



**The ADDSEN company plan
for gender equality and diversity
2023-2027 (GEP)**

About document

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Content

- 1 Introduction 3
 - 1.1 Executive summary..... 3
 - 1.2 Abbreviations used 3
- 2 Gender equality analysis..... 3
 - 2.1 Related documentation and strategic documents..... 3
 - 2.2 The existing practices and approaches towards gender equality in the organisation... 7
- 3 Challenges, objectives and methodology 7
 - 3.1 Work-life balance and organisational culture 7
 - 3.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making..... 8
 - 3.3 Gender equality in recruitment and career progression..... 8
 - 3.4 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content..... 9
 - 3.5 Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment 10
- 4 Action plan 2023-2027..... 10
 - 4.1 Gender equality requirements monitoring 10
 - 4.2 Action 1 - Work-life balance and organisational culture..... 11
 - 4.3 Action 2 - Gender balance in leadership and decision-making 11
 - 4.4 Action 3 - Gender equality in recruitment and career progression 12
 - 4.5 Action 4 - Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content ... 12
 - 4.6 Action 5 - Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment... 13

1 Introduction

1.1 Executive summary

ADDSEN Gender equality action plan for 2023-2027 was developed based on the analysis of internal environment of ADDSEN and the analysis of national and European strategies and legislative around gender equality. Specific challenges, objectives and indicators were identified and will be evaluated on yearly basis.

The data collection and monitoring of gender equality indicators is integrated in the Quality guide of ADDSEN prepared in line with international standards: ISO 9001/2015 and specifically in the following company processes: PP2 Human resources, HP1 Research and innovation and HP2 Advisory services.

1.2 Abbreviations used

ADDSEN - Addsen, s.r.o.

GEP – Gender equality plan, Plan for gender equality and diversity

Quality guide of ADDSEN – internal directive prepared in line with international standards ISO 9001/2015.

2 Gender equality analysis

2.1 Related documentation and strategic documents

2.1.1 Gender Equality Strategy 2020 -2025¹ and HE strategic plan 2021-2024²

One of the key specific issues is “Gender equality and inclusiveness” as cross-cutting priority in Horizon Europe: “Activities will aim at eliminating gender inequality and intersecting socio-economic inequalities – including those based on disability, ethnicity, and LGBTIQ – throughout research and innovation systems, including by addressing unconscious bias and systemic structural barriers, and the integration of the gender dimension will be a requirement by default in research and innovation content across the whole programme, unless its nonrelevance is duly justified.

This integration is particularly relevant for global challenges – including in areas such as health and care, also in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, online-violence, artificial intelligence and robotics, or climate change mitigation and adaptation – in which sex and/or gender differences play an important role, and hence determine the societal relevance and quality of research and innovation outcomes. “

2.1.2 Act 365/2004, the 'Anti-Discrimination Act'

Gender equality in Slovakia is legislated through **Act 365/2004, the 'Anti-Discrimination Act'**,³ which prohibits discrimination 'on [the] grounds of sex, religion or belief, race, nationality or ethnic group, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital or family status, colour, language, political or

¹ [Gender equality strategy \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/en/press-communications/infographic/infographic_gender-equality-strategy-2020-2025.pdf)

² [Horizon Europe Strategic Plan 2021 - 2024 | Knowledge for policy \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/en/press-communications/infographic/infographic_horizon-europe-strategic-plan-2021-2024.pdf)

³ [365/2004 Z.z. - Zákon o rovnakom zaobchádzaní v nie... - SLOV-LEX](https://www.zbierka.zk.sk/akt/365/2004-Z.z.-Zakon-o-rovnakom-zaobchadzani-v-nie...-SLOV-LEX)

another opinion, national or social origin, property, lineage or another status, or to report crime or other anti-social activity.’

2.1.3 Slovak National Strategy for Equality between women and men and equal opportunities 2021-2027⁴

It deals with eight strategic areas:

- violence against women
- reconciliation of family and work life
- education
- labour-market and pay inequality
- political participation of women
- participatory involvement of different partners in gender equality
- inclusion of vulnerable groups and groups facing multiple forms of discrimination
- international development and humanitarianism

2.1.4 National Action plan for equality between women and men and equal opportunities 2021-2027

Action plan for equality between women and men and equal opportunities 2021 - 2027⁵ sets out tasks in the eight areas outlined in the strategy and a clear timeline for each year for tasks to be carried out. Moreover, the plan also lists the bodies responsible for implementation, though no indicators or targets are included in the plan to facilitate monitoring.

