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POLICY, STRATEGY AND PLAN
for promoting gender equality
of the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics
at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences 2021 – 2030

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List of abbreviations

AC	Attestation Commission
AEA	Administrative and economic activities
AEC	Academic Ethics Committee
BAS	Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
BD	Board of Directors
ERA	European Research Area
IMI	Institute of Mathematics and Informatics
QC	Quality Council
QCm	Quality Commission
SC	Scientific Council
SSU	Scientific Structural Unit
UN	United Nations
WIMSA	Initiative "Women in Mathematics" of the Institute of the Mathematical Sciences of the Americas at the University of Miami

Introduction

Since its establishment in 1947, the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IMI-BAS) has been a leading Bulgarian center for research and training of highly qualified personnel, pursuing a purposeful, long-term and consistent policy related to the main trends in the development of mathematics, informatics and information technologies. As an integral part of the global scientific community, IMI functions in the European research environment based on values such as democracy, openness and equal opportunities. The goal of IMI has always been to attract people with talent and high professionalism, regardless of their gender, race, age, origin and religion.

With the development, adoption and implementation of the Plan for ensuring gender equality, IMI-BAS creates a framework for promoting gender equality in scientific, educational, labor and social relations in the institute community. This document presents the policy, strategy and plan of IMI -BAS for promoting and achieving gender equality, creating conditions for building an institutional environment and defining the bodies and mechanisms for implementing the plan.

In a global context, the Plan adheres to The goal №5 "Gender Equality" of the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development until 2030 and corresponds to the European Commission Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025 as well as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (adopted on 18.12.1979). The objective of the Plan is in sync with the priority policies of the European Union for gender equality in the field of scientific research and innovation. The initiative for the construction of the European research area (European Research Area - ERA), since its launch in 2000, aims to remove barriers and prevent them from appearing in the recruitment, retention and career development of female researchers and achieving gender balance in decision-making. The European Research Area will strengthen the focus on the equal participation of women in science, technology and engineering-mathematical fields. Gender equality in scientific research is also one of the principles in the European Charter for Researchers and in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, adopted by IMI-BAS in 2018.

The national context also favors the development of the Plan, as the Bulgarian legislation constitutionally guarantees the equality of women and men in all spheres of public, political and economic life. The country implements a consistent policy for gender equality, which is specially tailored to the national characteristics and is related to the commitments under international treaties to which Bulgaria is a party, incl. as a member of the EU and the UN. In this direction, the Law on Protection against Discrimination operates, regulating the protection against all forms of discrimination and assisting in its prevention. The prohibition of any kind of privileges or restrictions in higher education is postulated in Art. 4 of the Higher Education Act, the Labor Code and the Employment Promotion Act not only prohibit the implementation of discriminatory policies with regard to genetic, ethnic or social characteristics in hiring and exercising the right to work, but also regulate a large part of the issues related to achieving harmony between personal life and professional commitments regarding the periods related to the creation of the new generation.

In turn, according to the National Strategy for the Development of Scientific Research in the Republic of Bulgaria, 2017-2030 (Better Science for a Better Bulgaria), gender equality in the field of scientific research and innovation is taken into account when determining the main goals that the state sets regarding the development of scientific research and education in Bulgaria.

The plan includes goals, areas of intervention and measures that are in line with the newly adopted National Strategy for the Promotion of Equality between Women and Men 2021-2030, which formulates five priority areas for achieving the strategic goal: achieving de facto equality of women and men in Bulgaria through the implementation of a unified, consistent and sustainable state policy. These areas are:

1. Equality of women and men in the labor market and an equal degree of economic independence.
2. Reducing the gender pay and income gap.
3. Promoting equality of women and men in decision-making processes.
4. Combating violence and protecting and supporting victims.
5. Overcoming gender stereotypes in various spheres of public life and sexism.

