

# PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN SOFIA (METROPOLITAN) MUNICIPALITY

## Introduction

This Plan for gender equality in Sofia (Metropolitan) Municipality is a basic document planning the goals, purposes and specific measures to be implemented by the municipality in sync with its other divisions to achieve the set purposes.

The plan is based on one of the main principles of Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality, namely the principle of providing equal opportunities for career development to all employees, without allowing direct or indirect discrimination. In this sense, the Plan is a natural extension of the inherent pursuit of the municipality of institutionalization of the gender equality, and builds on it through measures promoting equality in five priority areas:

- Gender balance in the administration of the Metropolitan Municipality in leadership and decision-making;
- Gender equality in the employment and provision of career development opportunities for employees;
- Work-life balance and organizational culture;
- Measures against gender-based coercion, including sexual harassment.

## Methodology

The plan of Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality is the result of an analysis of European, national and institutional normative documents, statistical analysis of existing relevant gender-aggregated and -disaggregated data, and existing mechanisms. The Plan is in line with the key strategic documents of the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) related to gender equality in public administration, with the latest amendments of the policies of the European Commission (EC) in the field, as well as with the framework directives and national strategic and normative documents concerning gender equality.

Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality works to ensure such equal treatment and attitude guaranteeing all employees a favorable work environment devoid of any gender-based stereotypes and prejudice.

In 2022, the total number of full-time employees in the administration of Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality is 1,348 employees, of which 1,034 women and 314 men. In percentage terms, women are 68% of the total number of employees compared to 32% men.

The composition of the employees in Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality is as follows:

- Pursuant to Article 19 A, including the mayor, 5 women and 5 men – ratio 50% to 50%;
- Senior management positions, 22 women and 18 men – ratio 55% to 45%;
- Management positions, 55 women and 20 men – ratio 73% to 27%;

- Expert positions, 592 women and 143 men – ratio 81% to 19%;
- Support and technical positions, 186 women and 85 men – ratio 69% to 31%;
- Other activities, 174 women and 43 men – ratio 80% to 20%;

In the twenty-four regional administrations, the total number of full-time employees is 1,688. Of which 1242 are women and 446 are men – ratio 74% to 26%. The management positions in the administrations are held by 287 employees, of which 160 women and 127 men – ratio 56% to 44%. Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality aims at maintaining a balance of the gender ratio of the full-time employees, although women traditionally predominate in individual divisions according to the field of work.

Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality creates opportunities for employees to take care of their families, if necessary. Given the specifics of the activities in the individual divisions of Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality that may be executed remotely, floating work hours and remote work are available to parents with small children. Many projects allow employees to participate in vocational trainings, including after returning from extended parental leave. The implementation of this plan will create conditions for strict observance of the principle of gender-based anti-discrimination in order to promote anti-discrimination awareness and create a work and public environment free of any stereotypes and prejudice.

### **Scope of the Plan**

The plan is developed for a period of six years from 2022 to 2028, and covers all basic activities arising from the responsibilities of Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality as an employer, in accordance with the European and national normative and strategic documents containing guidelines for ensuring equality between women and men.

### **Objectives of the Plan and priority areas of intervention**

The Plan for gender equality in Sofia (Metropolitan) Municipality identifies opportunities to build on the achievements to ensure balance. On this basis, the following main goal was laid out:

*Improvement of the trend of the balance between women and men and implementation of good practices to achieve de facto gender equality in Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality.*

The Plan highlights priority areas and sets goals as follows:

1. Gender balance in the administration of the Metropolitan Municipality in leadership and decision-making:

Objective 1.1: Creating conditions for and pursuit of gender equality;

Objective 1.2: Assessment of the environment and identification of the strengths and weaknesses in the light of the gender balance in the management positions;

Objective 1.3: Achieving and maintaining balance in the administrative structures of Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality.

2. Gender equality in the employment and provision of career development opportunities for employees;

Objective 2.1: Assessment of the environment and identification of the strengths and weaknesses in the employment and career development;

Objective 2.2: Achieving and maintaining equality in the recruitment of human resources;

Objective 2.3: Achieving and maintaining equality in providing opportunities for career development.

3. Work-life balance as part of the organizational culture:

Objective 3.1: Identification of the needs of the employees related to the work-life balance;

Objective 3.2: Ensuring work-life balance for the employees;

Objective 3.3: Promoting a culture of equality in the care for dependent family members.

4. Measures against gender-based coercion, including sexual harassment:

Objective 4.1: Assessment of the environment and identification of the needs;

Objective 4.2: Optimization of the controls;

Objective 4.3: Enhancement of the institutional culture.

