

# Gender Equality Plan 2022-2027

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This document complies with the Horizon Europe framework standards. It will be updated annually.

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# 1 Introduction

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In the quest for knowledge, we often face a number of challenges, including gender inequality. This can hinder the development of the research and innovation sector. Traditional systems and preconceived gender norms weave a complex web, influencing the way we perceive leadership, career opportunities and even the very definition of what is considered 'appropriate' in the world of research. It is not just a question of figures, it also involves perspectives, possibilities, and potential unexplored innovations.

We must move beyond rhetorical limits if we are to understand the consequences of gender inequality on the research and innovation sector. This inequality is not simply a case of crude statistics or quotas but can also be seen in the way in which talent can sometimes be overlooked and opportunities reduced in the shadow of persistent stereotypes.

This gender equality plan represents a commitment to change on the part of Innoviris. It goes beyond annual obligations, humbly attempting to dive into the roots of the problem in order to mitigate subtle prejudices and continue to work for the research and innovation sector, where every contribution is assessed not on the basis of gender, but on its intrinsic merit.

In this document, we look at the five recommended areas for action. Work-life balance, fair representation in leadership spheres, equality in recruitment and career progression, the inclusion of a gender perspective into our research, and the fight against gender-based violence all converge towards the single goal of unlocking the full potential of research by unleashing all talent, regardless of gender.

At the same time, we recognise that both men and women can suffer from restrictive gender stereotypes, limiting their career choices and their roles in society. Our goal is true equality, where every individual, regardless of gender, has the freedom to pursue their aspirations, unrestricted by preconceived expectations.

## Legal background

The regional gender policy originates in the Ordinance of 29 March 2012<sup>1</sup> on the integration of the gender dimension into the policies of the Brussels-Capital Region and its implementing decrees. The most relevant articles of this Gender Mainstreaming Ordinance are the following:

- "Art. 3: Each Minister and Secretary of State shall integrate the gender dimension into all policies, measures and actions within their remit".
- "Art. 4: In addition to the measures contained in article 3 of the present Ordinance, each Minister and Secretary of State will ensure, in the areas falling under their competence, that the statistics produced, collected and ordered by the Brussels public services and public interest organisations in their field of action are broken down by sex, and that gender indicators are established if relevant". (See the BISA publication by Roger Kalenga-Mpala, 2014<sup>2</sup>, for analyses and recommendations).

## Political background

Innoviris meets Operational Objective 8 of the Minister's guidance note for the period 2019-2024, in which Innoviris must commit to integrating equal opportunities into R&I policy, in accordance with Article 3.1 of the Ordinance of 29 March 2012. In its annual operational plans, and in the light of the Regional Innovation Plan<sup>3</sup>, Innoviris systematically implements measures to achieve the above objectives.

A detailed overview of the current situation and future measures to be taken can be found below. Indicators are proposed at each stage so that progress can be monitored. First, we provide a brief overview of the regional gender equality challenges in the field of RD&I.

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<sup>1</sup> See [https://etaamb.openjustice.be/nl/beschikking-van-29-maart-2012\\_n2012031171](https://etaamb.openjustice.be/nl/beschikking-van-29-maart-2012_n2012031171)

<sup>2</sup> Kalenga-Mpala, R. (2014) Gender en statistieken in het Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest. *BISA Focus*, Brussels: Brussels Institute for Statistics and Analysis.

<sup>3</sup> See <https://innoviris.brussels/regional-innovation-plan>

### Gender equality as part of a responsible research and innovation policy

The development of a gender equality policy forms part of wider ethical considerations: what does the social responsibility of Innoviris' R&I support policy? Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) receive particular attention within the Horizon Europe framework programme. RRI focuses on creating high-quality scientific research and innovation that meets the needs of the public. Practically speaking, this means involving a wide range of stakeholders to determine the best use of science and technology for solving today's problems and creating a sustainable world for future generations.

The European Commission proposes six key policy themes related to RRI: (i) research ethics and integrity, (ii) open access, (iii) gender equality, (iv) public participation, (v) governance and (vi) science education. Innoviris is currently involved in all these policy areas. In addition, the results of the SwaFS MoRRI project<sup>4</sup> show that Belgium is at the forefront of RRI at European level, together with other pioneering countries such as France, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. It is thanks to RRI that Western European countries are able to make a difference when it comes to developing a competitive R&I ecosystem.

