 report)². The low number of women entering these fields of study, in turn, translates into a small share of women in the population of people employed in the technology industry.

According to the report "Women at University of technology, 2021"³ in Poland, in 2020, women accounted for 58% of the total number of university students, but only 35% of students of public technical universities.



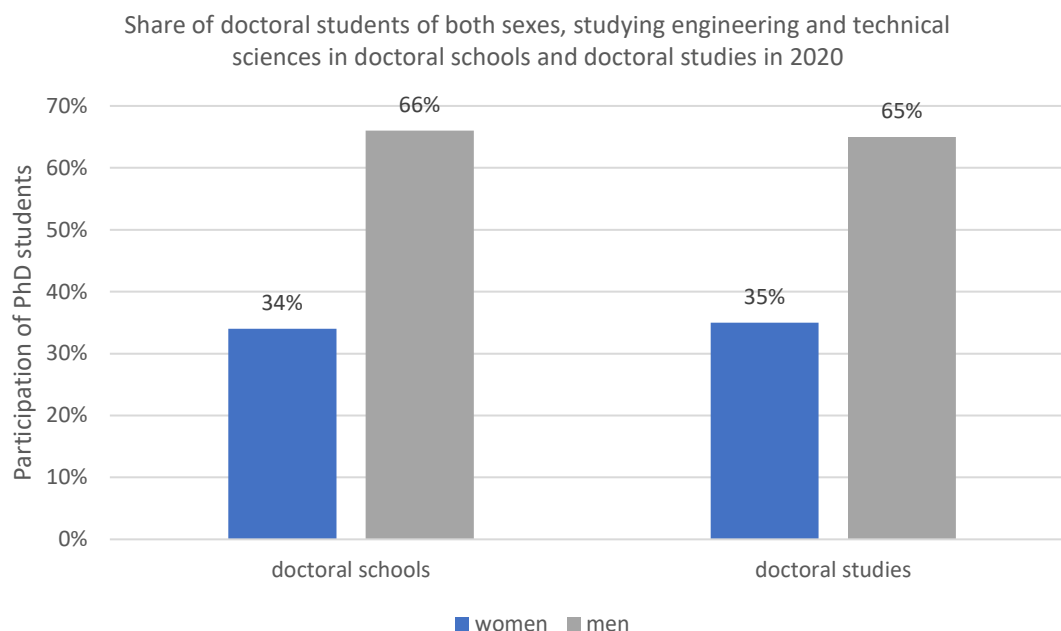
References: OPI PIB Business Intelligence System, POL-on data as of December 31st of each year

¹ STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

² WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGIES 2020, Report of the Perspektywy Educational Foundation and the Citi Foundation. Perspektywy Educational Foundation, May 2020

³ WOMEN AT UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, REPORT 2021, Perspektywy Educational Foundation Report prepared by Dr. Anna Knapińska using the system developed at the Database and Business Analytics Laboratory of the Information Processing Center - National Research Institute, April 2021

In the 2019/2020 academic year, 684 men and 357 women started their education at doctoral schools in the field of engineering and technical sciences. On the other hand, 1,707 women and 3,174 men studied engineering and technical doctoral studies. In both cases, the share of women was about 35%.



References: POL-on system, data as of December 31, 2019

As you can see, the ENSEMBLE³ Centre of Excellence is active in fields that are heavily masculinized. This circumstance is important for the correct selection of actions to be taken under the Gender Equality Plan.

2.2. A qualitative analysis of factors shaping gender equality in learning environments

The most reliable source of information to assess the state of gender equality in an organisation and to identify the key factors shaping it is anonymous surveys of employees in that organisation.. We based our qualitative analysis on the results of surveys conducted among the employees of organizations that conduct similar activities and function in the same environment, namely, the University of Warsaw and Łukasiewicz - Institute of Microelectronics and Photonics. Both of these institutions conduct scientific work in fields related to the area of activity of ENSEMBLE³, and both are part of the consortium implementing the Horizon 2020 project supporting the creation of our Centre of Excellence. Moreover, ENSEMBLE³ was established on the basis of one of the plants of the institute that is part of the current Ł-IMiF. It can therefore be assumed with high probability that the problems identified in these institutions are similar to the problems that already exist or may occur in the near future in ENSEMBLE³.

