



OGS



# Gender Equality Plan

GEP 2026-2028

# SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION .....	3
1. Regulatory Framework.....	5
2. Context .....	7
3. OGS Gender Equality Plan .....	9
3.1 Definition of objectives and actions for the three-year period 2026–2028 .....	10

## INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the OGS Gender Equality Plan (GEP); it represents the Organisation's concrete commitment to value differences, particularly those related to gender, and to promoting an organisational culture free from prejudice, based on the fundamental values of inclusivity, equity and transparency.

Gender equality is a core value of the European treaties, further solidified by the "Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025." Approved by the European Parliament in January 2021, this strategy serves as the European Commission's roadmap toward achieving a true "Union of Equality." In this context, the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers defines the pursuit of equal opportunities as: *"Looking at the constitutional principles of equality to make them history in the stories of today's women and men. It means choosing to eradicate the unjust concepts and behaviours that still prevent female citizens from living, being, and acting as equals with all other citizens."*

Beyond the European framework, gender equality is a fundamental driver of global growth and a cornerstone of the United Nations Agenda for Development and Progress. Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls is the fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), comprising nine sub-goals dedicated to ending all forms of gender-based discrimination worldwide.

The Horizon Europe framework programme, established by Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council, also fits into this context. It aims to fund research and innovation during the period 2021-2027. This programme seeks to promote equality between women and men in the research and innovation sector, defining gender equality as a cross-cutting principle of the programme.

To monitor progress towards the goal of gender equality, the European Union, and in particular the European Institute for Gender Equality, has developed the Gender Equality Index, a tool for monitoring progress on gender equality. This index assigns a score between 0 and 100 to Member States, taking into account six key domains:

- 1) Work
- 2) Money
- 3) Knowledge
- 4) Time
- 5) Power
- 6) Health

In 2025, Italy scored 61.9, ranking 12th in the EU. Despite an improvement of 9.4 points since 2015, the score still remains below the European average. The main areas of concern relate to employment, where Italy ranks among the lowest in the EU, whilst progress has been noted in economic and social power.

In order to pursue the objectives set by both the United Nations and the European Union, the Department for Equal Opportunities has approved the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026, which sets out the framework of values and the direction of the policies that must be implemented to bring about improvements in the field of gender equality. This Strategy provides a clear vision and a defined path towards gender equality and equal opportunities, clearly outlining a system of integrated policy actions through which concrete, defined and measurable initiatives will be brought to life.

The drafting of this Gender Equality Plan therefore takes place within this context, with the aim of defining a set of actions and measures consistent with the objectives identified in the PIAO 2026-2028 (Integrated Activity and Organisation Plan) in order to pursue gender equality.

In this regard, the European Commission sets out the requirements that the Gender Equality Plan must meet, relating to the drafting process and subsequent steps:

- **Publication of the document:** the Plan must be a formal document signed by the Administration's senior management and published on the institutional website. Notice of the publication must be given within the Administration;
- **Dedicated resources:** the Plan must include a commitment to provide sufficient resources for the implementation of the proposed actions;
- **Data collection and monitoring:** the Plan must include staff data specifically disaggregated by gender, which the organisation must monitor annually on the basis of specific indicators;
- **Training:** the Plan must include training and awareness-raising activities on gender equality for the entire organisation.

As the European Commission points out, a gender gap persists in the workplace regarding pay, care, power, and pensions. The GEP serves as a tool for overcoming gender stereotypes and discrimination within OGS, with the ultimate goal of achieving gender equality. In line with international and regional human rights instruments such as CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) and the ECHR (European Convention on Human Rights), the GEP embraces a broad conception of gender. It recognizes gender not only as a cultural construct and sex as a biological fact, but also adopts an intersectional approach. This includes all categories that intersect with gender to form the basis for multiple forms of discrimination, such as gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, and economic status.

In this way, the GEP's actions and indicators provide an analytical framework for understanding how sex and gender intersect with the personal identities of OGS workers. While the focus remains on women, who are historically and structurally subject to disproportionate discrimination, this is complemented by a broader perspective that accounts for specific individual vulnerabilities.