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<sup>4</sup> See <https://super-morri.eu>

## 2 Gender policy in RD&I – The challenges facing the Brussels-Capital Region

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A number of challenges identified in the context of implementing a gender policy are specific to the Brussels-Capital Region and therefore serve as a starting point.

### 1. Education and training - the divergent choices between men and women lead to underrepresentation in science and technology fields

A 2018 analysis<sup>5</sup> showed that, although women make up more than half of the student population in higher education in Brussels, they are generally underrepresented on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) courses, a fact also confirmed by more recent figures. In STEM programmes as a whole, only 20% of higher education students and around 35% of university students are women. This underrepresentation is highest in ICT (6% women at bachelor's level and 22% at Master's level), followed by civil engineering, natural sciences and industrial and technological sciences (all with less than 30% women) and mathematics, chemistry and geology (around 30% women). However, women and men are more equally represented in biological sciences, agricultural sciences, bioengineering, environmental sciences and management. Women are the dominant group in the health sciences, the humanities, social sciences and arts.

This shows that the Brussels Region is facing a number of significant gender-related challenges in the development of STEM talent in higher education, particularly in the specific areas mentioned above. These challenges apply more explicitly to the ICT sector, which is vitally important in Brussels.

### 2. Labour market and economy

The Brussels-Capital Region stands out for its high concentration of human resources qualified in research and development, representing around 2.1%<sup>6</sup> of its working population in 2021. Of the 15,213 FTE employed in R&D, 65.2% were researchers<sup>7</sup>. This is a slight drop compared with 2019 data, where approximately 2.3% of the working population was in R&D. A look at the number of R&D employees shows that 37% are women, who are an underrepresented group. This underrepresentation is particularly striking in the business sector, where 27% of R&D workers are women. The distribution is more or less equal in higher education and public administration. In the non-profit private sector - a very small sector in the Region - 64% are women. If we consider the percentage of researchers in the number of R&D jobs, this proportion is also 37%. The business sector has the lowest representation of women, as 29% of researchers are women<sup>8</sup>.

Furthermore, despite the overrepresentation of women in the graduate student population (Report by the Universities of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and the F.R.S.-FNRS on the state of gender equality in 2018-2019, p. 14), there is a funnel effect and an underrepresentation in research careers. At ULB, for example, 44% of scientific staff are female PhD students and 38% female post-doctoral students, 39% of academic staff are female lecturers, 31% female professors and 24% female full

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<sup>5</sup> Van Laethem, M. & Verstraete, C. (2018). STEM opleidingen, een mannenzaak? *BISA Focus*, Brussels: Brussels Institute for Statistics and Analysis.

<sup>6</sup> BISA. Number of employees (FTE) in R&D in relation to the number of people employed. In "Perspective Brussels Mini-Bru 2023." BISA.brussels.

<sup>7</sup> This implies that there is a relatively higher proportion of R&D workers in the Brussels-Capital Region than in Belgium and the European Union as a whole. This deduction is based on the data provided in the BISA, Mini-Bru 2023 document.

<sup>8</sup> Brussels Institute for Statistics and Analysis, 2022, see <https://ibsa.brussels/themes/recherche-et-technologie/recherche-et-developpement>

professors. The situation is relatively similar at the VUB, with women making up 44% of PhD candidates, 38% of post-doctoral students, 39% of senior lecturers, 31% of professors and 24% of full professors<sup>9</sup>.

Although female entrepreneurship is increasing in the Brussels-Capital Region, women are still in the minority in the business world and men are still overrepresented in entrepreneurial circles. Only 28.9% of Brussels entrepreneurs are women. However, the number of women entrepreneurs has risen significantly, by 12.6% between 2018 and 2021, compared with 9.8% among men. In Brussels, the majority of women (73.11%) are self-employed as their main occupation<sup>10</sup>. Furthermore, the world of digi-tech is almost exclusively made up of men. Women's access to venture capital is a more general problem. For these reasons, a specific objective 3.2 has been defined in the Small Business Act (2016-2025)<sup>11</sup>: "supporting women entrepreneurs". Campaigns such as "Invest for her" (hub.brussels and Be Angels) have been launched and several other initiatives are underway with a goal of 2025.