As part of the survey conducted at the University of Warsaw and Łukasiewicz - Institute of Microelectronics and Photonics, the following phenomena related to the experience of discrimination, combining professional work with private life and career development of women were identified:

a) work-life balance

- women more often declare that they are responsible for the majority of family responsibilities;
- maternity duties delay scientific work and discourage women from occupying administrative positions;
- a requirement for availability (for lab work) in certain scientific areas;
- research is difficult to balance with childcare;
- it is difficult to reconcile the expectation of international mobility with taking care of children and other dependants;
- women with children do not go on longer trips abroad, publish less, become less involved in the social life of institutions;
- the problem related to systemic benefits such as flexible working hours, remote work, co-financing of kindergartens and nurseries.

b) discrimination and support in career development

- gender discrimination in the process of building one's career;
- questions about family circumstances, in particular maternity plans, and inappropriate jokes and rude language during recruitment;
- awarding higher positions always to men, despite the objectively higher qualifications of women;
- questioning skills and knowledge based on gender;
- the existence of stereotypes related to the concept that women are less ambitious, less talented or that they are less often considered experts, while men are more determined and resistant to the number of assigned duties;
- pay differences between men and women employed in equivalent positions performing the same duties;
- granting additional bonuses to men for completing tasks that women performed as part of their job duties;
- higher promotion of men performing the same job duties as women;
- men hold functional positions more often than women, both at the level of leading their own research team, at the level of department head, and at a higher level;
- a critical stage in women's careers is the period between the doctoral dissertation and the awarding of the postdoctoral degree and at the stage of obtaining a professorship; at such points, women's careers slow down;

- parental leave negatively affects the career of both women and men;
- low availability of flexible working time arrangements;
- low participation of women in decision-making processes;
- multiple (cross) discrimination, i.e. due to two or more grounds (e.g. in relation to women over 50, people with disabilities, belonging to ethnic minorities);
- questioning career options based on gender;
- commenting on the personal life of a specific person;
- dressing for exams/important presentations in a certain way (e.g., shorter skirts, a blouse with a high neckline, or a certain type of shirt for men) for fear of receiving a lower grade otherwise;
- favouring male students by faculty;
- encouraging men to perform managerial functions in units (faculty, institute, department);
- encouraging men to take leadership positions in research projects;
- faster promotion of men.

c) applying for grants from external funds

- men receive grants and scholarships more often;
- lack or low level of administrative and substantive support in the parent unit in the field of preparation of grant applications by women, as opposed to men, who could count on a medium and high level of support;
- obstructing or discouraging women from applying for a grant;
- failure to obtain the consent of the superiors or the unit for the submission of grants by women, without giving any reason; while the vast majority of men did not have such problems;
- twice as many men as women resign from applying for a grant due to lack of time due to other professional duties (e.g. administrative functions);
- resignation from applying for a grant due to concerns about insufficient research achievements - women.

d) forms of equality violations:

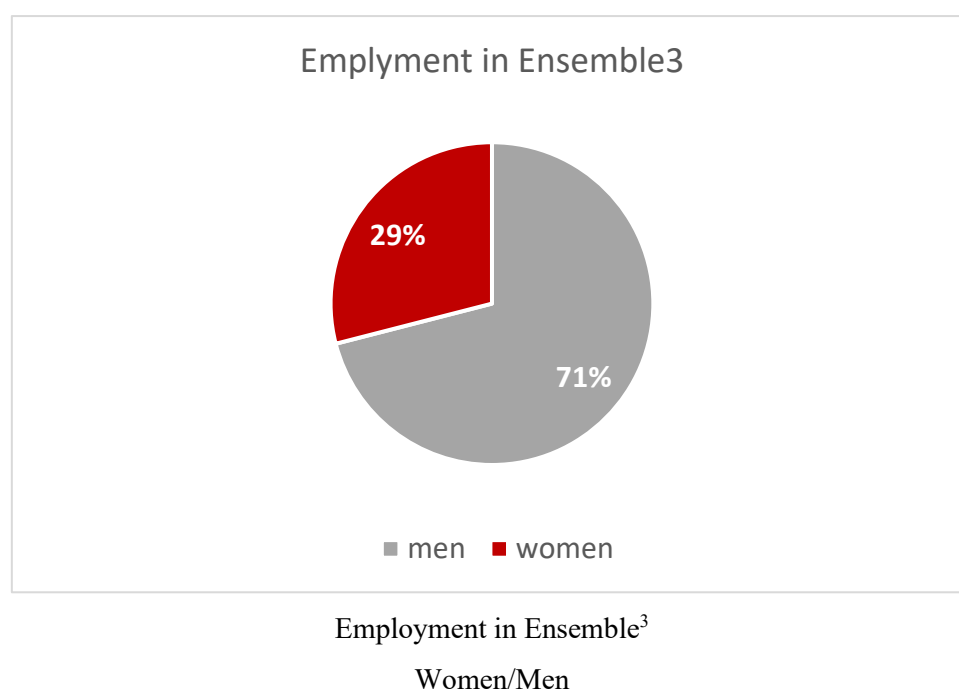
- comments or jokes referring to stereotypical gender beliefs;
- comments or jokes with sexual overtones;
- gender-based assessments;
- other inappropriate behaviour such as making derisive comments about dress and appearance, attributing achievements to the opposite sex, and questioning the competence of one sex;
- questioning the ability to combine professional work with caring for children, not taking into account parental responsibility in the evaluation of achievements, and the organization of work that collides with parental responsibilities.

