

Gender Equality Plan of the Institute of Human Genetics, PAS, Poznań

1. Introduction

The Gender Equality Plan of the Institute of Human Genetics of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IHG PAS) in Poznań for the years 2025–2027 is a strategic document developed to ensure a safe and friendly workplace, free from discrimination, enabling everyone to pursue scientific, professional, and personal development freely.

The Institute of Human Genetics PAS is guided by the principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunities for women and men. The Institute respects the applicable regulations on human rights, protecting against discrimination and violence, and strives to implement the highest standards aimed at ensuring equal treatment.

For several years, the Institute has been actively implementing an equality policy, which has been recognized by the European Commission. In January 2019, the Institute was awarded the distinction “HR Excellence in Research.” Since 2019, the Institute has been undertaking activities related to the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. Institutions distinguished in this way by the European Commission provide researchers with the best conditions for work and development, support scientific initiatives, pursue a policy of equal opportunities, foster mobility, and offer training to enhance the competences of employees and doctoral students.

The awarded distinction not only promotes the Institute’s existing HR policy but, above all, constitutes a commitment to the continuous improvement of human resources management policy, in line with the documents updated in 2024, namely the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

The adoption of this Plan complements and broadens the scope of activities in the field of promoting equality and preventing discrimination, including gender-based discrimination, as part of the IHG PAS’s commitment to continuously improving its recruitment and HR policies under the granted “HR Excellence in Research” distinction.

Efforts to promote the idea of gender equality constitute one of the priorities of the European Union, which has been emphasized both in the assumptions of the Horizon Europe programme and, previously, in the practices of the European Research Area (ERA) within cooperation with Member States and research organizations.

The European Commission’s commitment to promoting gender equality in research and innovation is an important part of its broader Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025, announced in March 2020. One of the objectives of this strategy is to strengthen the European Research Area by ensuring equal opportunities in the working environment, where everyone, regardless of gender, can develop their talents, as well as by better integrating the gender dimension into scientific projects, in order to improve research quality and translate it directly into benefits for a society based on knowledge, technology, and innovation.

This Plan also responds to the requirement of the Directorate-General for Research and

Innovation of the European Commission, according to which every university, research unit, and public administration body must have a Gender Equality Plan in order to be eligible for funding under the EU Framework Programme for 2021–2027 Horizon Europe (HE). Pursuant to Article 7(6) of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021, the HE programme “ensures effective promotion of equal opportunities for all and the integration of the gender dimension, including the incorporation of the gender perspective into the content of research and innovation.”

In response to the above requirements, in 2022 the Institute of Human Genetics PAS (IGC PAN) developed and implemented a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) for the years 2022–2024. The present Plan is a continuation of those activities and the resulting tasks to be implemented at IGC PAN. The Plan was signed by Prof. Dr. Hab. n. med. Maciej Giefing, Director of the Institute of Human Genetics of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Poznań, and enacted by internal order of the Director no. xx/2025.

The Plan was prepared on the basis of a diagnosis by the HR Department and the Director’s Plenipotentiary for Gender Equality and Equal Treatment, in connection with the Internal Equality and Anti-Discrimination Policy in force at the Institute, as well as in reference to the Action Plan 2024–2027 for the “HR Excellence in Research” award and to the requirements and recommendations of the European Commission. The implementation of the activities under the Gender Equality Plan at IGC PAN will be the responsibility of the Charter and Code Working Group and Institute employees designated by the Director.

2. Institute of Human Genetics of PAS (IHG PAS)

The Institute of Human Genetics of the Polish Academy of Sciences is a scientific institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences. It was established in 1974 as the Department of Human Genetics PAS and was subsequently transformed into the Institute of Human Genetics PAS by decision of the President of PAS No. 06/2003 of March 20, 2003. As of 31 December 2024, the Institute employed 103 people, including: 7 professors, 15 institute professors, 18 assistant professors, 6 assistants, 10 specialists (research and technical staff), 37 engineering and technical staff, 13 employees in administration and accounting.

Doctoral training is conducted within the Poznań Doctoral School of the Institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences, which is jointly run by the following Institutes: Bioorganic Chemistry, Dendrology, Molecular Physics, Human Genetics, and Plant Genetics.

Scientific staff employed at IGC PAN are not required to conduct teaching activities.