In the context of **the institutional policy** the Plan is in accordance with the IMI Code of Ethics (adopted by the IMI SC on 28.01.2019) and the IMI Doctoral Student Training Quality Assurance System (adopted by the IMI SC on 02/09/2018), which postulate equal opportunities and working and training conditions, avoiding any form of discrimination. The regulations for the internal work order of IMI postulates flexible working hours and flexible working conditions, which favor the distribution of personal and official workloads.

Regarding the distribution of personnel by gender in IMI, the analysis as of 31.12.2020 shows that the gender balance is partially disturbed. In contrast to the predominant number of women in the BAS academic circles, a fact that is analyzed in the BAS Development Strategy 2018-2030 as a unique phenomenon in related scientific institutions around the world, in the academic staff of IMI the percentage of women is still almost twice smaller than that of men. Unfortunately, the imbalance among assistant professors and chief assistant professors is even greater, which indicates the need for targeted actions to create favorable conditions for the career development of young female scientists. The presence of women in the Scientific Council is less than a third of the composition, but this is explained by the general proportion of the habilitated composition in favor of men (i.e. there is a relatively proportional representation). On the other hand, women predominate in the commissions supporting the work of the Scientific Council. The Board of Directors has maintained a balanced ratio between men and women in recent years.

The scientific community at IMI has always associated its activity with maintaining a spirit of tolerance, equality and collegiality. The Institute conducts and participates in initiatives aimed at creating a favorable climate for gender equality and for equal career development and recognition:

- Holding of an annual international conference "Women in Mathematics in South-Eastern Europe", organized by the International Center for Mathematical Sciences at IMI-BAS and Institute of the Mathematical Sciences of the Americas at the University of Miami.
- Provision of scholarships for women scientists for achievements in the field of mathematics and informatics from the International Center for Mathematical Sciences at IMI-BAN and WIMSA.
- Traditional recognition of the successes of our scientists participating in the L'Oréal and UNESCO Program "For Women in Science" (as of 2021, IMI has two winners of the award).
- The publication of the book "Women in the history of academic science in Bulgaria. The habilitated women at BAS" from the Publishing House of BAS in 2018.

Equal opportunities for all are a key goal of the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The current plan includes actions to ensure gender equality, manage diversity and balance work and family commitments. The goal is to promote a sustainable research culture that is sensitive to gender and diversity issues.

Policy of IMI to provide an enabling environment regarding the promotion of gender equality

Principles on which IMI's Policy on Gender Equality is based:

1. equal opportunities for the sexes in the field of scientific, educational, labor and social relations among the institute community;
2. equal access of the sexes to all resources in the institute;
3. equal treatment of the sexes and prevention of gender-based discrimination and violence;
4. balanced representation in all decision-making bodies;
5. overcoming gender stereotypes.

IMI's gender equality policy is implemented through:

1. integration of the principle of gender equality in the management of IMI;
2. implementation of incentive measures, especially when disproportion and disturbed balance are found;
3. mechanism for control and correction of violations of gender equality.

IMI's policy regarding gender equality is implemented by the Scientific Council (SC), the committees created for it and representatives of the management. The SC of IMI determines the policy and strategy of IMI and adopts a plan for their implementation. Operational activities are carried out by the commissions established at the Scientific Council. A representative of the management of IMI operationally directs, coordinates and controls the implementation of the gender equality policy.

IMI institutional strategy regarding gender equality

IMI's institutional strategy regarding gender equality is based on the prevention of discrimination and gender inequality and covers the academic and administrative staff, doctoral students and trainees at IMI. The institutional strategy is implemented through a plan that includes activities, responsible bodies and indicators for the implementation of activities.

Plan to promote gender equality in IMI

The plan was developed by a specially formed group at IMI, including representatives of the executive and scientific management of IMI, the academic staff, young scientists, doctoral students and administrative staff.

Due to the specificity of the research activity and the legal frameworks for BAS and IMI, as well as the measures to achieve the implementation of the three central goals of the ERA on gender equality, the Plan includes the following sections:

1. Development and promotion of an institutional culture in processes and activities aimed at achieving gender equality (in accordance with priority areas 1 and 2 of the National Strategy and the National Plan).