Based on the analysis of the questionnaires, it can be concluded that those of the above-mentioned phenomena, which most often apply to women, are usually factors of gender discrimination. On the other hand, the phenomena concerning men usually have the character of a positive distinction and constitute a kind of a privilege obtained on the basis of gender.

It should be emphasized, however, that the research method used in the above-mentioned surveys allowed us to determine the occurrence of certain undesirable phenomena, but did not provide information on the frequency of their occurrence. Nonetheless, these results should be considered a solid basis for programming appropriate actions in the Gender Equality Plan.

2.3. Analysis of equal opportunity in employment policies

The starting point for the analysis was to verify the gender distribution of the people recruited and working at the ENSEMBLE³ Centre of Excellence. As already mentioned, in the period immediately preceding the development of this study, intensive recruitment processes took place, as a result of which employment increased from almost zero to the level of over **94 people**.⁴



At the end of July 2026, ENSEMBLE³ employed **94 people: 27 women, 67 men**. Thus, women currently constitute **29% of the people employed at the Centre**.

In terms of job categories, the employees of ENSEMBLE3 are divided into three main groups:

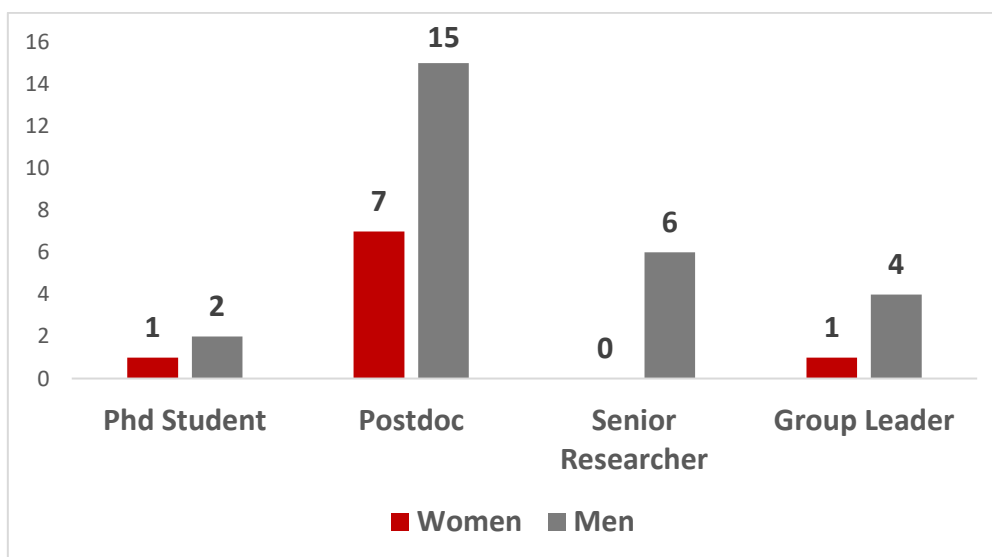
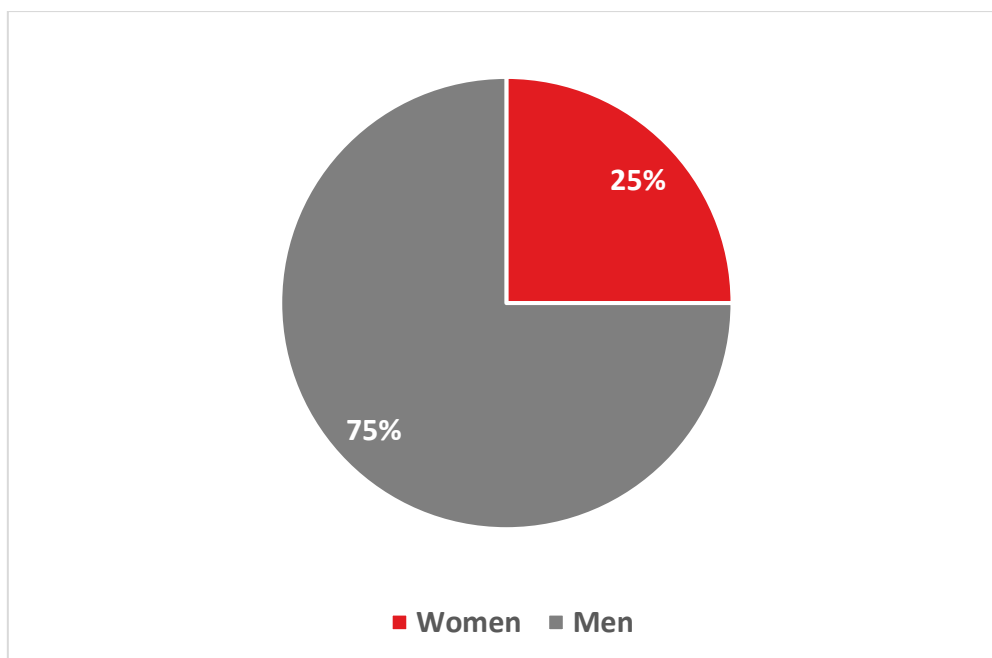
- a) research workers,
- b) laboratory and technical staff,
- c) employees of the administrative department.