3. Gender Equality Plan

The Gender Equality Plan for IGC PAN includes:

- a) **DIAGNOSIS** — an analysis and key conclusions based on analytical data obtained from the HR Department,

- b) **OBJECTIVES** with identified actions and indicators, together with their discussion, covering four thematic areas that are crucial for achieving gender equality in research and innovation, as required by the European Commission.
- c) **ACTIONS** with designated responsible persons, a time frame for implementation, and indicators.

3a. Diagnoza

The starting point for this analysis was the characterization of the overall gender structure of employees at the Institute of Human Genetics, PAS, broken down into research, research and technical, and administrative staff. The number of academic titles and degrees held by employed women and men as of the end of 2024 was determined. Another element of the diagnosis was to establish the distribution of positions in order to identify and counteract potential manifestations of inequality. Further analysis covered the holding of managerial positions as well as participation in committees and decision-making bodies.

The diagnosis prepared for the purposes of the Gender Equality Plan for the Institute of Human Genetics, PAS, was based on information concerning the participation of women and men in the human resources structure. Data regarding research staff were analyzed by gender and with reference to the four stages of research career development proposed in the Communication of the European Commission of 21 July 2011, and maintained in the Communication of the EC that replaced it, namely the European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe of 6 December 2023¹:

R1 – prior to obtaining a doctoral degree or equivalent;

R2 – after obtaining a doctoral degree or equivalent, researchers not yet independent;

R3 – independent researchers with recognized achievements (habilitation);

R4 – leading researchers (professorial title).

Table 1 (below) presents data on the number of research staff by R1–R4 category and gender (employment status as of December 31, 2024).

Table 1. Employment structure of research staff at IHCG PAS

Group	Number of women	Number of men	Total
R4	3	4	7
R3	14	1	15

¹ https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/towards_a_european_framework_for_research_career.pdf

R2	9	4	13
R1	5	1	6
Total	31	10	41

IGC PAN is a relatively small institute, employing a total of 41 research staff members. Among them, women predominate, accounting for 75.6% of research staff. With the exception of the group of leading researchers (R4), women outnumber men across all categories at the Institute. The largest group among research staff at IGC PAN consists of R3 researchers (habilitation holders, institute professors) — 15 people, which represents 36.6% of the Institute’s research staff. A distinctive feature of this group is the clear predominance of women — 93.3%. The second-largest group is R2 researchers (assistant professors), numbering 13 people. Within this group, the share of women significantly exceeds that of men (69.2% vs. 30.8%). The third group in terms of size comprises R4 leading researchers (professors) — the only category in which men prevail (57.1% vs. 42.9% women). The smallest group consists of R1 researchers (assistants). Here, women also make up the majority, representing 83.3%, compared with men, who constitute only 16.7% of the R1 group.

As of 31 December 2025, IGC PAN employed a total of 103 staff members. The Institute is unique in that women constitute an overwhelming majority not only among the research staff but also across all employees of the Institute.

Employment by staff group, broken down by gender, is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Total number of employees at the Institute (as of 31.12.2024)

Employees	Number of women	Number of men	Total
Research staff	31	10	41
Research-technical staff	9	1	10
Engineering-technical staff	36	3	39
Administrative staff	7	6	13
Total	83	20	103

Among all employees of the Institute, 80.6% are women and 19.4% are men. Within individual staff groups, the proportion of women ranges from 75.6% (research staff), through 90% (research-technical staff), 53.8% (administrative staff), to 92.3% (engineering-technical staff).

The greatest gender imbalance is observed among the engineering-technical staff, where the majority are employed as biologists (36 women and 3 men). The employment structure in engineering-technical and research-technical positions reflects a higher interest of women in these roles.

The predominance of women is not limited to the Institute's employees. This trend is also observed among individuals seeking internships, conducting master's theses, or pursuing research within the framework of doctoral studies. In 2024, women constituted an overwhelming majority of interns, master's students, doctoral candidates, and applicants to the Doctoral School, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Gender distribution among doctoral students, master's students, and interns

	Number of women	Number of men	Total
Doctoral students	14	6	20
Doctoral School Candidates*	39	45	84
Master Students*	10	5	15
Interns*	6	2	8
Total	69	58	127

* data for the year 2024

With the exception of applicants to the Doctoral School in 2024, where the proportions of women and men were nearly equal, women predominate significantly among doctoral students, master's students, and interns. This trend is reflected in the employment structure of the Institute's research staff and is specifically related to the discipline in which the scientific research is conducted and to the promotion procedures.