2. Achieving and maintaining gender equality in research, career development and management structures (in accordance with priority area 3 of the National Strategy and the National Plan).
3. Promoting and maintaining a creative environment in order to achieve a balance between personal life and professional commitments and to improve the quality of life and work (in accordance with priority area 5 of the National Strategy and the National Plan).

The plan includes objectives, areas of intervention and measures for the period up to 2030.

1. Development and promotion of an institutional culture in processes and activities aimed at achieving gender equality

Purpose	Indicator	Measures	Executor
Making equality between women and men an integral part of institutional policy	Achieving a balance between men and women in the overall ethics policy at IMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconciliation of IMI's regulatory documents with the Plan's implementation activities. • Designation of a general body monitoring the implementation of the Plan and delegation of representatives in each composition, which is responsible for its implementation. • Establishing procedures for the systematic collection of quantitative and qualitative data related to gender. • Establish procedures for annual progress reporting. • Analyzing quantitative and qualitative data related to gender. • Systematic monitoring of the implementation of the Plan and accompanying action plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC • BD • Human Resources Department
Building an organizational culture of gender equality	Maintaining a desirable state of gender equality in all spheres of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of non-discriminatory language in institutional documents. • Providing training to managers and responsible persons at various levels on the policies and implementation of the Plan. • Improving public communication and organizing activities inside and outside the institution to promote the achievement of gender equality. • Promotion of good practices by demonstrating the successful work of women in the institute and their career development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC • BD • AEC • Public Relations Officer
Development of a system of employment and career development aimed at ensuring equality of the genders	Balanced distribution by gender in a horizontal plan (in the scientific units and administrative departments of IMI) and in a vertical plan (career development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Striving for balanced gender representation in selection and evaluation committees for recruitment and career development in IMI. • Analyzing recruitment and career development processes and proposing future activities to eliminate gender inequality. • Maintaining a balanced representation of women and men in management positions. • Offering educational courses to develop management skills that can be used to improve gender equality . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BD • SC • Human Resources Department • relevant authorities at the BAS

<p>Improving the satisfaction of scientists and employees with the implementation of the Plan for equality of the genders</p>	<p>Achieving greater satisfaction with the state of equality of gender and its support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of questions related to satisfaction with the implementation of gender equality in regular satisfaction surveys of staff and doctoral students • Proposing action plans to improve equality policies and practices based on the information obtained from these surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEC • QCm • QC
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2. Achieving and maintaining gender equality in research, career development and management structures.

Purpose	Indicator	Measures	Executor
Ensuring gender balance in the conduct of scientific research, training of doctoral students and implementation of scientific and educational projects	Increased number of women with publications in prestigious publications, as well as heads of research and educational projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing the data in the reports of IMI and in the attestations of employees and doctoral students, in relation to gender and types of scientific activity. • Proposing measures to improve the gender balance in scientific activities (special awards for women's scientific activity, adequate support during pregnancy and maternity, etc.). • Consideration of maternity leave in assessment and attestation. • Strive for a balanced representation of the sexes in the proposal of members of evaluation committees of scientific research and educational projects. • Promotion of good practices of European universities and research institutions related to gender equality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC • BD • AC • Department International Activity and Projects
Stimulating the scientific contribution of women	Balanced representation of women and men in the collectives and in the management of research and educational projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running campaigns that present the impact of diversity and gender equality in research teams on the quality of research. • Holding events that highlight the contribution of women in research teams. • Encouraging and supporting women in submitting research and educational projects. • Creation and promotion of profiles of women with successful careers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department International Activity and Projects • Public Relations Officer

3. Fostering and maintaining a creative environment in order to achieve a balance between personal life and professional commitments and improve the quality of life and work