### **HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT**

The document presents the regulatory framework (Section 1) and the internal context of OGS (Section 2) before outlining the Plan (Section 3), which defines the priority areas for action, the objectives and the respective measures. The document concludes with a summary table that also includes indicators for monitoring individual measures.

The results, in relation to the objectives and actions identified, will be monitored and reported on annually by the *GEP Team*.

The update of the Plan, starting with a review of the planned objectives, aims to adjust them where necessary and design new actions, including by identifying indicators, targets and resources.

# 1. Regulatory framework

The prohibition of gender-based discrimination sits at the heart of major international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and CEDAW - the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Beyond these broad protections, the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions specifically target workplace discrimination, identifying it as a primary cause of stifled opportunity, wasted human talent, and the exacerbation of social tensions. By promoting "decent work," the GEP aligns with the ILO Constitution and its core conventions, specifically No. 100 (Equal Remuneration) and No. 111 (Discrimination in Employment), which advocate for labour conditions defined by freedom, equity, security, and dignity.

At the regional level, the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) explicitly prohibits gender discrimination under Article 14. Within European Union law, Article 2 TEU establishes equality between women and men as a founding value, while Article 3 TEU commits the Union to combating social exclusion and discrimination. Furthermore, in accordance with the CEDAW Committee's General Recommendation No. 28, the term "sex" is interpreted here as encompassing "gender", referring to the socially constructed roles and attributes that a given society deems appropriate for women and men.

Among the fundamental principles of the Constitution, the inviolability of human rights is guaranteed for both individuals and social groups (Article 2), together with social dignity and equality before the law without distinction, inter alia, on grounds of 'sex' (Article 3). Work is also considered one of the foundations of the democratic Republic (Article 1), as well as being a right recognised by the State, whereby the latter undertakes to promote the conditions that make it effective (Article 4). Regarding the specific sector of research, the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation for the period 2021-2027, Horizon Europe, has introduced new provisions to strengthen gender equality in European organisations. In particular, for all research bodies and higher education institutions, the adoption of a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) has become a requirement for access to funding.

The implementation of a GEP does not influence the evaluation of projects, but is a mandatory requirement at the time of signing the Grant Agreement.

In parallel with, and by analogy to, Horizon Europe, the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) also makes access to funding for all public and private organisations conditional upon the adoption of gender budgeting and the GEP (MUR Guidelines).

The GEP is a set of actions, not isolated but integrated into a single strategic vision, aimed at:

- identifying gender distortions and inequalities;
- implementing innovative strategies to correct distortions and inequalities;
- defining objectives and monitor their achievement through appropriate indicators.

As noted in the introduction, the European Commission's initiative forms part of the EU Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025, within which strategic objectives and actions have been set out to achieve significant progress by 2025 towards a Europe that guarantees gender

equality. Again with a view to the aforementioned intersectionality, the EU Strategy itself refers to people 'in all their diversity' to encompass 'heterogeneous categories including sex, gender identity, gender expression or sexual characteristics' with reference to 'women or men' (note 9).

The main objectives set out by the Commission are:

- to end gender-based violence;
- to combat sexist stereotypes;
- to close the gender gap in the labour market;
- to tackle the pay and pension gaps;
- achieving gender balance in decision-making processes.

The gender equality plan is the strategic, operational and specific tool that enables defining the legal, organisational, economic and social framework and the operational conditions for implementing gender equality in practice.

The purpose of a gender equality plan, the areas of intervention and the issues to be addressed can vary greatly depending on the specific contexts in which they are implemented. The European Commission's guidelines encourage consideration of the specificities of local contexts, whilst respecting differences and diversity.

## 2. The context

The National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics - OGS is a public research body overseen by the Ministry of Universities and Research, operating internationally in the fields of oceanography, geophysics and seismology.

The Institute's expertise is applied in the fields of Earth, marine and polar sciences to contribute to the dissemination of scientific knowledge, technological innovation and the practical resolution of environmental, economic and social issues.