Furthermore, analyses of bottleneck occupations in the Brussels-Capital Region<sup>12</sup> show a persistent labour shortage in STEM-related technical and scientific professions, such as engineers, IT specialists in the broad sense (software engineers, systems engineers, programmers, etc.), architects and technicians (in air conditioning, electromechanics, etc.). These professions are characterised by a significant underrepresentation of women, which is logical given the years of female underrepresentation in STEM disciplines. This situation is particularly marked in the ICT and engineering sectors. It is essential to strengthen supply in the labour market and ensure equal gender opportunities. From this point of view, working to improve the representation of men and women in scientific and technological disciplines is a significant ambition, as is the development of women's skills in male-dominated sectors (and vice versa).

### 3 Work-life balance and organisational culture

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One of Innoviris' four strategic ambitions for the coming years is to develop an internal culture of respect and diversity, so that Innoviris becomes a "best place to work" (a key aspect of Innoviris' strategic vision). The objective is to set an example, particularly in terms of inclusion and diversity.

A culture of respect and diversity means an open culture, a culture of communicating successes and failures, an innovative organisation that constantly learns from its successes and failures, demands respect for everyone and makes a clear distinction between actions and the individual. Management will always ensure that this is the case and will demand that every Innoviris employee shows the same respect for others. Management attaches great importance to diversity. A diversity of experiences, backgrounds, ideas and opinions will lead to better innovative solutions and optimal decisions. Representing the diversity of Brussels within Innoviris is necessary for creating tools and policies that are ethical and adapted to the diversity of the Brussels-Capital Region (BCR). Innoviris also defends equality and prohibits all forms of discrimination, whether based on skin colour, national or ethnic origin, philosophical or religious beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Innoviris staff work flexible hours, which allows them to balance their work and family life. Structural remote working is also widely accepted and used by staff members. It means that they can work permanently from home for up to three days a week. This also contributes to their work-life balance

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<sup>9</sup> Vrije Universiteit Brussel (2017). Eindrapport Genderactieplan 2014-2016, Brussels.

<sup>10</sup> See [https://hub.brussels/fr/blog/lentrepreneuriat-feminin-a-bruxelles-en-chiffres/#:~:text=Seuls%2028%2C9%20%25%20des%20entrepreneurs,principal%20\(73%2C11%25\)](https://hub.brussels/fr/blog/lentrepreneuriat-feminin-a-bruxelles-en-chiffres/#:~:text=Seuls%2028%2C9%20%25%20des%20entrepreneurs,principal%20(73%2C11%25).).

<sup>11</sup> See: <https://be.brussels/en/about-region/values-budget-and-strategy/strategy-and-policy-priorities>

<sup>12</sup> See: <https://economy-employment.brussels/permit-list-scarcity-profession>

and, potentially, to a more equal role for men and women in the household. The following monitoring indicators are proposed:

|   | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|---|------|------|------|
| % of men taking parental leave and a career break               | 10   | 18   | 10   |
| % of women taking parental leave and a career break             | 3    | 8    | 5    |
| % of men using structural remote working (2 to 3 days a week)   | 40   | 93   | 86   |
| % of women using structural remote working (2 to 3 days a week) | 55   | 93   | 93   |

*\* The data on remote working since 2020 does not take into account compulsory remote working under the COVID-19 measures. It corresponds to people who have regularised their administrative situation with a view to future structural remote working when it is no longer compulsory.*

Innoviris also has a well-being plan that is reviewed every year based on the monitoring of well-being at work. The actions taken under this plan are the result of an analysis of psychosocial risks carried out in the past.

Lastly, a large number of human resources have been dedicated to implementing gender equality, with the appointment of a diversity manager, a gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting coordinator and an equal opportunities correspondent.

**Future actions**

To draw up a new well-being plan, a new psychosocial risk analysis will be carried out in the near future and lead to targeted measures to ensure that the internal culture of diversity and inclusion is maintained and sustained. An internal gender and diversity charter is also planned and will be distributed internally.