In the research departments, managerial positions are most often held by men with professorial titles (3 individuals). Among women serving as department heads (3 individuals), all hold the habilitation degree (and IGC PAS professorship). In the independent research groups, 4 women and 1 man hold managerial positions. All research staff in managerial roles are advanced in their careers and belong to either the R4 or R3 groups.

The table below presents the distribution of managers by gender, taking into account their stage of scientific career development.

Table 4. Structure of managerial positions among research staff in 2024.

Organizational unit / Manager	Woman	Man
Department of Molecular and Clinical Genetics	R4	
Department of Nucleic Acid Function	R3	
Department of Molecular Pathology	R3	
Department of Reproductive Biology and Stem Cells		R4
Department of Cancer Genetics		R4
Innovative Medical Center IHG PAS		R4
Independent Research Group of RNA Biology	R4	
Independent Research Group of Non-coding Parts of the Genome	R3	
Independent Research Group for Advanced Tissue Modelling		R3
Independent Research Group of Sperm Genetics	R3	
Independent Research Group of the Regional Center for Digital Medicine	R3	

Analyzing the data above, it can be observed that among the heads of research departments, there is a balance between men (3) and women (3) in these positions. However, the men are all leading researchers (R4) (3 out of 3). Women in department head positions are advanced in their careers and belong to the R3 group (2 individuals), while one woman heading a department is a leading researcher (R4).

Among the five independent research groups, four are led by women at different stages of career development: R3 (3 individuals) and R4 (1 individual). One independent research group is led by a man at the R3 career stage (1 individual).

Considering the department and independent research group leaders together, the overall gender distribution is as follows: 7 women and 4 men).

The management team of the Institute of Human Genetics PAS consists of the Director of the Institute (M, R4) along with three deputies: for Scientific Affairs (F, R3), for Development (F, R3), and for Administrative Affairs (F). The Institute's management is supported by the Chief

Accountant (F). This gender distribution applies to both the 2020–2023 and 2024–2027 terms. The table below presents the management team of IGC PAN, broken down by gender.

Table 5. Executive staff IHG PAS

	Woman	Man
Director		X
Deputy Director for Research	X	
Deputy Director for Development	X	
Deputy Director for Administration	X	
Chief Accountant	X	

Participation in recruitment committees as well as in other committees appointed at the Institute in 2024 was also analyzed. In that year, a total of 30 committees and decision-making teams convened. Altogether, 115 individuals served on these committees and teams.

Considering recruitment committees for academic staff separately, there were four such committees in 2024. Regarding recruitment committees for doctoral candidates, there were also four. In 2024, one recruitment committee for administrative staff convened. Altogether, nine recruitment committees met. In 2024, one recruitment committee for administrative staff convened.

In total, 19 individuals served on all types of recruitment committees, including 16 women and 3 men. The predominance of women on recruitment committees reflects the gender imbalance among academic staff. Meanwhile, the roughly twofold higher representation of women compared to men on other committees is influenced by the predominance of women among all Institute employees.

Table 6. Participation of women and men in committees in the year 2024

Committees	Number of women	Number of men	Total
Rekrutment	16	3	15
Other	85	15	100
Total	93	22	115

The Institute is authorized to confer the degree of Doctor and Doctor Habilitatus in the discipline of medical sciences. The table below presents data on defended doctoral theses in 2024.

Year	Number of defended doctoral theses		Total
	Women	Men	
2022	4	0	4
2023	2	1	3
2024	5	0	5
Total	11	1	12

All Institute employees have the opportunity to enhance their skills by participating in training programs. In 2024, a total of 19 employees took part in training, with the percentage distribution between academic staff and administrative staff as follows: academic staff 47.4% and administrative staff 52.6%, indicating a very similar proportion.

Table 8. Participation structure of various employee groups in training in 2024

Employees	Women	Men	Total
Research staff	7	2	9
Administrative staff	8	2	10
Total	15	4	19

- Based on the diagnosis, the following conclusions can be drawn:
- The Institute faces gender inequality issues typical for research units conducting studies in the fields of medical sciences, health sciences, and biological and biotechnological sciences.
- Gender disparities exist among academic staff; women dominate at almost every stage of the career path, with the exception of one group, namely full professors (R4).
- At the early stages of academic careers, the number of women exceeds that of men, indicating that women more frequently complete doctoral studies and perform better in admissions to doctoral schools.
- Among academic staff, young female researchers predominate (19 women at stages R1 and R2).
- Women are predominant in the Institute's management and decision-making processes.
- Women dominate not only among academic staff but also in engineering-technical and administrative positions.
- Efforts should be made to strengthen the balance between professional and family life.