2.1.5 European Charter and Code for Researchers⁶

Working conditions for researchers: “Employers and/or funders should ensure that the working conditions for researchers, including for disabled researchers, provide where appropriate the flexibility deemed essential for successful research performance in accordance with existing national legislation and with national or sectoral collective-bargaining agreements. They should aim to provide working conditions which allow both women and men researchers to combine family and work, children, and career.”

2.1.6 Council Conclusions of 28 May 2021 on ‘Deepening the European Research Area: Providing researchers with attractive and sustainable careers and working conditions and making brain circulation a reality’⁷.

Some Council of the European Union conclusion are related to gender equality in research:

- Highlights the need to strengthen public and private investment in R&D in Europe and to support lower performing research systems to increase their attractiveness to avoid brain drain, loss of competitiveness due to persistent inequalities and promote retaining talent in all its diversity

⁴ [Detail materiálu | Portal OV \(gov.sk\), Gender Mainstreaming Approach - Slovakia \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁵ [Detail materiálu | Portal OV \(gov.sk\), Gender Mainstreaming Approach - Slovakia \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁶ [European Charter for Researchers | EURAXESS \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁷ [st09138-en21.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

- Considers that Gender Equality Plans in Horizon Europe could be a promising tool to achieve more equality within research careers.
- Considers that attraction and retention of talent in Europe needs improved conditions for early-career researchers, promoting gender equality, taking away remaining administrative barriers and fostering meritocracy as well as adapting systems of remuneration, social security and pensions to non-linear careers.
- Considers the development of an observatory for monitoring of research careers trajectories, doctoral and post-doctoral holders flows of talent, including geographical and sectoral mobility and working conditions to allow for the assessment of sustainability and attractiveness of research careers, and of the level of change in inequalities.
- Calls on Member States and the Commission to improve skills and training for early-stage careers to boost recruitment and career progression and to promote measures to reduce precarity of research careers, inter-generation inequality and provide early-career researchers with sustainable, predictable and attractive research careers; and ASKS future presidencies to further develop and explore this outstanding issue.

2.1.7 HE Guidance on Gender Equality Plans, 2021⁸

It is a guide for public and private organisations for creation of a GEP and it includes mandatory process-related requirements and recommended content-related (thematic) areas which can be considered in this plan.

To comply with the Horizon Europe GEP eligibility criterion, a GEP must meet **four mandatory process-related requirements**:

1. **Public document:** The GEP must be a formal document published on the institution's website, signed by the top management and actively communicated within the institution. It should demonstrate a commitment to gender equality, set clear goals and detailed actions and measures to achieve them.
2. **Dedicated resources:** a GEP must have dedicated resources and expertise in gender equality to implement the plan. Organisations should consider what type and volume of resources are required to support an ongoing process of sustainable organisational change.
3. **Data collection and monitoring:** organisations must collect sex/ gender disaggregated data on personnel (and students, for the establishments concerned) with annual reporting based on indicators. Organisations should consider how to select the most relevant indicators, how to collect and analyse the data, including resources to do so, and should ensure that data is published and monitored on an annual basis. This data should inform the GEP's objectives and targets, indicators, and ongoing evaluation of progress.
4. **Training:** The GEP must also include awareness-raising and training actions on gender equality. These activities should engage the whole organisation and be an evidence-based, ongoing and long-term process. Activities should cover unconscious gender biases training aimed at staff and decision-makers and can also include communication activities and gender equality training that focuses on specific topics or addresses specific groups.

In addition to these four mandatory requirements, there are also **five recommended content-related (thematic) areas** that organisations may wish to consider in their GEP:

1. **Work-life balance and organisational culture:** GEPs aim to promote gender equality through the sustainable transformation of organisational culture. Organisations should implement necessary policies to ensure an open and inclusive working environment, the

⁸ [Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans - Publications Office of the EU \(europa.eu\)](https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/11111111-1111-1111-1111-111111111111)

visibility of women in the organisation and externally, and that the contribution of women is properly valued. Inclusive work-life balance policies and practices can also be considered in a GEP, including parental leave policies, flexible working time arrangements and support for caring responsibilities.