⁴ the analyses presented in sections 2.3- 2.4 were conducted as at the end of **July 2026**

Due to the different specificity of individual groups of employees, it is reasonable to analyse the phenomena occurring in these groups separately. Such an analysis is presented below.

Researchers

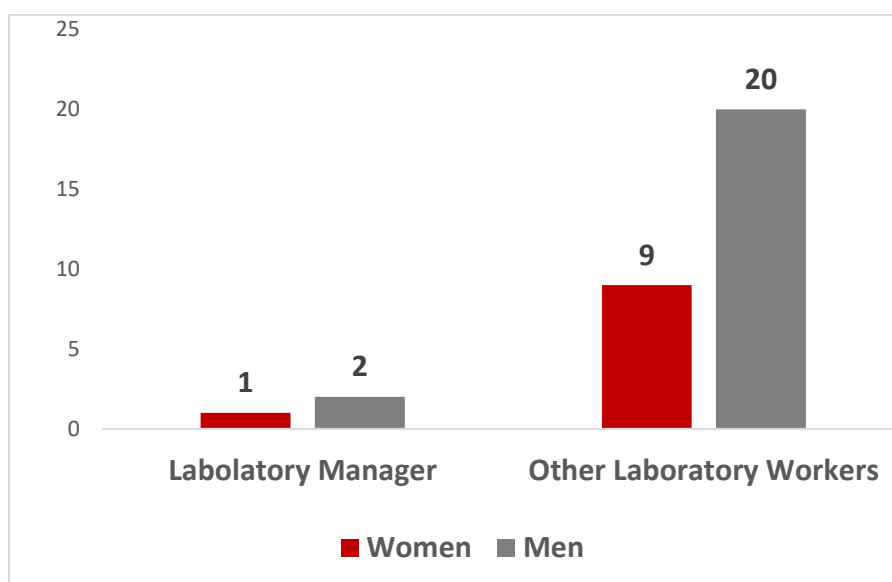
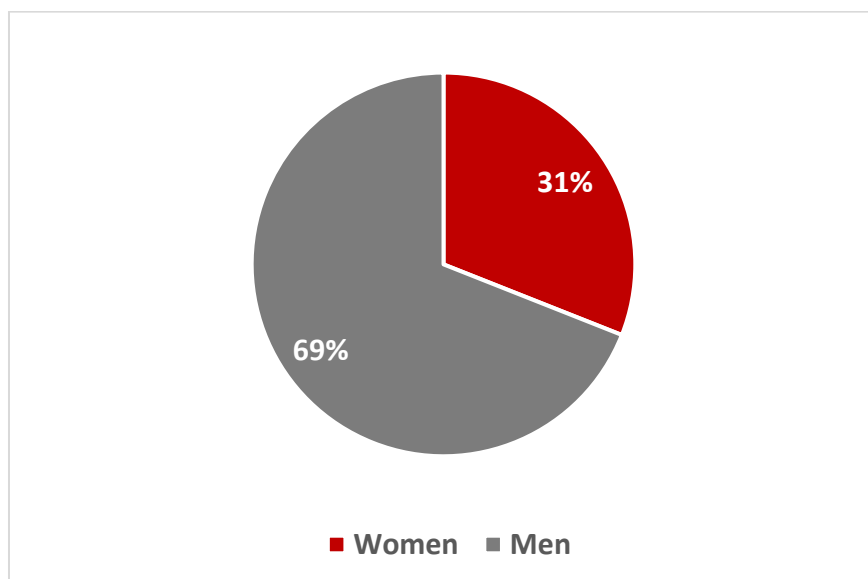
Employment Women/Men science



Employment W/M by positions

As can be seen in the above charts, only out of research employees of the Centre are women. The domination of men is present in all positions, and is particularly evident in the case of Senior Researcher.

