



Gender Equality Plan

2023-2025

Preamble

Gender equality at work, and more generally gender respect and non-discrimination are key principles that the EuResist Network espouses, in the broader context of its commitment to a more equitable, just and supportive world.

With this in mind, we wanted to equip ourselves with a plan for gender equality, as also required by current European regulations.

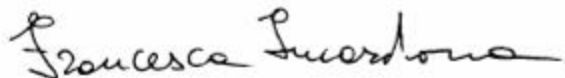
The realisation of this plan involved all the stable components of the organization and required an analysis of the status quo. The analysis revealed a situation that is not particularly unbalanced and does not give rise to particular concerns. However, there is room for improvement. For example, training activities were considered useful and will be implemented annually. The plan provides for cyclical monitoring and implementation of corrective actions.

Resources have been allocated for its implementation and a responsible figure has been identified.

EuResist Network is a small reality, however we are proud to give our contribution to a more equitable society that is more respectful of all differences and fragilities.

The CEO of EuResist Network

Francesca Incardona





Introduction: the EuResist Network

EuResist Network GEIE is an international partnership devoted to understanding and fighting the resistance to anti-HIV drugs. It is established in Rome, Italy, with the legal form of a European Economic Interest Grouping.

It is composed by:

- Karolinska Institutet (Stockholm, Sweden)
- Max Planck Gesellschaft (Germany)
- University of Siena (Italy)
- InformaPRO s.r.l. (Rome, Italy)
- Cologne University (Germany).

Its approach is eminently multidisciplinary and focused on exploiting the power of Real-World data at the benefit of the individual patient.

EuResist Network manages:

- **the EuResist Integrated Data Base (EIDB)**, among the largest available databases of HIV genotypes and clinical response to antiretroviral therapy, with more than 96.000 patients. The EIDB is open for research studies.
- **Research projects on HIV and other infectious diseases.** EuResist Network is actively involved in front end research to combat HIV drug resistance and the spread of HIV and other infectious diseases, in particular SARS-COV-2. It coordinates and participates in several research projects, including EU funded projects.
- **Training activities on HIV drug resistance and data management.** EuResist Network organizes on-site and distant courses and offers training material on drug resistance and drug resistance data management.
- **Bioinformatics and AI research applied to virology.** Following the development of the EuResist prediction engine in 2008, the EuResist Network continues its advanced bioinformatics activities, now also by PhD mentoring.

EuResist Network is a non-profit SME and a Research Institution.

EuResist Network adheres to the Global Compact, a non-binding United Nations pact to get businesses and firms worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies, and to report on their implementation:

<https://unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/participants/138255-GEIE-EURESIST-NETWORK>

Context of the Gender Equality Plan

The present Gender Equality Plan (hereinafter: GEP) finds its origin in a careful reading of the specific mission of EuResist Network (hereinafter: the Network or the Company). It is conceived as an instrument of monitoring, capacity building and implementation of structural actions, for the promotion of gender equality in the company organization, working processes and research activities and more in general to create a fair and just workplace

The GEP is intended as an indispensable tool to counteract any form of discrimination or violence, with a view to overcoming stereotypes even in R&I systems and adopting practices of valorisation of differences.

The GEP follows the *Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans*¹.

It responds to requests of the Research and Innovation Directorate of the European Commission which provided that all research organizations, public and private, who want to access Horizon Europe funding, have a Gender Equality Plan. However, this document does not correspond to a passive acceptance of a constraint that comes from the European institutions, but it proposes, for the next three years, actions and priorities for the reduction of gender asymmetries and enhancement of all diversities (eg: age, culture, physical ability, sexual orientation, multilingualism, etc.).

The GEP is a dynamic document, subject to additions and future adjustments; dedicated resources and expertise in gender equality are involved for its development.

Problems and risks are identified considering the dimension and the specific work and research environment of the Company; their causes and desired outcomes, including targets, are detailed, as well as the set of action points that are required to achieve the aims.

The GEP is developed with the engagement of the whole organization: the Management Board, Collaborators and stakeholders. The release and continuous evaluation of the document is an ongoing process that encourages self-reflection and review of practices.

Indeed, the GEP has been developed and will be updated through the following actions, that are illustrated in the related sections in the document and will be run annually:

Audit and monitoring

Update of planned actions

The plan then follows the five recommended content-related (thematic) areas indicated by the *Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans*, declining them into various objectives.

1. Work-life balance and organisational culture
2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
4. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content
5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

¹ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffcb06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-232129669> (last accessed on 24th August 2023)

Audit and Monitoring

Annual evaluation meetings are organised involving all the employed and collaborating personnel. A smooth environment for problems reporting is ensured. A collection of anonymous complaints is also organised.

Further to discussion of qualitative issues, a quantitative annual assessment is carried out.

