



The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) European Movement Albania

2023

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INTRODUCTION

European Movement Albania (EMA) is an independent, non-profit organization, combining think tank and advocacy instruments. EMA was established in February 2007, in response to Albania's increased efforts at speeding up the process of preparing for EU accession. It is devoted to encourage and strengthen the present democratic experiences, by promoting democratic values during the policy making process, analysis and implementation of public policies in the country. It attempts at making the policy-making process more transparent and open, and responsive to the public interest, offering alternative suggestions based on evidenced research. EMA has its organizational structure located in Tirana, and Local Coordinators in the main cities of the country.

End of 2022 data:

- The staff and Board of Directors of EMA consists of 6 people: 66.67% men and 33.33% women.
- The network of experts consisting of around 15 experts with a ratio of 75% female members and 25% male members.
- The internship program until now with 50 engaged interns of EMA, has had a 70% female participation and 30% male participation.

The relevance of GEP

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) aims to evaluate the status quo, ensure visibility and responsibility regarding the process of reaching gender equality within the organization. Gender equality has been a core value of our EMA since its establishment as well as a relevant objective of regional cooperation initiatives promoted by EMA.

In 2022 European Movement Albania (EMA) made relevant progress putting in place the mechanisms and setting up the framework that enables equal opportunities during the recruiting process and career progress in complete alignment towards national legislation, European and international instruments and principles of equality, non-discrimination and promotion of gendered-balance policies.

Legislation

- The Parliament of the Republic of Albania with the proposal of the Council of Ministers has approved the Law No. 9970, date 24.07.2008 “Regarding gender equality in the society” pursuant to Articles 78 and 83 point 1 of the Constitution. This law aims to ensure equal participation of women and men in all areas of life, equal opportunities and chances to enjoy their rights and to fulfil obligations in the society. Moreover, it determines the responsibilities of central and local authorities to draft and implement normative acts, as well as policies that support the development and promotion of gender equality in society.
- EMA has also been paying close attention to the *European Commission’s: A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025* in order to get insights on how to develop policies within the organization while considering gender equality a core value. EMA has also been induced by institutionalized gender mainstreaming when it comes to organizing, improving, drafting and evaluating policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all approaches at all levels.

The current situation and 2022 recommendations

EMA's 2023 GEP provides guidance on how the organization will target and address in a systematic manner the stumbling blocks that impede the functioning of the organization in achieving short and long-term objectives.

Following the implementation of the 2022 GEP our appointed team conducted an internal review process in 2022 and identified a number of lessons learned. It is recommended to take various actions in these areas: (advocacy, recruitment, internal collaboration, communication and monitoring)

- Leadership and decision-making structures of EMA and the network of experts should continue to preserve the gender balance. The election of the Board members should be made on principles of representation and equal opportunities.
- On various projects, EMA prioritizes experts according to the related field of expertise, but also taking into account the non-discrimination principles in terms of gender and sexual orientation.
- The recruitment process and the chances to advance in career should continue to be merit-based.
- When it comes to the internship opportunity, all applicants are welcomed but priority should be given to male applicants since internal organizational data have shown that they are few in applying in such openings (in average the ratio is one application from male applicants for 6 applications from female ones) to apply in such openings.

Objectives of GEP 2023

Objective 1: Gender balance in recruitment and career progression

EMA needs to continue to have a merit-based recruitment process and guarantees equal possibilities for applicants/prospective staff and current staff regarding skill development. It also needs to promote and provide the career development of everyone without any discrimination and prejudice.

This can be done by:

- Updating the internal policy to ensure gender balance in recruitment
- Make clear information on promotion criteria
- Take appropriate measures to correct the gender imbalances already detected

- Increase transparency and standardization of advertising of positions, job descriptions, workload, pay, and office hours

Objective 2: Identify training opportunities on gender equality to increase the internal knowledge

This can be achieved by:

- Developing expertise on gender equality
- Ensuring knowledge circulation to EMA staff
- A strategic approach will be designed to pursue the integration of gender dimension into
EMA supported actions to increase the number of actions addressing gender issues and, more generally, to ensure that all actions are gender responsive and create synergy with already existing initiatives.

Objective 3: Combat Gender-based violence

- EMA fully respects the national legislation when it comes to gender-based harassment in the work place, but having a code of conduct in case of complaints would facilitate the steps needed to be taken.
- Mandatory anti-harassment training to employees should be delivered
- An Emergency Response Protocol with clear guidelines on how first respondents should react in case of harassment should be developed
- Gender sensitivity trainings shall be conducted with the staff and network of experts so stereotypes will be removed through capacity-building.

Objective 4: Establish and strengthen partnerships that effectively support the development and implementation of programs that address gender inequalities

This can be achieved by:

- Developing a robust communications and advocacy strategy that promotes gender equality
- Taking into consideration best practices on eradication of stereotypes and social preconceptions from other similar entities
- Acknowledging the substantial role played by civil society in protecting human rights
- Developing an enabling environment for the advancement of the civil society sector gender balance practices, through research, monitoring, and cross-sectoral dialogue, for the development of policies in support of the sector based on the best international standards.
- Introduction of innovative practices that bring social change

Monitoring process and follow up reports

As mentioned above, a specific unit consisting of elected staff together with an actor that has expertise in gender equality shall be appointed to evaluate the implementation of the measures included in the GEP. The involved actors shall promote gender equality change for a better, balanced and inclusive working environment.

Monitoring does not only enable to see where and how actions are being implemented but also helps to create accountability and ensure sustainability of positive measures.

Indicators on the transparency of recruitment, promotion and evaluation procedures are also needed. The follow up reports that will be conducted in a periodic way (one follow-up report shall cover a period of two-years) and they will draw conclusions regarding the progress made towards achieving gender equality in the organization.

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