## **ACTION PLAN PER PRIORITY AREAS FOR INTERVENTION**

### **1. Gender balance in the administration of the Metropolitan Municipality in leadership and decision-making**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Measure/Activity</b>	<b>indicator</b>	<b>Resources / funding</b>	<b>Responsible person</b>
<b>Creating conditions for and pursuit of gender equality</b>	Formation of a working/expert group to monitor the implementation of the current plan and its objectives, including to be engaged with the annual reporting based on the specified indicators.	Working group formation deadline: end of 2022  Indicators: Formed working/expert group; Number of working meetings/sessions	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management, managers of divisions

		held; Number of prepared annual reports related to the Plan implementation;		
<b>Assessment of the environment and identification of the strengths and weaknesses in the light of the gender balance in the management positions</b>	Systematic acquisition of gender-disaggregated data and compliance/monitoring of the gender ratio in all management structures of Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality, as well as in all competitions for management positions.	Term: ongoing Indicators: Prepared database; Performed monitoring and analysis based on collected data	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget	HR Department and/or Working/Expert Group
<b>Achieving and maintaining balance in the administrative structures of Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality</b>	Encouraging representatives of the underrepresented gender in the respective division to apply, if possible	Term: ongoing Indicator: number of people informed.	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management, managers of divisions
	Given equal other conditions and qualities of the applicants, employment of the applicant from the underrepresented gender in the respective division	Term: ongoing Indicator: Number of people assigned;	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget	Division managers and directors of directorates
	Participation in leadership trainings organized by Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality	Term: ongoing Indicators: Number of trainings organized and conducted; Number of participants;	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget, related projects	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management
	Participation in trainings and workshops organized by Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality to promote the pursuit of gender balance and building an institutional culture to recognize and prevent gender-based prejudice	Term: ongoing Indicators: Number of trainings organized and conducted (minimum 1 training per year); Number of participants;	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget, related projects	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management

## 2. Gender equality in the recruitment of human resources and provision of career development opportunities for employees

Objective	Measure/Activity	Deadline / target indicators	Resources	Responsible person
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			<b>and funding</b>	
<b>Assessment of the environment and identification of the strengths and weaknesses in the employment and career development</b>	Systematic acquisition of gender-disaggregated data and monitoring of the gender ratio in the administration positions	Term: ongoing Indicators: Prepared database; Performed monitoring and analysis, based on collected data.	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget	HR Department and/or Working/Expert Group
	Surveys for identification of the strengths and weaknesses in the employment process and the existing career development opportunities and procedures	Term: ongoing Indicators: Брой conducted research/surveys (1 per year); Number of participants.	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget	Division managers and HR Department
<b>Achieving and maintaining equality in the recruitment of human resources</b>	Participation in trainings for recognition of gender prejudice of all managers influencing the recruitment and selection of employees	Term: ongoing Indicators: Number of trainings conducted; Number of participants.	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget	Division managers/directors of directorates
<b>Achieving and maintaining equality in providing opportunities for career development</b>	Awareness about the manner of submitting complaints in case of gender-based discrimination (to managers of divisions in terms of forms, email addresses, etc.)	Term: ongoing Conducted information campaigns and/or equivalent; Number of informed participants; Number of complaints submitted and processed.	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget, funding by third parties	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management
	Regular information campaigns for awareness and reaction against the gender-based discrimination	Term: ongoing. Indicators: Conducted information campaigns; Number of informed participants.	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget, funding by third parties	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management

### **3. Work-life balance as part of the organizational culture**

Objective	Measure/Activity	Deadline	Resources / funding	Responsible person
<b>Identification of the needs of the employees related to the work-life balance</b>	Systematic acquisition of gender-disaggregated data and monitoring of the gender ratio of the employees in parental leave	Term: ongoing  Indicators: prepared database; performed monitoring and analysis based on collected data; number of men/women on childcare leave.	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management and HR Department and/or Working/Expert Group
	Participation in a survey conducted by Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality for identification of the needs of the employees related to the work-life balance	Term: 2023-2025  Indicator: Conducted survey research; Number of participants.	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management
<b>Ensuring work-life balance for the employees</b>	Communicating to the employees the opportunities for temporary or permanent floating work hours and/or on remote work	Term: ongoing  Indicators: Number of conducted information campaigns; Number of participants; Number of employees benefited.	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget	Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management  Division managers

<p><b>Promoting a culture of equality in the care for dependent family members</b></p>	<p>Informing and encouraging the men in Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality to use parental leave or leave for care for family members</p>	<p>Term: ongoing Indicators: Informative meetings held; Number of informed participants; Number of men on childcare leave.</p>	<p>Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget</p>	<p>Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management  Division managers</p>
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#### 4. Measures against gender-based coercion, including sexual harassment

Objective	Measure/Activity	Deadline / target indicators	Resources and funding	Responsible person
<p><b>Assessment of the environment and identification of the needs</b></p>	<p>Survey among the employees of the municipality for diagnosis and identification of problems and risks</p>	<p>Term: 2023  Indicator: Conducted 1 survey/research.</p>	<p>Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget</p>	<p>Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management</p>
<p><b>Optimization of the controls</b></p>	<p>Informing the employees of Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality of the need and their commitment to prepare a report procedure to division managers in cases of gender-based discrimination and coercion.</p>	<p>Term: 2023  Indicators: Number of informed employees; Number of reporting protocols.</p>	<p>Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget</p>	<p>Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management</p>
	<p>Informing the employees of Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality about the supplements to the Code of Conduit of the municipality</p>	<p>Term: in case of an addition to the Code of Ethics in the period 2022-2028 Indicator: Number of informed employees.</p>	<p>Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget</p>	<p>Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management</p>
<p><b>Enhancement of the institutional culture</b></p>	<p>Participation in trainings and workshops organized by Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality to build an institutional culture to recognize and prevent gender-based coercion</p>	<p>Terms: 2023, 2025-2028 Indicators: Conducted 4 trainings; Number of participants.</p>	<p>Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality budget</p>	<p>Sofia (Metropolitan) municipality management</p>