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

Since 1 February 2021, Innoviris has had a new Management Board with equal gender representation (50/50 - two women and two men). Middle management (team leaders) is also balanced, with five women and four men (55% women).

|  | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|--|------|------|------|
| % of women in management                       | 50   | 50   | 50   |
| % of women in middle management (team leaders) | 55   | 55   | 55   |

In addition, in terms of decision-making, significant emphasis is placed on gender in project evaluation for the expert juries that assess and select the submitted projects. There is no specific quota for jury composition. Experts are selected primarily based on their expertise regarding the content and their availability. Potential underrepresentation at this level is often due to a shortage of experts of a specific gender in the sector concerned or in a specific field. The example of the ICT sector mentioned above is revealing in this regard. Experience shows, for example, that the available pool of female IT experts is very limited. The changes in the number of experts available by gender will be systematically measured when a pool of experts is made operational via a digital platform. As a pilot project, the 2019-2020 juries were subjected to a gender analysis to understand the extent to which the current selection procedure leads to gender parity. For the period 2019-2020, for which it has been possible to partially monitor the number of female experts on juries, it appears that female experts were underrepresented, and less likely than male experts to accept invitations to sit on juries. This was particularly true for industrial research unit juries, probably due in part to the specific context of



gender imbalance in the STEM and industrial science and technology sectors mentioned in the foreword. Certain projects and programmes were close to having a balanced jury or even had an overrepresentation of women. However, these configurations were in the minority.

|   | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|------|------|
| % of women - invitations to industrial research unit jury | 25   | 15   |
| % of women - invitations to strategic research unit jury  | 33   | 36   |
| % of women - participants in industrial research unit     | 26   | 17   |
| % of women - participants in strategic research unit      | 30   | 33   |

In recent years, specific training has taken place to raise awareness/educate employees and managers about gender equality and unconscious gender bias. It was organised by the competent regional administration, equal.brussels. At the same time, for years now, our in-house scientific advisors have been completing an equal opportunity test for all projects with a budget over €30,000, in which they are asked to examine the sensitive aspects of diversity in the projects.

Since 2022, an ethics circle composed of Innoviris employees has been committed to promoting in-depth reflection on ethical issues within the organisation. This ethics circle wants to play an awareness-raising role, in particular by implementing awareness strategies for jury members on a range of ethical issues, including those linked to gender. In this context, an awareness-raising exercise for jury members was recently carried out, with jurors receiving a video in advance on gender bias in evaluation.

**Future actions**

The analysis of gender- and diversity-related aspects in evaluation processes will continue in 2024. This analysis should lead to recommendations for targeted measures and the development of a project evaluation procedure that is more attentive to gender issues (to be implemented at a later date). A poster on unconscious bias is planned for 2024 and will be displayed in the rooms where the evaluations take place.

In addition, further thought will be given to how to encourage more women to accept invitations to evaluate projects on juries.

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

Innoviris is actively committed to offering gender-neutral job opportunities, which are developed in close collaboration with our competent regional administration, talent.brussels. To avoid gender bias when recruiting new staff, diversity training is planned for the chairpersons of the selection committees responsible for recruitment. In addition, general attention is paid to staff composition to ensure a gender balance in middle management and general personnel management. Globally, Innoviris' staff is made up of 60% women. Over the last three years, this figure has fluctuated between 58% and 60%, reflecting a balanced staff composition (for more statistics on gender balance in management, see point 4).

|                      | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|----------------------|------|------|------|
| % of women employees | 58   | 58   | 60   |

**Future actions**

The actions mentioned above will continue, as will the perpetuation of a culture of diversity and tolerance.

## 6 Integration of gender into research and teaching content

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### 6.1 Structural change regarding the over/underrepresentation of women in R&I fields and sectors

The underrepresentation of female researchers and research staff and the shortage of (female) labour profiles and entrepreneurs in a number of specific R&I sectors logically result in an unequal gender ratio among participants in Innoviris programmes.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of structural change regarding the over/underrepresentation of women in R&I fields and sectors. Innoviris has already documented this situation on several occasions in various publications in collaboration with the Brussels Institute of Statistics<sup>13</sup>. Innoviris considers that the heart of its gender policy lies in strengthening the offer through targeted awareness and empowerment initiatives. To this end, Innoviris has deployed and continues to deploy a wide range of actions, largely framed by the Regional Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Budgeting Action Plan and the institutional strategic science promotion plan. In the broadest sense, Innoviris undertakes a range of actions to raise the profile of women in science - of which the WATS (Woman Award in Science and Technology) is the most important - and to publicise the unequal distribution of men and women in science. It involves using role models to give women legitimacy in scientific disciplines where they are underrepresented, with the goal of breaking down taboos. The WATS will be awarded again in 2024. This competition has opened a number of doors (including internationally) for previous winners. One example is 2018 winner Lieve Lambrechts, who was cited as a role model in "The most inspiring women in tech in Belgium".

