

PLAN FOR ENSURING THE PRINCIPLES OF GENDER EQUALITY

at the Institute of Molecular Biology and Genetics of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

Introduction

The Institute of Molecular Biology and Genetics of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine adheres to the principles of gender equality and ensuring equal rights, equal opportunities and access to all resources.

Gender equality is the equal legal status of women and men and equal opportunities for its realization. Equality of rights of women and men is one of the fundamental principles of social life. According to the Constitution of Ukraine, all people are free and equal in their dignity and rights. Human rights and freedoms are inalienable and inviolable (Article 21); citizens have equal constitutional rights and freedoms and are equal before the law (Article 24); obtaining higher education is carried out exclusively on a competitive basis (Article 53).

The need to observe the equality of the rights of men and women is also enshrined in the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men", which emphasizes the need to achieve a parity position of women and men in all spheres of life in society through the legal provision of equal rights and opportunities for women and men, liquidation discrimination on the basis of gender and the application of special temporary measures aimed at eliminating the imbalance between the opportunities of women and men to exercise equal rights granted to them by the Constitution and the current legislation of Ukraine.

Strategic goal and action plan

The plan for ensuring gender equality (hereinafter the Plan) is a set of actions aimed at providing equal rights and opportunities to women and men, as well as ensuring a balance between work/study and personal life.

The plan for gender equality in the IMBG of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine is consistent with the main provisions of the Development Strategy of the IMBH of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine for 10 years. The strategic directions of the Plan take into account the recommendations of the European Union framework program for research and innovation "Horizon Europe", the European Charter for Researchers, the National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace, Security".

The plan was created with the aim of developing practical approaches to achieve a sustainable gender balance in the team, as well as:

- ensuring equal opportunities to realize the scientific potential of all employees;
- raising employees' awareness of their rights and freedoms, which may be violated by gender bias;
- prevention of gender bias;
- creation of the most comfortable working conditions for employees regardless of gender.

Measures to achieve and maintain gender balance

For the constant analysis of the current situation and monitoring of compliance with the norms of gender equality, the Institute has created a system of permanent measures:

1) Systematic data collection.

The Human Resources Department annually (or upon request) submits data related to the gender balance situation in the Institute to the administration in reports. Thus, the gender ratio among employees of IMBG in 2017-2022 was maintained at the level of 65% of women in the team:

№	Name of indicators	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
1.	total number of employees / of them - women (% of the total number of employees)	285/185 (64,9%)	275/167 (60,7%)	269/165 (61,3%)	261/171 (65,5%)	272/184 (67,6%)	284/187 (65,8%)
2.	scientists / of them - women (% of scientists)	218/131 (60,1%)	207/111 (53,6%)	204/116 (56,9%)	193/118 (61,1%)	203/127 (62,6%)	216/132 (61,1%)

2) Data analysis:

The responsibilities of IMBG Deputy Director for scientific work, who is responsible for personnel issues (Prof. Lyubov LUKASH), include measures of monitoring the state of the gender balance situation at the Institute. analysis of gender equality tolerance atmosphere and HR Department data in this area, regularly updated.

3) Dissemination of best practices:

As a part of the international projects carried out at the Institute, trainings are planned on the permanent basis for the Institute's management and scientists on the importance of ensuring and maintaining gender balance and tolerance for issues of gender equality and minorities.

The Institute pays a lot of attention to issues of ensuring and maintaining gender balance in the team. The following priorities are in the area of constant attention of the administration of the IMBG NASU:

- o Gender balance in management and decision-making;
- o Gender balance in hiring and career growth;
- o Integration of the gender aspect in the processes of scientific research and teaching;
- o Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment;
- o Balance between work and leisure, corporate culture.

• **Gender balance in leadership and decision-making**

Women occupy 11 management positions in the Institute of Molecular Biology and Genetics of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (39% of the total number of IMBG managers). In 2017-2022, the Institute improved significantly the gender ratio among the members of the Directorate: 6 people / 3 of them - women (50.0%), despite the fact that in the previous period 2011-2016, the similar indicator was 33.3%.

The Institute also maintains a rather balanced gender ratio among the management of Departments and Laboratories – there are 22 persons / 8 of them - women (36.3%). In the previous period 2011 - 2016, the same ratio was 31.6% women.

Gender ratio among the members of IMBG Scientific Council in 2021-2023: 10 women (38,5%) among 26 members of the Scientific Council (this composition was approved by the NASU Decision №6 23.09.2021) — in the previous period, 2011-2016 there were 33.3% of women.

• **Gender balance in hiring and career growth**

In solving personnel issues, the IMBG NASU adheres to European standards. This means that if a competition for a position at the Institute is announced, and two candidates who have the same professional qualifications and fulfill the conditions of the competition at the same level have applied for the same position, - then preference is given to woman.

A Personnel Reserve of potential managers has been created at the Institute to ensure the sustainability of the research, innovation and personnel policy and the continuity of the Institute's management (IMBG Order No. 76/1-os, June 22, 2021). Out of 11 potential candidates for management positions, 6 are female (54.5%).

In addition, to ensure gender equality in the hiring of women and men, the following measures are implemented:

- o Providing information about the competition to the widest possible range of potential candidates.
- o Job announcements with clear requirements.
- o Involvement of women in underrepresented fields, including the search for female specialists using special Internet resources (for example, work.ua; rabota.ua; jobs.ua; grc.ua, etc.).
- o Transparent candidate selection process based on clear criteria.
- o Using standardized forms of resumes and conducting a "blind" evaluation of resumes.