2. **Gender balance in leadership and decision-making:** Increasing the number and share of women in leadership and decision-making positions touches upon all aspects in the GEP. Measures to ensure that women can take on and stay in leadership positions can include providing decision-makers with targeted gender training, adapting processes for selection and appointment of staff on committees, ensuring gender balance through gender quotas, and making committee membership more transparent.
3. **Gender equality in recruitment and career progression:** Critically reviewing selection procedures and remedying any biases can ensure that women and men get equal chances to develop and advance their careers. Establishing recruitment codes of conduct, involving gender equality officers in recruitment and promotion committees, proactively identifying women in underrepresented fields and considering organisation-wide workload planning models can be important measures to consider in a GEP.
4. **Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content:** The GEP should consider how sex and gender analysis will be included in the research or educational outputs of an organisation. It can set out the organisation's commitment to incorporating sex and gender in its research priorities, the processes for ensuring that the gender dimension is considered in research and teaching, and the support and capacity provided for researchers to develop methodologies that incorporate sex and gender analysis. Research funding and research performing organisations both have a role to play in ensuring this.
5. **Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment:** Organisations establishing a GEP should consider taking steps to ensure they have clear institutional policies on sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence. Policies should establish and codify the expected behaviour of employees, outline how members of the organisation can report instances of gender-based violence and how any such instances will be investigated, and sanctions applied. They should also consider how information and support is provided to victims or witnesses and how the whole organisation can be mobilised to establish a culture of zero tolerance toward sexual harassment and violence.

2.1.8 [Gender Equality in Academia and Research - GEAR tool - Action toolbox | European Institute for Gender Equality \(europa.eu\)](#)⁹

Action toolbox is focused on research organisations and higher education organisations. It aims to provide guidance to these organisations in developing their gender equality. It is strongly oriented towards the areas recommended by Horizon Europe.

2.1.9 [D4.2_Roadmap_for_the_implementation_of_customized_Gender_Equality_Plans_rev1.pdf \(genera-project.com\)](#)¹⁰

The roadmap is one of the outcomes of the Horizon 2020 Project Genera (Gender Equality Network in the European Research Area). GENERA brings together 13 important research organisations and higher education institutes with the scientific focus on physics in Europe. The GENERA Roadmap is meant to support the Implementation Managers within the GENERA

⁹ [Gender Equality in Academia and Research - GEAR tool - Action toolbox | European Institute for Gender Equality \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹⁰ [D4.2_Roadmap_for_the_implementation_of_customized_Gender_Equality_Plans_rev1.pdf \(genera-project.com\)](#)

Project and persons who are responsible for improving gender equality by implementing a GEP in their organisation.

2.1.10 Practical Guide to Improving Gender Equality in Research Organisations - Science Europe¹¹

his practical guide sets out good practice examples and guides the further development of context specific approaches including how to avoid unconscious bias in peer review processes, how to monitor gender equality, and how to improve grant management practices.

2.2 The existing practices and approaches towards gender equality in the organisation

ADDSEN is established in the Bratislava region, Slovakia. Its focus is on innovation management, business development consulting and RTD activities related to the usability of innovation. The core team has been performing innovation management since 2006 and was actively involved in Framework Programme Seven (FP7), Competitiveness Innovation Programme (CIP) and Horizon 2020/Horizon Europe in numerous collaborative projects. Our customers are SMEs, public bodies, i.e. universities, research centres and governmental agencies.

The ADDSEN company's legal representative and internal organisational structure determine the company's organisation. The company's bodies are the general assembly and the company legal representative (executive director). The activities of these bodies and the scope of individual worker roles are described in the Quality guide of ADDSEN issued and updated in line with the international standards ISO 9001/2015.

The main results of the analysis of the sex or gender-disaggregated data are reflected in the chapter 0 in Analysis of the company environment for each of the thematic areas.

3 Challenges, objectives and methodology

3.1 Work-life balance and organisational culture

3.1.1 Recommendations from HE Guidance on GEP

GEPs aim to promote gender equality through the sustainable transformation of organisational culture. Organisations should implement necessary policies to ensure an open and inclusive working environment, the visibility of women in the organisation and externally, and that the contribution of women is properly valued.