One focus is to promote women in technology, IT and entrepreneurship. In the past, as part of the NextTech plan, through the "Women in Tech" actions with hub.brussels, forces have been brought together to promote women in IT, create an awareness portal and provide advice and training. Girls must be encouraged to take on complex IT tasks - IT as a scientific skill. Innovation requires a focus on IT as a science, in addition to IT as a skill. It is essential to motivate girls in this field in (general) secondary education. One of the main aims of the many science promotional actions supported by Innoviris is therefore to demonstrate that girls can also manage more complex IT tasks, in order to boost their confidence in their skills in this area and motivate them to undertake them. Coding workshops, where complex cognitive tasks are taught in a 'hands-on' way and with a gender-neutral educational discourse, are an example of this. For more than three years, attention to gender in the science promotion actions funded by Innoviris has been integrated into the application forms, and projects that may have a negative impact on gender balance are no longer funded.

#### Future actions

All the actions carried out as part of the above-mentioned strategies will continue to emphasise the gender dimension in the promotion of science. Furthermore, the feasibility of a reward system for projects responding to our science promotion call (STEM-call) is currently being evaluated; projects that offer a specific and original gender perspective would receive a more favourable evaluation. In addition, this year, for the first time, gender experts will be involved in evaluating scientific promotion projects that have been identified as focusing on gender and diversity.

The future Cité des Sciences, which will be developed in the coming years, will also play an important role in this respect, by offering a range of scientific teaching and communication that incorporate the gender dimension.

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<sup>13</sup> see [Focus n°23](#) by Kalenga-Mpala, & Wautelet, 2018; [Focus n°26](#) by Van Laethem & Verstraete, 2018; and [Brussels Innovation Insights](#) by Bogaerts, 2019

## 6.2 Gender dimension within awareness-raising projects

The presence of gender dimensions within awareness-raising projects has been evaluated. The specific fields in the project forms relating to the gender dimension were completed by beneficiaries and then analysed. The aim of this process was to examine science and technology education initiatives in Brussels from a gender equality perspective. A selective methodology was adopted to carry out this analysis, focusing on a representative sample of projects. These projects address the issue of diversity and inclusion, underlining the importance of creating equitable opportunities for all. An analysis was carried out by examining a representative sample of projects, including WeKonekt, GLUON, Fablab'ke and BeCentral Foundation.

Overall, the projects had a positive and proactive approach by encouraging equal gender participation. Specific initiatives are being implemented to reduce existing disparities, with activities open to all genders. For example, GLUON focuses on promoting gender equality in the participation of girls and boys in digital activities by linking technology laboratories to biotechnology and presenting female role models in science and art.

Challenges remain, however, as is underlined by observing the project participants. Disparities remain in certain workshops, and projects such as BeCentral Foundation and Code United aspire to achieve perfect parity between girls and boys in the future. Despite these challenges, the beneficiaries' continued commitment to creating inclusive environments promotes equitable gender participation in science and technology education in Brussels.

## 6.3 Recruitment strategies for R&I project teams

Some RDI programmes and topics seem to attract more men, others more women. In this respect, funding modalities and working conditions, which may be unfavourable to a certain gender, could also play an important role. This aspect will be addressed below.

As a starting point for a gender policy around project teams, it is useful to develop monitoring of the representation of men and women in project teams and funded R&I activities. An initial internal monitoring has been launched, to the extent possible and where data is available. An initial analysis carried out in the past of strategic research programmes (universities and colleges) showed that the representation of women increased overall between 2012 and 2018. In line with expectations based on the analysis, this increase was mainly observed in programmes with a social focus, such as Prospective Research (formerly Anticipate). This situation is illustrated in Table 1. Whereas in 2012, women were underrepresented among researchers, co-promoters and promoters, in 2018 there was an almost equal distribution of men and women among researchers and co-promoters. The annual variations may be due to the nature of the research subjects selected each year.

Table 1. Composition of the Prospective Research project team

|              | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Researchers  | 36 % | 22 % | 13 % | 22 % | 35 % | 44 % | 47 % |
| Co-promoters | 25 % | 0 %  | 12 % | 10 % | 14 % | 25 % | 50 % |
| Promoters    | 9 %  | 22 % | 9 %  | 8 %  | 18 % | 41 % | 21 % |

As shown in Table 2, from 2019 to 2023, trends in female researcher participation appear to remain stable or even increase.