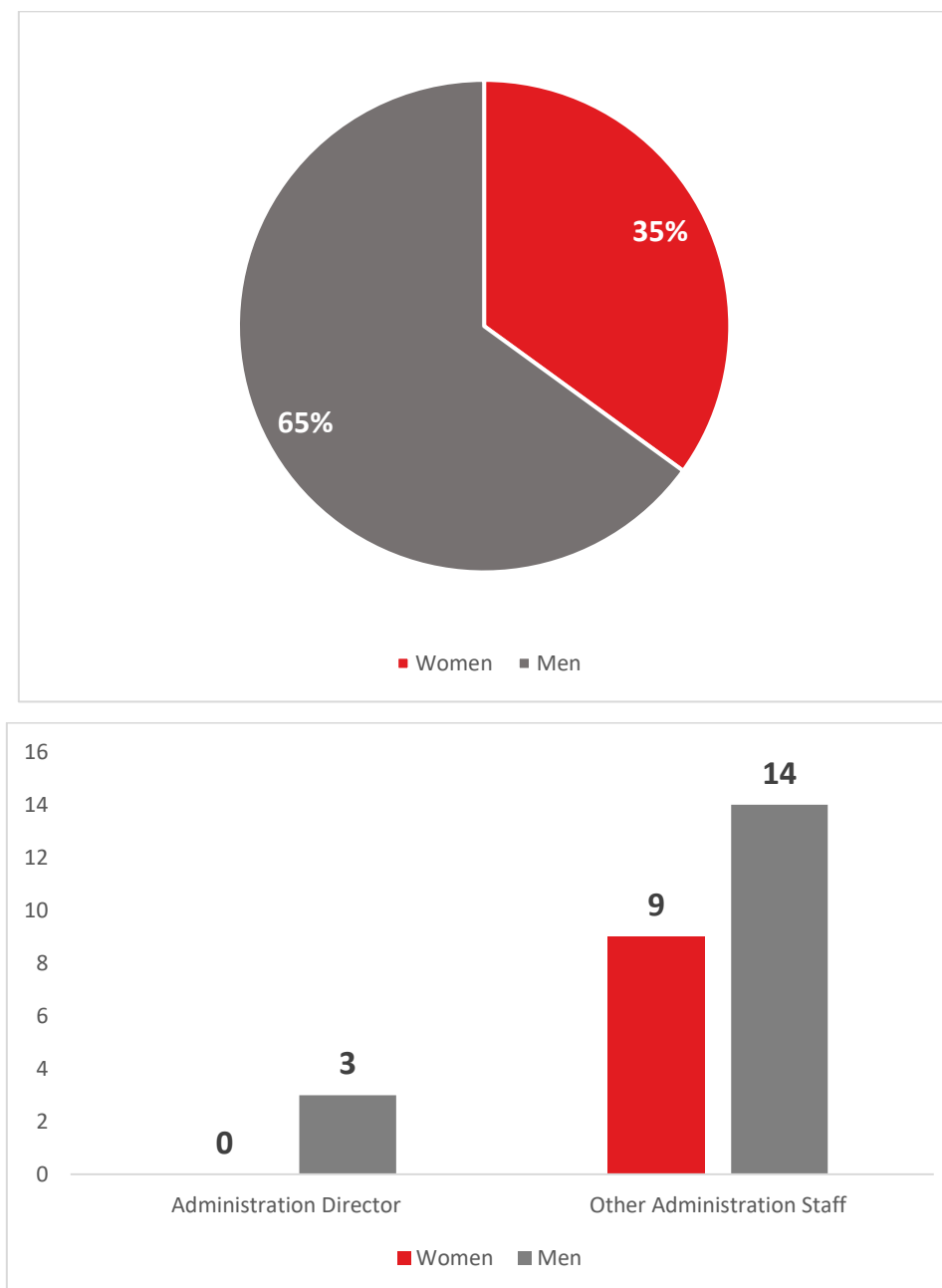
Laboratory and technical staff



Laboratory manager; Laboratory worker

Also in the case of this group of positions, there is a clear gender imbalance in the employment structure.

Administrative staff

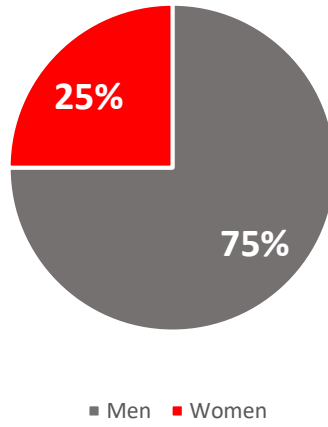


Employment Women/Men support

In the group of administrative employees, there is also a clear over-representation of men.