The following variables are evaluated annually, in the frame of a larger human rights assessment:

1. Does the company have a policy commitment in relation to the following human rights topics?

	No, and we have no plans to develop a policy	No, but we plan to within the next two years	Yes, included within a broader policy or as a stand-alone policy [Prompts HR2.1]
Freedom of expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to water and sanitation	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital security / privacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Gender equality and women's rights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Rights of indigenous peoples	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Rights of refugees and migrants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Please input the year the relevant human rights policy was last reviewed

	Year (YYYY)
Freedom of expression	_____
Access to water and sanitation	_____
Digital security / privacy	2023
Gender equality and women's rights	2023
Rights of indigenous peoples	2023
Rights of refugees and migrants	2023

For each human rights policy, is it:

	Aligned with international human rights standards	Publicly available	Approved at most senior level of the company	Applied to the company's own operations	Applied to the company's own operations and suppliers	Applied to the company's own operations and the value chain (e.g., suppliers, consumers, communities, other business relationships)	Developed involving human rights expertise from inside the company	Other (Please provide additional explanation) <i>[Makes text box mandatory]</i>
Freedom of expression	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to water and sanitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital security / privacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality and women's rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rights of indigenous peoples	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rights of refugees and migrants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. In the course of the reporting period, has the company engaged with affected stakeholders or their legitimate representatives in relation to the following human rights topics?

	No engagement on this topic	To better understand the risks/ impacts in question	To discuss potential ways to prevent or mitigate the risks/ impacts in question	To agree on a way to prevent/ mitigate the risks/ impacts in question	To assess progress in preventing /mitigating the risks/impacts in question	To collaborate in the prevention/ mitigation of the risks/ impacts in question
Freedom of expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to water and sanitation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital security / privacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	x	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender equality and women's rights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	x	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rights of indigenous peoples	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	x	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rights of refugees and migrants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	x	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. What type of action has the company taken in the reporting period with the aim of preventing/mitigating the risks/impacts associated with this human rights topic?

Provided internal training/ capacity building for the direct workforce	Built capacity among relevant business relationships (e.g., partners,	Conducted an audit process and/or corrective	Collective Action with peers or other stakeholders	Collaborated with governmental or regulatory	Other (Please provide additional information	No action within reporting period

suppliers, clients, etc.) action plan to address the issue bodies in the mandatory text box)

Freedom of expression	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to water and sanitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital security / privacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality and women's rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rights of indigenous peoples	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rights of refugees and migrants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Who receives training for the following human rights topics?

	No training provided	Select employees	All employees	Contractors	Direct suppliers of the organization	Indirect suppliers of the organization	Other – such as partners, clients, etc.
Freedom of expression	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to water and sanitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital security / privacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality and women's rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rights of indigenous peoples	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rights of refugees and migrants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How does the company assess progress in preventing/mitigating the risks/impacts associated with the following human rights topics?

	No monitoring of progress	Review topics on ad hoc basis	Set annual targets/ goals, track progress over time (internal programmes only)	Set annual targets/ goals, track progress over time (internal and external programmes)	Other (Please provide additional explanation) [Makes text box mandatory]
Freedom of expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Access to water and sanitation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital security / privacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender equality and women's rights or girls	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rights of indigenous peoples	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rights of refugees and migrants	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. During the reporting period, has the company been involved in providing or enabling remedy where it has caused or contributed to adverse impact associated with the following human rights topic(s)?

	No remedy provided/enabled	Yes, remedy provided/enabled	No adverse impact identified or caused	Choose to not disclose
Freedom of expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to water and sanitation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital security / privacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender equality and women's rights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rights of indigenous peoples	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rights of refugees and migrants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Organisation chart

As of August 2023, the composition of personnel working and collaborating with EuResist Network is as follows:

EuResist Network ORGANIGRAM

CEO: Francesca Incardona, female

Management Board:
 Francesca Incardona, female,
 Rolf Kaiser, male,
 Thomas Lenaguer, male,
 Anders Sönnerborg, male,
 Maurizio Zazzi, male

IT Manager and DPO
 Antonia Bezencheck, female

Data Managers
 Iuri Fanti, male,
 Adrian Shallvari, male

Research management
 Chiara Mommo
 Francesca Ferrucci

Scientific Board:
 Management Board,
 Ana Abecasis, female,
 Marina Bobkova, female,
 Carole Devaux, female,
 Gianfranco Morino, male,
 Milosz Parczewski, male,
 Nico Pfeifer, male,
 Michal Rosen-Zvi, female,
 Murat Sayan, male,
 Perpetua Gomes, female,
 Sabina Ferdinand Mugusi, female,
 Uwe Koppe, male,
 Karolin Meixenberger, female

PhD students
 Giulia Di Teodoro, female,
 Yacob Gebretensae, male

Update of planned actions

On the basis of the results of the periodic monitoring, new actions may be needed and the present Plan is updated.

In 2023, the following actions have been suggested and approved. They have to be implemented within the next yearly evaluation.

Suggested action	Approval date	Date of implementation
Training session on challenging stereotypes and on gender violence	August 2023	
Set-up of a confidential channel to report any incidents of gender-based violence and sexual harassment.	August 2023	

Area 1. Work-life balance and organisational culture

EuResist Network has a streamlined structure, mostly relying on remote work and an organisational culture that gives the highest priority to favouring the work-life balance as well as the respect of religious and social habits.