The OGS's general strategies and specific objectives for scientific research and innovation are consistent with policies defined at national and international level.

In line with these policy guidelines, OGS has structured its three-year research programme into five **science and innovation missions** that explicitly represent the expertise, objectives and ambitions of the Institute and its staff, and which correspond to those sectors in which OGS is recognised nationally and internationally as a leading scientific body.

The five missions, as set out in the Three-Year Activity Plan, are:

1. **Understanding Seas and Oceans**
2. **Understanding Geological Processes;**
3. **Understanding Disaster Risk;**
4. **Exploring the Polar Regions;**
5. **Promoting Open Science.**

The main activities carried out consist of research projects, **technological** development and service activities, for the benefit of the local area, with a particular focus on issues related to major global challenges.

The Organisation is structured around four scientific and technological research units: the **Section of Oceanography** (OCE) and the **Section of Geophysics** (GEO), the **Centre for Seismological Research** (CRS) and the **Centre for Management of Maritime Infrastructures** (CGN). The research units are organised (ROF 29 September 2015) into specialist groups and support groups.

There are two administrative departments: **Human Resources** (DRU) and **Finance and Assets** (DFP), as well as the technical support units: **IT Services** (ST) and **International Cooperation and Research Promotion** (ICAP).

In accordance with Article 21 of Law No. 183 of 4 November 2010 (the so-called 'Collegato lavoro'), the Organisation has established the **Single Guarantee Committee for Equal Opportunities, the promotion of staff wellbeing and against discrimination (CUG)**, which acts as the key point of contact in the fight against discrimination in the workplace, not only on the grounds of gender, but also on the grounds of age, disability, ethnic origin, language, race and sexual orientation. This protection covers pay, career progression, safety and access to employment.

The current composition of the CUG was established by order of the Director General No. 253 ADW of 5 April 2024 and is as follows:

Representative	Substitute	Represented party
Federica Melozzi	Gianluca Brogi	OGS
Anna Teruzzi	Simona Cassaro	OGS
Paolo Bernardi	Margherita Persi	OGS
Laura Riosa	Fabiana Brancolini	OGS
Alessandra Zanetti	Simona Gigli	CISL FSUR
Luca Moratto	Alessandro Conighi	FLC CGIL
Renato Capuozzo	Michela Giustiniani	SNALS CONSAL
Anna Tarantino	Stefano Maffione	UIL SCUOLA-RUA

Dr Federica Melozzi has been appointed **Chair of the CUG**, assisted by Dr Anna Teruzzi as Vice-Chair.

The role of **Trusted Advisor** for the three-year period 2023-2026 has been conferred upon Dr Francesca PIDONE by Presidential Decree No. 53 of 15 November 2023. The Trusted Advisor provides advice and assistance to all those who, in any capacity, work and operate within OGS and who believe they have been subjected to acts or behaviour, including sexual harassment, that are detrimental to personal dignity.

The gender breakdown within the Organisation shows a predominance of women in the administrative sector, whilst the technical-scientific sector exhibits a different trend depending on the field of interest: in the earth sciences, men are clearly in the majority, whereas in oceanography, women predominate.

The greatest difference is evident when analysing age groups: staff over 50 are predominantly male, whilst women predominate among the younger generations. Women also predominate among staff holding research grants and scholarships.

Even when considering career progression, there is no reduction in the proportion of women moving from the entry level (Level III) to Level II. In the transition from Level II to Level I, however, there is a marked decline in the proportion of women; this trend, however, must also be viewed in light of the small overall number of staff in top-level positions, meaning that even a single person more or less can result in significant changes in the percentage breakdown.

The situation at the level of scientific sections or technological units is not uniform and appears consistent with what has already been outlined regarding the representation of women in the various areas of activity within OGS.

Overall, the proportion of women stands at 44%.

As regards the senior management bodies, there is perfect parity with two men and two women.

However, there is a clear disparity with regard to the directors of the Sections and Centres (four men and no women).

The situation changes, however, with regard to the various organisational positions at the administrative level, where women are in the majority.