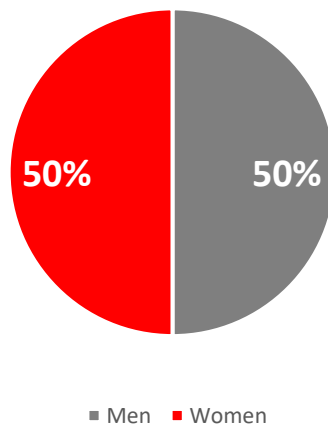
In summary, there is a large gender imbalance in ENSEMBLE³ both in the total employment structure and in the employment structure of specific job groups. The reasons for this should therefore be investigated. For this purpose, the gender structure of candidates for work at the Centre was also analysed. Its results are presented in the charts below.

Recruitment for research positions

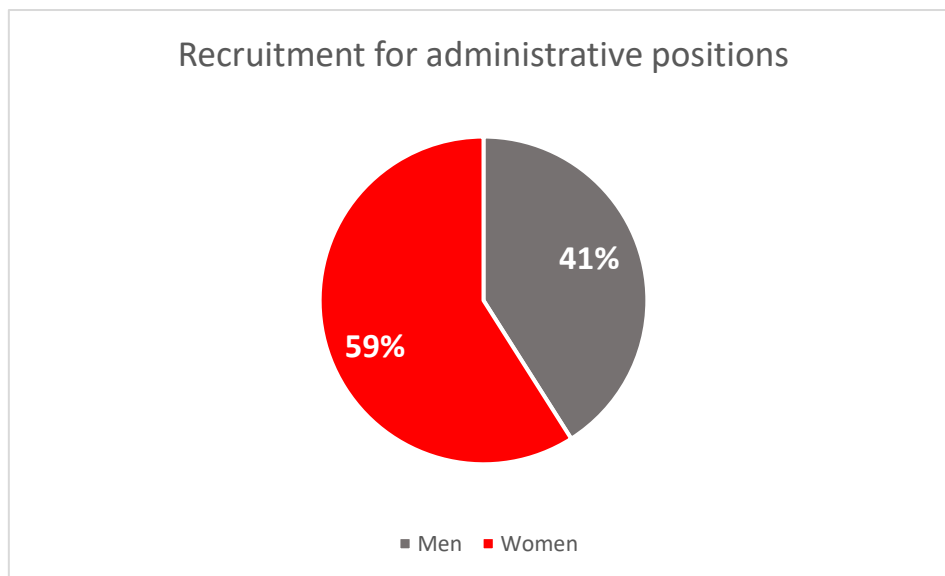


Recruitment for research positions

Recruitment for technical positions



Employment for technical positions



Recruitment for administrative positions

As can be seen, the gender structure of candidates applying for a job at the Centre is similar to the structure of people actually employed to research positions as a result of completed recruitment. It can be concluded from this that recruitment processes at ENSEMBLE³ on these positions are conducted in a neutral manner that does not favour or discriminate against either gender. Meanwhile, there is an imbalance between gender structure for candidates 50%/50% and employed people 69%/31% in favour of men in the technical stuff, and the same picture for the administrative positions (more women between candidates, but less of them hired). A similar situation is in the group of administrative positions: among job applicants there is a predominance of women, while among employees - a predominance of men. However, it would be inappropriate to draw any far-reaching conclusions from this data due to the small size of this group of workers, which can result in significant fluctuations of a purely statistical nature. Certainly, however, this phenomenon should be monitored in future recruitments.

In view of the above, it must be concluded that the causes of the significant gender imbalance in the Centre's staffing structure are not internal, but lie in the socio-economic environment in which the Centre operates. In particular, as already indicated in the earlier part of this study, a significant over-representation of men in the field of exact and natural sciences is a common phenomenon, already noted in the gender structure of people studying in such fields of study. This translates in turn into: the predominance of men among graduates of such studies, the supply of people of both sexes with such qualifications in the labour market, the structure of candidates for employment in ENSEMBLE³ and finally the proportion of people actually employed in this Centre of Excellence.

2.4. Equal opportunity analysis of remuneration policies

Data on the amount of remuneration is sensitive data, and the protection of its confidentiality is particularly difficult in organizations with a small number of employees, where publishing even averaged data on the amount of remuneration in individual employee groups may allow third parties to infer the amounts of remuneration received by specific employees. For these reasons, this analysis does not provide any absolute values for the salaries received by ENSEMBLE³ employees. This analysis is based solely on relative values, that is, a comparison of the average salary⁵ received by women and men employed in the same positions.