Table 2. Composition of the Prospective Research project team

|              | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|
|              |      | *    |      |      |      |
| Researchers  | 54 % | x    | 53 % | 53 % | 56 % |
| Co-promoters | 0 %  | x    | 60 % | 33 % | 0 %  |
| Promoters    | 31 % | x    | 22 % | 40 % | 33 % |

\* No Prospective Research call for projects in 2020, just a renewal of the 2019 projects.

In technology- and industry-focused research programmes, such as research platforms, we observed a 25-30% representation of women among sponsors and co-sponsors (profiles for which Innoviris has data) for the period up to 2018.

Detailed figures for industrial programmes are not currently available. An accurate analysis of industrial projects is not always easy, since teams often move during a project, as there is often only 10-20% support for a project from certain profiles, with people changing during its course. Lastly, because not all profiles are determined when the project is submitted. Nevertheless, the qualitative data also indicates an underrepresentation - not an absence - of women in (digital) technological fields. However, since 2019, Innoviris has been analysing the representation of men and women through the ex-post survey of past industrial projects. Based on the initial results, it can be concluded that after three years, 30% of sustainable jobs in companies receiving Innoviris funding are filled by women. Ex-post evaluation is an important tool for future monitoring.

#### 6.4 Inclusion of a "gender" field in submission forms

The Innoviris' Legal Department carried out an internal feasibility study to evaluate the viability of collecting gender-related data. The conclusions of this study highlighted a number of important recommendations. First, it is recommended that questions be formulated in an inclusive way, avoiding the direct use of the terms "sex" and "gender". It is preferable to use formulations such as "Are you...", offering options such as Female, Male, Other or I prefer not to answer.

It is also essential to ensure that answering the question remains optional, allowing participants to choose not to answer. The use of language that is accessible to everyone, without excessively specialised terms, is also emphasised. It is crucial to clearly specify the confidentiality measures concerning the data collected, explaining that it will be used exclusively for statistical purposes.

It is important to provide a clear explanation of the statistical purpose, avoiding abbreviations and technical language. Lastly, it is recommended that the gender category be included in the confidentiality policy to ensure that this dimension is sufficiently taken into account in data protection.

#### Future actions

If the ex-ante gender monitoring of project teams and programmes is to be carried out, the inclusion of a gender field in all online submission forms is a necessity, as is the creation of a linked field in the database.

#### 6.5 Funding facilitation modalities

The consideration of the gender dimension in funding schemes is a key political issue that can be integrated into the design of programmes and calls for projects. This is a theme that overlaps with

every other aspect and can constitute a bottleneck for entry and participation in R&I programmes. The implementation of an internal policy can be inspired by that of other funding agencies. Initially, in 2024, consideration will be given to a more flexible framework for projects in the event of holidays or other changes, taking equal opportunities into account.

#### Future actions

Following the implementation of measures to increase flexibility for projects, other measures inspired by the practices of other funding agencies will be considered.

### 6.6 Gender as a theme in funding requests for R&I projects

Innoviris does not currently have a development policy in this area for research and innovation projects. However, gender is often included in socially oriented programmes.

When submitting projects, project leaders are nevertheless asked whether the theme and/or results of the project may contribute to discrimination against people (directly or indirectly affected) based on gender and gender identity and expression (in addition to ethical and cultural origin, sexual orientation and social background and situation). If this is a possibility, they are asked to justify it. A short-term objective is to challenge project proposals with potential gender sensitivities during evaluation to reflect on (undesirable) effects in the research process and outcomes.

#### Future actions

The launch of a dedicated action is planned to integrate the gender dimension into research proposals and R&I processes; it will target challenges related to gender imbalances in experimental plans for (or participation in) the development of technological (medical, data manipulation, etc.) and non-technological innovations.

## 7 Measures to combat gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

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Innoviris guarantees focus and permanent monitoring by the internal diversity manager in the light of the institution's well-being plan, in line with the strategic vision of making Innoviris a "best place to work", as mentioned earlier in this document.

Innoviris also contributes to the regional LGBTQIA+ plan, and in this context is committed to improving the involvement of representatives of these groups in Innoviris calls for projects through communication campaigns targeted at the local community.

As mentioned above, in project submission forms, project leaders must reflect on the discriminatory aspects present in the theme or results, with a request for justification.

#### Future actions

To be developed, based on the institution's well-being plan.