### 3. OGS Gender Equality Plan

As a national scientific institution, OGS is called upon to offer the younger generations a different path from that of the past, one freer from prejudice and stereotypes, capable of embracing people's freedom whilst appreciating their uniqueness and originality.

The Gender Equality Plan is a tool designed to foster this cultural change, with the aim of continuing to build an open and communicative working environment where fair treatment is evident and discriminatory situations are absent, thereby instilling in our entire community a sense of trust, belonging and shared objectives, and consequently offering opportunities for growth for the institution as a whole.

OGS has identified the following five priority areas, in line with the European Commission's guidelines, on which to develop improvement measures with short-, medium- and long-term objectives:

1. work-life balance and organisational culture
2. gender balance in senior positions and decision-making bodies
3. gender equality in recruitment and career progression
4. integration of the gender dimension into research
5. combating gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

The actions and measures identified that aim to:

- identify appropriate procedures to detect gender-based prejudices, stereotypes, biases and discrimination;
- define and implement innovative strategies to correct and combat any inequalities that have emerged in all areas of research, management and administration at OGS;
- set medium- and long-term objectives to promote gender equality across all groups (research staff, technical/administrative staff, trainees);
- monitor the progress of the relevant actions through effective indicators.

During the planning phase, and in line with the Organisation's other policy documents, the objectives to be achieved, the actions and measures to be adopted, the indicators, the implementation timelines and the allocation of the necessary responsibilities are identified for each thematic area.

The process of adopting the GEP involved the President, the Director General and the Chair of the CUG, with the support of the permanent technical unit for the operational aspects. Annually, during the measurement and reporting phase of the performance cycle, progress towards the objectives identified here is monitored, including with the support of a specially established working group (GEP Team), and reported for the purpose of updating the document itself.

### 3.1 Definition of objectives and actions for the 2026-2028 three-year period

The objectives and respective actions envisaged by the GEP for the five priority areas identified for the 2026-2028 three-year period are set out below.

#### PRIORITY AREA 1

#### Work-life balance and organisational culture

##### Objective 1.1: Work-life balance

This objective focuses on achieving greater compatibility between the professional and personal spheres, enabling individuals to balance their personal needs, whether relating to family life or personal growth and fulfilment, with the organisational requirements of a complex structure. The expected outcome is to improve the quality of life for both male and female workers whilst simultaneously enhancing workplace dynamics. The overall aim is to improve 'organisational well-being' more generally, understood as an organisation's ability to promote and maintain the physical, psychological and social well-being of all workers within it.

##### Actions:

##### *1.1.1 Promote the use of conciliation procedures to facilitate the conversion of employment contracts to part-time arrangements*

Within the scope of the opportunities offered by legislation, maximum flexibility in converting the employment relationship from full-time to part-time, even for limited periods, with the utmost flexibility in agreeing the implementation arrangements (percentage of part-time and horizontal or vertical working arrangements). This will allow a temporary reduction in working hours to meet the personal / family needs of the worker, whilst at the same time preventing the worker from temporarily leaving the workforce where, in the absence of part-time work, the employee would be forced to take unpaid leave or personal leave.

##### *1.1.2 Encourage greater flexibility in the working day*

Ensure a range of start and finish times for the working day, taking this flexibility into account when defining the respective start and finish times.

##### *1.1.3 Launch an annual anonymous survey on how work-life balance measures actually affect staff job satisfaction*

Develop an annual survey, adapting it to the previous year's results, aimed at gathering feedback from staff regarding work-life balance measures and how these affect their job satisfaction.

##### *1.1.4 Strengthen the use of work-life balance tools by increasing the use of flexible working*

Encourage the use of flexible working for employees with parenting and/or caregiving responsibilities, in accordance with current regulations for the research sector.

### *1.1.5 Encourage fathers to take paternity leave and support them in doing so*

Encourage the use of paternity leave by raising awareness of rights and gender awareness initiatives concerning men.