The results of this analysis are as follows:

Scientific positions

- Group Leader: average salary of women totals 111% the average salary of men.
- Independent Researcher (Senior Researcher): There are currently no women employed in this position; all employees in this category are men.
- Young doctor (Postdoc): the average salary of women totals 99.3% of the average salary of men. Doctoral Student (PhD Student): the average pay for men and women is exactly the same.

Laboratory and technical positions

- Laboratory Manager: the average salary of women totals 97.3% of the average salary of men.
- Laboratory Worker: the average salary of women totals 106% of the average salary of men

Administrative positions

The average salary of women employed in administrative positions is 77.5% the average salary of men. However, it should be noted that the main reason for this is that the administrative job group is not homogeneous. This includes key management positions (directors) as well as specialist and support positions. The higher average earnings for men is due to the fact that all (3) director positions are filled by that gender.

In light of these data, it can be argued that the remuneration policy pursued at ENSEMBLE³ is also neutral, i.e. it neither favours nor discriminates against either gender. Only the fact that all three administrative director positions are held by men may be the subject of reflection. However, it should be remembered that the highest management function in the entire Centre of Excellence, i.e. the President of the Management Board, is held by a woman.

⁵ i.e. the arithmetic mean per full-time equivalent

At the end of the diagnostic part of this study, it is worth recalling once again that ENSEMBLE³ is still at a very early stage of development. For this reason, data on the phenomena occurring within this organization are still partial and provisional, which makes it impossible to conduct in-depth analyses. In the future, once the building phase of the institution has been finalized and, in particular, once the current recruitment processes have been completed, the Centre's staff structure will include people of both sexes at all relevant stages of their careers, especially their scientific careers. This will allow you to monitor changes over time and evaluate the effectiveness of the various measures implemented.

3. Goals of the Plan and methods of their implementation

The diagnosis presented in chap. 2 of this study showed that in ENSEMBLE³ there is a significant disproportion between the number of women and men:

- in the general employee population,
- among research workers,
- in top management.

This condition is not due to discriminatory practices within the Centre of Excellence itself, but to broader socio-economic conditions over which our organization has no real influence. Nevertheless, it makes sense to take proactive measures to mitigate these disparities as much as possible. The areas in which ENSEMBLE³ management and staff can have an effective impact are, in particular:

- support for balancing work and family life, with a focus on child care,
- better dissemination of knowledge about equality, diversity and counteracting undesirable discriminatory behaviour,
- support for women at all stages of their careers, with special emphasis on advancing their careers in science.

In the light of these conditions, five goals were defined around which activities undertaken by the ENSEMBLE³ community will be oriented. They are as follows:

Objective 1: Facilitating work-life balance

Objective 2: Reducing the gender imbalance in the recruitment of female employees

Objective 3: Supporting gender balance in key positions

Objective 4: Preventing unwanted discriminatory behaviour, including based on gender

Objective 5: Supporting the advancement of women's scientific careers

Each of these goals has been assigned specific actions that will be implemented over the life of this Plan. To ensure the effective implementation of these activities, each of them has been assigned an "owner" responsible for its implementation and a monitoring indicator that allows for an objectified assessment of the degree of progress of a given task.

The coordination and monitoring of the activities undertaken under the Gender Equality Plan at the ENSEMBLE³ Centre of Excellence is planned to be entrusted to the Gender Equality Coordinator. This function will be performed by an employee designated by the President of the Centre. Both this framework document - Gender Equity Plan and information related to its implementation will be available on the Centre of Excellence website. In addition, as part of the evaluation of the Gender Equality Plan, a report will be prepared once a year on the degree of implementation of the Plan and the progress of individual activities.

Objective 1: Facilitating work-life balance

Action	Description	Responsibility	Monitoring indicator
Relocation assistance for employees.	– Providing migrant workers with a relocation package. – Allowing employees to move with their families. – Assistance in finding the suitable school for your children. – Assistance to foreigners in legalizing their stay in Poland.	Secretary office Legal Counsel HR Department	100% of migrant workers covered by relocation assistance.
Ensuring equal working conditions for employees of both sexes.	– Providing employees with the opportunity to work remotely. – Providing employees with the resources they need to do their jobs.	Directors Managers Organizing Team HR Department	No instances of unreasonable disagreement with remote work. 100% of workstations equipped with appropriate resources.
Providing employees with influence over the organization of their work time.	– Not employing women at night without their consent. – Introducing the possibility of flexible working hours.	President of the Centre HR Department	Relevant provisions introduced to the Work Regulations.
Introducing benefits for parents from the company's social benefits fund.	– Co-financing for kindergartens and nurseries. – Subsidizing a child's vacation.	Social commission	Relevant provisions introduced in the Regulations of the Company Social Benefits Fund.