Inclusive work-life balance policies and practices can also be considered in a GEP, including parental leave policies, flexible working time arrangements and support for caring responsibilities.

3.1.2 Analysis of the company environment

The company fosters a supportive atmosphere that encourages a healthy work-life balance. Employees have flexible working time, and the company enables home-office. The employees

¹¹ [Practical Guide to Improving Gender Equality in Research Organisations - Science Europe](#)

have the flexibility to arrange meetings based on their availability. Moreover, In Slovakia the parental allowance is a type of state social benefit paid by the state to the entitled person for providing due care to the child. The employees are entitled to receive this contribution according to Slovak legislation. Also, the visibility of women is equally ensured on project website and in presentations of expert teams of the company.

3.1.3 Challenges and objectives

ADDSEN must be a flexible, inclusive, and family-friendly workplace, where it is possible to combine career and family life. Good work conditions and a safe working environment for all staff, including staff members with special needs should be provided to enable employee's optimal performance outputs.

3.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

3.2.1 Recommendations from HE Guidance on GEP

Increasing the number and share of women in leadership and decision-making positions touches upon all aspects in the GEP. Measures to ensure that women can take on and stay in leadership positions can include providing decision-makers with targeted gender training, adapting processes for selection and appointment of staff on committees, ensuring gender balance through gender quotas, and making committee membership more transparent.

3.2.2 Analysis of company environment

ADDSEN is a small company, so it has no specific committees or boards. In research and innovation projects there is usually one member who represents the company on project boards, and the member is elected based on her/his qualification for this position. Gender quotas are reflected in the evaluation of submitted proposals depending on the call for proposals.

Each service delivery is overseen by a designated project manager. The project manager is assigned depending on her/his qualifications and experiences related to provided consultancy. There is a gender-equal representation in this role in the company.

3.2.3 Challenges and objectives

In research and innovation projects ADDSEN project managers should continue to consider the share of women in leadership and decision-making positions during project board election procedures and project tasks leadership.

The project manager for service delivery should be assigned depending on her/his qualifications and experiences related to provided consultancy.

3.3 Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

3.3.1 Recommendations from HE Guidance on GEP

Critically reviewing selection procedures and remedying any biases can ensure that women and men get equal chances to develop and advance their careers. Establishing recruitment codes of conduct, involving gender equality officers in recruitment and promotion committees, proactively identifying women in underrepresented fields and considering organisation-wide workload planning models can be important measures to consider in a GEP.

3.3.2 Analysis of company environment

ADDSEN is currently gender balanced company with gender ratio 50:50 (2 men, 2 women). Career opportunities are open for both genders. When opening new positions in the company, it happens in a transparent way. Career development depends on the qualification, working experiences of employees and company business opportunities.

Company ADDSEN is a small company and has no human resources department. Tasks related to recruitment and career development are the responsibility of the company CEO. There are no deviations in salaries based on gender and this policy will be implemented also in the case of new employees.

3.3.3 Challenges and objectives

ADDSEN should strive to maintain internal processes and procedures with the aim of ensuring equal opportunities in recruitment and career progression.

3.4 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

3.4.1 Recommendations from HE Guidance on GEP

The GEP should consider how sex and gender analysis will be included in the research or educational outputs of an organisation. It can set out the organisation's commitment to incorporating sex and gender in its research priorities, the processes for ensuring that the gender dimension is considered in research and teaching, and the support and capacity provided for researchers to develop methodologies that incorporate sex and gender analysis. Research funding and research performing organisations both have a role to play in ensuring this.

3.4.2 Analysis of company environment

ADDSEN is active in research and innovation projects financed by the Horizon Europe programme, in which "Gender equality and inclusiveness" is a cross-cutting priority. The company has 4 project managers active in research and innovation projects – two women and two men.

Gender equality in projects is evaluated based on the requirements of each call of proposals. In addition, provision of tailor-made services to individual clients will be assigned according to the service focus and experience of specific employee, without any gender preference.

3.4.3 Challenges and objectives

The integration of the gender dimension will be a requirement by default in research and innovation projects in whole Horizon Europe program. ADDSEN project managers should ensure that gender equality is properly reflected in submitted project proposals. It includes gender quotas in project boards, leaderships in project tasks and gender dimension in project tasks (e.g. end-users engagement).