3b. Objectives

The structure of the Gender Equality Plan for the IGC PAS presented below has been developed based on five key areas identified by the European Commission. It includes the objectives identified through the diagnosis and the planned actions through which these objectives will be achieved.

OBJECTIVE 1. Raising awareness of equality and non-discrimination principles

OBJECTIVE 2. Gender equality in recruitment and career development

OBJECTIVE 3. Strengthening the balance between professional and family life (work-life balance)

OBJECTIVE 4. Promoting a balanced representation of women and men in decision-making processes

OBJECTIVE 5. Preventing harassment and discrimination

3c. Actions

Actions	Responsible persons	Timeframe	Indicators
The Director's Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment (Gender Equality Officer — GEO) will continue core tasks, including: promoting gender equality through informational campaigns; monitoring the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan; collecting data on gender equality at IHG PAS.	Institute Management	01/2025	Confirmation of the appointed GEO; contact details available on the Institute's website and intranet
Adding the Gender Equality Plan to the Institute's website — in the HR Logo section	Gender Equality Officer	04/2025	Published Gender Equality Plan for 2025–2027
Updating the content of the Gender Equality Plan section on the intranet, including: the IGC PAS Gender Equality Plan and useful information to raise awareness on gender equality issues	Gender Equality Officer	2025 - 2027	Published content
Information and promotional activities regarding events promoting gender equality and diversity, interesting webinars, and important scientific publications; encouraging staff participation and engagement.	Gender Equality Officer	2025 - 2027	Increased employee awareness; survey in 2027
Training and seminars on gender equality, gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, and anti-discrimination — conducted by specialists; mandatory for all staff	Institute Management Gender Equality Officer	2025-2027	At least 1 training/seminar per year
Monitoring and controlling the percentage representation of women and men in decision-making teams and committees	Gender Equality Officer	2025-2027	Annual report on the percentage representation of men and women submitted to Management

Monitoring and controlling the percentage representation of women and men in recruitment and competitions for academic positions	Gender Equality Officer	2025-2027	Annual report on the percentage representation of men and women submitted to Management
Monitoring the participation of women and men in grant applications and grants awarded	Gender Equality Officer	2025-2027	Annual report on the percentage representation of men and women submitted to Management
Developing guidelines to ensure gender balance in competition committees	Gender Equality Officer; Logo HR Working Group	12/2025	Recommendations for Management based on annual reports on the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan
Diagnosing and monitoring the needs of staff returning to research after parental leave, regarding support provided by the Institute	Gender Equality Officer; Logo HR Working Group	12/2025 12/2026 12/2027	Formulation of recommendations regarding the scope of actions and solutions the Institute can offer in this area
Continuation of identifying and monitoring the needs of parents and caregivers regarding support provided by the Institute in the area of work-life balance	Gender Equality Officer; Logo HR Working Group	12/2025 12/2026 12/2027	Formulation of recommendations regarding the scope of actions and solutions the Institute can offer in this area

4. Implementation of the GEP and Monitoring of Actions

Since January 2019, IGC PAS has held the HR Excellence in Research recognition awarded by the European Commission. The continuation of implementing the latest action plan and monitoring its progress is the responsibility of the HR Logo Working Group, which will also be involved in the implementation of this Gender Equality Plan (GEP). The Gender Equality Officer (GEO), appointed by the Director of IGC PAS, oversees, with the support of the HR Logo Working Group members, the proper execution of the planned actions. The GEO is also responsible for linking gender equality initiatives with activities related to implementing the principles of the Charter and Code at the Institute of Human Genetics PAS. Full support from the Institute's Management will facilitate the effective implementation of the GEP and the execution of its individual actions.

The Gender Equality Plan has been developed for a period of three years. In our assessment, this timeframe is necessary to introduce comprehensive changes within the Institute. The plan will be evaluated in 2027, at which stage further adjustments and modifications may be introduced.

5. Resources

Implementing the Gender Equality Plan requires the allocation of appropriate resources, both

human and financial. The Institute will allocate financial resources for the plan's implementation, including, in particular, anti-discrimination training for management and other staff, as well as funding for the position of Gender Equality Officer. Additionally, in line with the Institute's general policy, additional sources of funding will be sought, for example in the form of grants, enabling the Institute to expand the scope of gender equality initiatives. As IGC PAS is a small research center, there is no need to create a separate department dedicated to gender equality issues. The responsibility for implementing the GEP rests with the Gender Equality Officer.

Źródła:

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