Objective 2: Reducing the gender imbalance in the recruitment of female employees

Action	Description	Responsibility	Monitoring indicator
Ensuring equal opportunity in the recruitment process.	– Formulating advertisements in a way that allows both women and men to meet the criteria. – Transparent criteria in the announcement, clear guidelines for the evaluation of achievements. – For ads in Polish, provide the job title in both masculine and feminine forms (e.g., Asystent/Asystentka). – Not indicating the candidate's preferred gender in the contents of advertisements. – Maintaining gender balance among male and female candidates admitted to interviews. – Not referring to a candidate's marital or family status (children) during the selection process. – Final selection of a candidate for a position with consideration of gender equity in the organization. In case of two candidates with comparable competencies - preferred choice of female. – Monitoring of recruitment statistics.	President of the Centre HR Department Research Group Leaders Laboratory Managers Gender Equality Coordinator	100% of the recruitment advertisements in a gender-neutral manner. A percentage of women hired at least equal to the percentage of women applicants.
Ensuring equal opportunities for employed workers.	– Monitoring the number of men and women employed in the company and preparing periodic balance sheets. – Proposing the same type of employment contract for each position for men and women.	President of the Centre HR Department, Group Leaders, Laboratory Managers,	Comparable average salary for the same positions among men and women (deviation not greater than 10%).

	– Equal pay for employees regardless of gender at each job level, in accordance with the Remuneration Regulations. – Availability of all benefit packages (medical care, participation in conferences, business trips, renting a flat in the first period of employment) for all employees, regardless of gender.	Gender Equality Coordinator	No instances of unreasonable denial of access to certain benefits.
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Objective 3: Supporting gender balance in key positions

Action	Description	Responsibility	Monitoring indicator
Improving the gender balance in key positions.	– Monitoring the gender balance in recruitment committees. – Monitoring the number of men and women employed by the company in key positions - preparing periodic balances. – Promoting women for key positions of internal promotion.	HR Department Gender Equality Coordinator	Percentage of women in recruitment committees not less than the percentage of women in the total staff.
Providing training for employees in key positions and their potential successors.	– Organizing leadership skills development, team management and communication courses.	President of the Centre HR Department Group Leaders Laboratory Managers	100% of the company's management positions covered by training courses.

Objective 4: Preventing unwanted discriminatory behaviour, including based on gender

Action	Description	Responsibility	Monitoring indicator
Providing training on gender equality.	– Organizing workshops and training courses on equality, incl. in cooperation with the University of Warsaw and KIT. – Training on countering gender-based violence (including sexual harassment). – Disseminating information materials on equality between women and men.	HR Department Gender Equality Coordinator	100% of employees covered by training.
Providing training on other discriminatory behaviour.	– Organizing workshops and training on discriminatory behaviour related to gender and other categories such as race, ethnicity, age, socio-economic status or disability.	HR Department Gender Equality Coordinator	100% of employees covered by training.
Monitoring irregularities.	– Implementation of the irregularity reporting system. – Support for people affected by prejudice motivated violence. – Conducting surveys on the working conditions of women and men employed in the company, their professional career experiences or the possibility of combining work and private life.	President of the Centre Gender Equality Coordinator	Established irregularity reporting procedure. Surveys at least once a year.

Objective 5: Supporting the advancement of women's scientific careers

Action	Description	Responsibility	Monitoring indicator
Conducting promotional campaigns for women starting their scientific careers.	– Promoting the image of women working in the scientific community and in carrying out technological processes (e.g. a campaign on a website). – Active participation in international initiatives contributing to the reduction of gender disparities in scientific work.	PR Manager	At least one campaign per year. At least one initiative every 24 months.
Promoting female role models.	– Organizing scientific lectures in the fields related to the Centre's activities, conducted by women - scientists of international renown. – Meetings with invited guests on career prospects for women scientists.	PR Manager	At least one meeting per year.
Systematic improvement of the scientific qualifications of women employed in the Centre of Excellence.	– Provide Centre researchers with training and internship at Centre partner institutions. – Enabling the young research workers of the Centre obtaining a doctorate at the Doctoral School of Exact and Natural Sciences of the University of Warsaw. – Preparation of individual development plans for academic staff.	President of the Centre Research Group Leaders	100% of research workers participating in internship. At least 1 PhD student in each research group. 100% of research workers covered by individual development plans.