## **PRIORITY AREA 2**

### **Gender balance in senior positions and decision-making bodies**

#### *Objective 2.1: Improve gender balance in institutional and government roles*

##### *Actions:*

##### *2.1.1. Establish a dedicated structure ('GEP Team') to implement the Gender Equality Plan, comprising the President, the Director-General, the Chair of the CUG or their delegates*

Determine the composition of the GEP Team on an annual basis to ensure it is fully operational for the purposes of the annual monitoring of the GEP's objectives. The team must ensure that all 'stakeholders' within the organisation are represented.

##### *2.1.2. Assess changes to regulations to achieve equal or better representation*

Promote gender representation on all the Organisation's committees and commissions.

##### *2.1.3. Ensure gender representation on examination and competition boards*

Ensure compliance with the regulations on the composition of examination and competition panels (Article 57(5.1)(a) of Legislative Decree No. 165 of 30 March 2001), which stipulates that, where possible, at least one third of the panel members should be women.

##### *2.1.4. Ensure gender representation at conferences organised by OGS*

Recommend the respect of gender in selection of speakers and moderators, including within individual *panels*. Should a panel consist exclusively of men, this composition must be justified in writing to the relevant research manager or technologist, attaching information on the efforts made to improve gender balance.

##### *2.1.5. Publish an annual report on recruitment, employment practices and best practices regarding diversity and inclusion at OGS*

Report annually on the impact of diversity and gender policies at OGS through the publication of a report on recruitment, employment practices and best practices in terms of inclusion.

#### *Objective 2.2: Foster change in the structure of gender relations to promote gender balance*

##### *Actions:*

### *2.2.1 Promote gender education within OGS through internal information sessions on the tools available at regulatory and contractual levels*

Organise meetings to raise staff awareness of existing tools to promote gender balance and equality, and to identify and combat gender-based stereotypes and prejudices that limit the full enjoyment of rights by all.

### *2.2.2 Promote gender education through discussion seminars with research groups working on these issues*

To facilitate meetings and discussions (at national and international level) on the inefficiencies (economic, organisational, political) arising from gender imbalance, on the causes of gender inequality, and on gender-based stereotypes and prejudices.

### *2.2.3 Establish at least one gender-neutral toilet per building*

Ensure the provision of at least one gender-neutral toilet per building at each OGS site in order to guarantee a safe space for transgender and non-binary people.

### *2.2.4 Provide sanitary pads in women's and unisex toilets or make them available via vending machines*

Ensure that sanitary products are always available in women's and unisex toilets in order to uphold the right to health and personal dignity without distinction of class, gender or gender identity, making workplaces more inclusive and ensuring that sanitary products are provided on the same basis as other free amenities (soap, toilet paper).

### *2.2.5 Recognise menstrual leave as an option for women and transgender people who request it*

Guarantee female workers and transgender people who request it two days' paid menstrual leave per month, without the need for a medical certificate, in accordance with the principle of equality in the right to work and health.

## **PRIORITY AREA 3**

### **Gender equality in recruitment and career progression**

#### *Objective 3.1: Promote staff training on gender balance*

Recognising and harnessing people's diversity and unique qualities is crucial to boosting innovation, improving resilience, sustainability and reputation, and creating an inclusive working environment.

#### *Actions:*

##### *3.1.1 Role and opportunities of the UNI-ISO 30415:2021 certification "Human Resource Management – Diversity and Inclusion"*

Affirm the concept of diversity and inclusion as a fundamental value of the Organisation. The

new UNI ISO 30415 certification aims to promote internal change within organisations, guiding them both in defining more socially sustainable strategic objectives and in building a different relationship with their stakeholders.

### *3.1.2 Encourage the recruitment of transgender people*

Promote a corporate culture that opposes stereotypes and discrimination based on gender identity. Modify application systems to allow for self-identification of gender for those applying for any position and to distinguish between 'legal name' and 'chosen name'.

### *3.1.3 Conduct an annual anonymous survey among all staff to gather insights into experiences, perceptions and views regarding gender equality within OGS*

Develop a survey to be administered annually to all staff, adapting it to the results of the previous year, aimed at gathering feedback on everyone's perceptions, experiences and perspectives regarding discrimination, stereotypes and gender equality in the workplace.