Purpose	Indicator	Measures	Executor
Maintaining a work environment that allows employees to balance their professional and personal duties and responsibilities	Improved employee satisfaction with their work and environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and implement institutional practices that neutralize the impact of workplace stress on mental health (e.g. flexible working hours, personal training and development, mobility, career development support programs, etc.). • Improving communication practices and teamwork (e.g. regular sectional meetings and thematic seminars allow for the creation of working relationships based on common interests, which in turn improves the quality of work). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department International Activity and Projects • Human Resources Department • Heads of departments
Development of social services supporting career development	More users of gender equality services in career development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of services that improve the quality of life and work in the BAS system (organization of summer children's camps, provision of opportunities to use the recreation centers, etc.). • Provision of recreation and maternity areas in the Institute building and BAS complex and organization of recreational activities. • Guaranteeing the necessary support for men on parental leave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director AEA
Non-discrimination in income based on gender	Maintaining gender pay equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of existing mechanisms for equal pay for equal work regardless of gender. • Implementing transparent and gender-neutral practices that ensure the reduction of "invisible work" through overtime pay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BD • Financial and Accounting Department
Making IMI a place free from harassment and discrimination	Promoting freedom of speech and preventing sexual harassment and discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration of IMI's position that all forms of discrimination and harassment on any grounds are reprehensible. • Development of a procedure for reporting and acting on cases of sexual harassment or violence, as well as forms of discrimination prohibited by law. • Providing support for staff and doctoral students regardless of their sexual orientation or self-identification or other genetic, ethnic or social characteristics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEC • BD

List of regulatory documents

- [1] United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>
- [2] European Commission Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/BG/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0152>
- [3] United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by UNGA resolution 34/180 of 18.12.1979), <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>
- [4] Initiative for the construction of the European research area (European Research Area – ERA), <https://op.europa.eu/en/web/eu-law-and-publications/publication-detail/-/publication/aae418f1-06b3-11eb-a511-01aa75ed71a1>
- [5] European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, adopted by IMI-BAN in 2018. https://math.bas.bg/wp-admin/admin-ajax.php?juwpfisadmin=false&action=wpfd&task=file.download&wpfd_category_id=1072&wpfd_file_id=6756
- [6] Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, <https://www.parliament.bg/bg/const>
- [7] Labor Code, <https://www.justice.government.bg/home/normdoc/1594373121>
- [8] Act on Protection against Discrimination, https://kzd-nondiscrimination.com/layout/images/stories/pdf/ZAKON_za_zasita_ot_diskriminaciq_Zagl_izm_DV_br_68_ot_2006_g.pdf
- [9] Act on Higher Education, <https://lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2133647361>
- [10] Employment Promotion Act, <https://www.az.government.bg/pages/zakoni/>
- [11] Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, <https://www.lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2135680028>
- [12] National strategy for the development of scientific research in the Republic of Bulgaria, 2017-2030 (Better science for a better Bulgaria), <https://www.strategy.bg/StrategicDocuments/View.aspx?lang=bg-BG&Id=1231>
- [13] National strategy for promoting equality between women and men 2021-2030, <https://www.mlsp.government.bg/blgarsko-zakonodatelstvo>
- [14] BAS Development Strategy 2018-2030, https://www.bas.bg/wp-admin/admin-ajax.php?juwpfisadmin=false&action=wpfd&task=file.download&wpfd_category_id=1683&wpfd_file_id=13290
- [15] Code of Ethics of IMI (adopted by the National Assembly of IMI on 28.01.2019), https://math.bas.bg/wp-admin/admin-ajax.php?juwpfisadmin=false&action=wpfd&task=file.download&wpfd_category_id=1072&wpfd_file_id=8240
- [16] System for ensuring the quality of education of doctoral students of IMI (adopted by the National Assembly of IMI on 9.02.2018), https://math.bas.bg/wp-admin/admin-ajax.php?juwpfisadmin=false&action=wpfd&task=file.download&wpfd_category_id=1072&wpfd_file_id=8239
- [17] Regulations for the internal working order of the IMI - https://math.bas.bg/wp-admin/admin-ajax.php?juwpfisadmin=false&action=wpfd&task=file.download&wpfd_category_id=1069&wpfd_file_id=11482

Note: Links are active as of 12/15/2021.