3.5 Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

3.5.1 Recommendations from HE Guidance on GEP

Organisations establishing a GEP should consider taking steps to ensure they have clear institutional policies on sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence. Policies should establish and codify the expected behaviour of employees, outline how members of the organisation can report instances of gender-based violence and how any such instances will be investigated, and sanctions applied.

They should also consider how information and support is provided to victims or witnesses and how the whole organisation can be mobilised to establish a culture of zero tolerance toward sexual harassment and violence.

3.5.2 Analysis of company environment

Management of human resources is in the responsibility of CEO. GEP compliance manager role is being established by this document and will take over the previous role of the CEO in the process against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

3.5.3 Challenges and objectives

GEP compliance manager of ADDSEN will ensure that each employee can report ill treatment e.g. discrimination and harassment and know procedures on how this claim will be handled.

4 Action plan 2023-2027

4.1 Gender equality requirements monitoring

Action plan for gender equality is set-up for the period 2023-2027 and it will be evaluated in the end of each year. The outputs from this evaluation will be reflected in Management review report each year. Quality guide of ADDSEN will be updated if needed according to the outcome of the quality system ADDSEN review in line with international standards ISO 9001/2015.

4.1.1 Responsibility and resources

Adherence to ADDSEN's GEP is mandatory for all employees and company activities. Selected employees will be responsible for monitoring indicators specified in the Action Plan/yearly evaluation of GEP and for reporting any problematic issues related to gender balance that would hinder ADDSEN in its efforts to achieve its overall objectives.

GEP working group consists of:

- GEP compliance manager Daniela Macáková
- CEO Miroslav Konečný

4.2 Action 1 - Work-life balance and organisational culture

Recommendations	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Status
<p>Flexible, inclusive, and family-friendly workplace.</p> <p>Good work conditions and a safe working environment for all staff, including staff members with special needs.</p>	<p>Maintain family friendly workspace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - flexible working time - home-office - meetings organised in advance - nomination of deputies in project tasks - possibility of online meetings - possibility to participate in the activities during parental leave, - possibility to work part-time during/ after parental leave 	<p>Number of permanent employees – women and men, employees with disabilities</p>	<p>2023-2027</p>	<p>ongoing</p>

4.3 Action 2 - Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

Recommendations	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Status
<p>To consider the share of women in leadership and decision-making positions.</p>	<p>ADDSEN project managers should consider the share of women in leadership and decision-making positions e.g. members of project boards, leaders of project tasks.</p> <p>Leadership in ADDSEN service delivery should be assigned in a transparent way.</p>	<p>Positive evaluation results on the gender dimension in submitted projects.</p> <p>Gender balance in leadership in ADDSEN service delivery</p>	<p>2023 - 2027</p>	<p>ongoing</p>

4.4 Action 3 - Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Recommendations	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Status
Equal opportunities in recruitment and career progression.	<p>It should be ensured that internal processes and procedures are transparent and that all employees have equal opportunities for career advancement.</p> <p>Position announcements must be broad and international with inclusive language.</p> <p>When an employee works outside Slovakia, it will be necessary to ensure that there is no discrimination in relation to ADDSEN GEP principles.</p>	<p>Clear and transparent criteria in assessment of work</p> <p>Outcomes from hiring process – job requirements, candidates' qualifications, new employees' qualifications, employees outside Slovakia</p>	2023 - 2027	ongoing

4.5 Action 4 - Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

Recommendations	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Status
Gender equality should be properly reflected in submitted research and innovation project proposals.	<p>ADDSEN project managers should ensure that gender dimension is reflected in submitted project proposals in line with the requirements of calls for proposals.</p> <p>It could include gender quotas in project boards, leaderships in project tasks and gender dimension in project tasks (e.g. end-users engagement).</p>	Positive evaluation results on the gender dimension in submitted projects.	2023 - 2027	ongoing

4.6 Action 5 - Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Recommendations	Actions	Indicators	Timeline	Status
GEP compliance manager of ADDSEN should ensure that each employee can report ill treatment e.g. discrimination and harassment and know procedures on how this claim will be handled.	Trainings/ consultations for new and existing employees in gender equality and gender-based violence	Number of trainings or meetings in gender equality and gender-based violence	2023 - 2027	ongoing