## **PRIORITY AREA 4**

### **Integrating the gender dimension into research**

#### *Objective 4.1: Promote and support all genders in the workplace*

Remove organisational and cultural barriers in the career paths of women, transgender people and intersex people, and work to close the gender gap in management and leadership roles.

#### *Actions:*

##### *4.1.1 Training courses to raise awareness of the importance of gender mainstreaming*

In collaboration with the CUG, mentoring programmes will be organised, comprising group seminars on stereotypes and discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics, as well as on specific topics (leadership, communication, situational awareness, decision-making, problem-solving, empowerment). These activities will be led by both women in senior positions within the Institute and external experts, as well as by individuals active in research and outreach on gender issues in the broadest sense. The activities will be monitored using assessment tools (descriptive forms, questionnaires) that will enable the analysis and reporting of results. The expected outcomes include each participant gaining a greater awareness of their role and responsibilities, and enhancing the soft skills essential for holding roles with high managerial responsibility.

##### *4.1.2 Extension of age limits in regulations governing the award of 'assignments'*

Some regulations governing the award of grants, appointments and contracts stipulate that participation in the call for applications is restricted to individuals who have not exceeded the age of 30 by the closing date of the call. This requirement will be amended to provide that, for women, the age limit will be extended by one year for each child, in line with the arrangements already in place for PRIN (Research Projects of National Significance) calls and European

research calls.

#### *4.1.3 Monitoring the representation of women within research teams, both as Principal Investigators and as team members*

The aim is to raise awareness of the scientific, social and economic value of incorporating the gender dimension into research, with a view to achieving, in the long term, an increase in the number of research projects that include the gender dimension.

#### *4.1.4 Establishing the specific event 'Women's Career Day'*

OGS is committed to organising an annual conference/event dedicated to women who have achieved professional excellence, allowing them to share their experiences, including both obstacles and successes, with all staff, with a particular focus on gender equality.

#### *4.1.5 Celebration of International Women's Day*

OGS is committed to organising an annual event to mark International Women's Day, focusing each year on different areas relating to women's rights.

### *Objective 4.2: To promote a culture of equal opportunities through the use of inclusive language in both internal and external communications*

#### *4.2.1 Prepare a training document for staff on the correct use of gender-neutral language*

Prepare a document on gender visibility in language and staff training on the correct use of gender-neutral language, aimed at recognising and giving visibility to all genders, including the following sub-actions:

##### *4.2.1.1 Use, wherever possible, linguistic strategies that neutralise gender*

Give preference to the following linguistic choices:

- phrases that include gender-neutral terms (e.g. person, being, human being, individual, subject);
- collective nouns or those referring to the service/role (e.g. 'staff', 'teaching staff', 'management', 'secretariat', 'presidency', 'users', 'council');
- relative or indefinite pronouns (who, anyone);
- use of the passive voice (e.g. 'the application must be submitted' instead of 'students must submit the application'; 'the form must be sent' instead of 'the student must send the form');

##### *4.2.1.2 Choose language that does not perpetuate gender discrimination, particularly when publishing and updating the OGS website*

##### *4.2.1.3 Compile a glossary of inclusive terms.*

4.2.2 *Establish a working group dedicated to gender issues (focus group) to address...*

## **PRIORITY AREA 5**

### **Combating gender-based violence**

#### *Objective 5.1: Promote the recognition of gender-based violence*

##### *Action:*

##### *5.1.1 Establishing a support service for victims of gender-based violence in the workplace*

Widespread dissemination of information regarding the establishment of the support service, set up in collaboration with the G.O.A.P. Anti-Violence Centre in Trieste at OGS, for women who have been victims of any form of gender-based violence in the workplace.

#### *Objective 5.2: Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women*

##### *Action:*

##### *5.2.1 Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women with an event and a specific survey*

Organisation of an event aimed at raising awareness of the issue of gender-based violence against women, inviting experts in the field and sharing personal testimonies. Launch of an anonymous survey specifically focused on gender-based violence in the workplace.