Only 2 days per week of presence in the office are requested. The definition of days is flexible and decided together among the CEO and the collaborators. Under particular requests, the requirement of presence in the office is waived.

Further than in relation to the internal collaborators, this attention is paid also in relation to the activities with external partners and stakeholders: meetings are organised taking into account specific requests from people (mostly females) who need to take care of children or other family members, as well as taking into account holy days of all the involved religions.

Area 2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

The sole director (CEO) of EuResist Network is presently a woman. The CEO represents the Network vis a vis third parties. She has coordination functions between the Members of the Network for the realization of its goals. To this end she takes all necessary and/or appropriate decisions and takes in autonomy all the decisions related to day by day management. In particular, the CEO is responsible for:

- convening and chairing the assembly of the Members, preparing the Minutes of the assemblies and monitoring the implementation of decisions taken by the Members;
- an adequate and orderly accounting and for the preparation of the annual balance sheet of the Network;
- coordinating the common activities of the Network and the activities deriving from the agreements of flexible cooperation.

The management board (MB) is made up of representatives of the institutions (each with its own GEP) that form the European Economic Interest Grouping. The MB is presently formed by 4 men and 1 woman. The MB is responsible for the realization of the goals of the Grouping. Each Member shall have one vote. Decisions are taken by majority of the Members. Unanimous decision of the Members is required for decisions concerning: movement of the registered seat of the Grouping; amendments to the scope and goals of the Grouping; amendments to the number of votes assigned to Members and to the conditions for taking decisions by the Members; amendments to the terms of administration of the Grouping; approval of the balance sheet, discharge of the administrator for the annual accounts, determination of the maximum amount for the contribution to the functioning and common activities of the Group; admission and exclusion of the Members; termination of the Grouping.

The Scientific Board takes all the scientific decisions related to the use of the EIDB and to the other scientific activities of the Network. The Scientific Board is presently formed by 8 women and 9 men. Decision are taken by majority after internal discussion. Regarding the use of the EIDB, each member can deny the use of its own portion of data for a specific study, without need to motivate the decision.

Area 3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Gender equality in recruitment and career progression is a key priority for EuResist Network. We believe that when women have the same opportunities as men to be hired and advance in their careers, research organizations can benefit from greater diversity of thought, productivity, and success.

The actions that EuResist Network takes to promote gender equality in recruitment and career progression include:

Using non-discriminatory selection criteria; this means avoiding the use of sexist terms or images in job advertisements, and ensuring that all selection criteria are based on merit, not gender.

Investing in women's training and development; this includes providing women with opportunities such as mentoring, training courses, and conferences. It also includes, as described above, providing flexible

working arrangements, such as part-time work and working from home, to help women balance their work and family responsibilities.

Creating an inclusive organizational culture; this means promoting a culture of respect, fairness, and inclusion, and ensuring that all staff feel valued and respected.

Removing barriers to women's career progression; further to providing flexible working arrangements, and training/mentorship programs, as already mentioned, this includes challenging gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality within the organization.

Area 4. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

Research content. The research activities carried out by EuResist Network always take into consideration the gender dimension. Data on gender are collected in the EIDB and the relevance of gender on scientific issues is evaluated.

Project design and development. The gender dimension is taken into account when planning the leadership of research projects or parts thereof (work packages (WP)). When designing a new research project EuResist Network promotes gender balance among WP leaders.

Area 5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Gender-based violence is a serious problem that affects women and girls disproportionately. It can take many forms, including physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, and economic violence. Sexual harassment is a form of gender-based violence that can occur in the workplace, in education, and in other settings.

EuResist Network has a responsibility to take steps to prevent gender-based violence and sexual harassment. This includes providing a safe and supportive work environment where everyone feels respected and valued. This means having clear policies against gender-based violence and sexual harassment, and taking swift action to investigate and address any incidents that occur.

It also includes educating staff about gender-based violence and sexual harassment and the importance of reporting any incidents that occur, for instance by providing training sessions.

Policies and procedures to be put in place

The policies should be communicated to all staff and should be easily accessible.

- **Conduct regular training:** this training should cover the definition of gender-based violence and sexual harassment, the impact of these behaviors, and the steps that staff can take to prevent and respond to these behaviors.
- **Encourage reporting:** encourage staff to report any incidents of gender-based violence and sexual harassment. To this end **a confidential reporting channel will be set-up.** EuResist Network will ensure that staff feel comfortable reporting these incidents without fear of retaliation.
- **Take swift action:** the Network will take swift action to investigate and address any incidents of gender-based violence and sexual harassment. This means conducting thorough investigations and taking appropriate disciplinary action against perpetrators.



Resources allocation for the implementation of the GEP

EuResist Network has nominated Dr. PhD Francesca Ferrucci as responsible person for the implementation of the GEP.

EuResist Network has allocated person hours and financial resources for the implementation of the GEP.