To support the development of the academic career of women and men at the Institute, the administration provides:

- o Systematic monitoring of the participation of women and men in competitions for grants, projects and financial support.
- o Systematic monitoring of the representation of men and women in the expert areas and research councils of the Institute.
- o Carrying out a detailed analysis of the needs of young female workers in order to support their academic career development.

- o Carrying out activities aimed at increasing women awareness of the possibility of their career growth in the chosen field of research.
- o Integration of the gender aspect into the processes of scientific research and teaching. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

As part of almost every European project implemented at the Institute, trainings are held for the Institute's management and scientists on the importance of ensuring and maintaining gender balance, as well as on safety against gender-based violence at the workplace, including sexual harassment. The trainings are conducted by European partners according to the best practices developed and adopted in the EU.

• **Inclusion and promotion of a gender perspective in scientific research and teaching:**

- o provision of conditions and resources for the development of a policy of self-improvement in the field of organizational culture in order to avoid professional burnout of employees.
- o systematic monitoring of all personnel with evaluation of workplace satisfaction: workplace culture and management.
- o organization of seminars, trainings and other events dedicated to issues of gender equality and balance between work and personal life, to promote awareness of diversity, interaction and support at different levels of the university community.
- o promoting the development of a network of mentors to help employees receive the necessary support and advice from more experienced colleagues.
- o creation of access to resources of the latest technologies that will guarantee the development of productivity and efficiency of employees at the workplace.

• **Balance between work and leisure, corporate culture**

The IMBG of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine constantly takes care of the issues of harmonious distribution of time between work and family.

In 2019-2021, during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, remote work of Institute employees was allowed, in those cases where it was possible. The decisions were delegated to the managers at the level of the head of the scientific units. But it turned out that remote work seriously affects the balance between work and personal life. This was especially true of female co-workers. IMBG did not conduct a special study, and can claim this only at the level of observations. But according to a survey conducted by the Ceridan company, only 47% of surveyed employees of remote companies did not work outside of working hours. For this reason, the Institute did not stop working offline full-time during the pandemic, and the vast majority of employees worked at workplaces in compliance with all prevention norms.

After the declaration of martial law, the Institute did not stop its work during the recent pandemic, and no more than 17% of scientists worked remotely during the full-scale russian invasion. By the end of 2022, there were only 27 IMBG scientists out of 238 who were located abroad. The IMBG Administration makes every effort to encourage the physical presence at the workplace of all employees of the Institute in order to preserve the personnel potential and stabilize the activities of the Institute during the war.

To facilitate the combination of work and family life, IMBG NASU administration:

- Balances the hours of meetings of scientific councils, scientific conferences for a harmonious distribution of time between work and family.
- Introduces individual work schedules and other flexible forms that facilitate the combination of work and family life according to the needs of employees.
- Informs employees about the need for a balance between work and personal life.
- Provides a psychological assistance for employees to prevent emotional burnout.

To raise awareness of the importance of equality issues and strengthen positive attitudes towards diversity, there are provided in IMBG:

- Constant monitoring of gender balance indicators.
- Permanent informing measures for the team about the state of affairs regarding gender balance and compliance with the principles of gender equality in the team.
- Joint strategic vision of issues of gender balance and close cooperation in this area of the staff of the Institute, its public and scientific organizations and administration.
- Timely identification and resolution of issues related to possible non-compliance with the principles of gender balance.
- Participation in public events (for example, in the "Women in Science" contest). Participation in the celebration of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science.
- Identifying and overcoming possible cases of gender stereotypes and linguistic sexism.

• To prevent and identify situations of gender-based violence (including sexual harassment) and discrimination that may occur in the team, the Institute manages to provide on the permanent base:

- forming in the team an atmosphere of intolerant attitude towards violent behavior patterns, indifferent attitude towards the victims, awareness of gender-based violence as a violation of human rights;
- provision of individual psychological support to possible victims of any type of violence and/or discrimination.

The public associations of the Institute also stand guard over the priorities of gender equality and prevent gender-based violence:

The Institute has a **Trade Union Committee** in accordance with the Laws of Ukraine "On Trade Unions, Their Rights and Guarantees of Activity" and "On Association of Citizens", the Code of Labor Laws of Ukraine, legislation on education and other normative legal acts adopted in accordance with them international treaties, agreements, conventions, the consent to the binding of which has been granted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

The Trade Union part of IMBG consists of 122 employees - 39 men and 83 women (who represent 68% of the total number of members). Since 2017, the head of the Trade Union Committee of the Institute is Shirina Tetyana Volodymyrivna.

The activities of the Trade Union Committee are aimed at protecting the labor, professional, socio-economic rights and interests of all employees. Besides, the Trade Union members receive free legal assistance if needed.

The Trade Union Committee is the representative of the labor team when concluding a collective agreement and is the guarantor of the fulfillment of obligations stipulated by the collective agreement. The Committee also monitors the state of labor protection on the ground, stands up for the rights of Trade Union members within the current legislation of Ukraine, including in matters of compliance with the principles of gender equality in the structure and activities of the Institute.

In order to ensure a harmonious distribution of time between work and family by the Institute's employees, the **IMBG Council of Young Scientists (CYS)** regularly holds social events aimed at maximization of socialization of employees with the involvement of their families. For example, Science Days are conducted with presentations and demonstrations of modern scientific achievements at the Institute's premises twice a year. They involve employees, their families and children, and all interested parties. It is planned to continue the rise activities in this direction, expanding the variety of actions and events to attract more employees and people.

As part of the CYS activities, sport events are also regularly organized, for example marathons in the Pheophania park. They are joined with picnics, competitions and sport prizes. Widening of social activities with inclusion of the excursions program (throughout Kyiv and nearby) is planned for the people's joy in the work-free time, to leave no space and time for conflicts, bad habits and gender-connected aggression.