



CENER 21

Association Center for Energy, Environment and Resources

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2025-2027

February, 2025

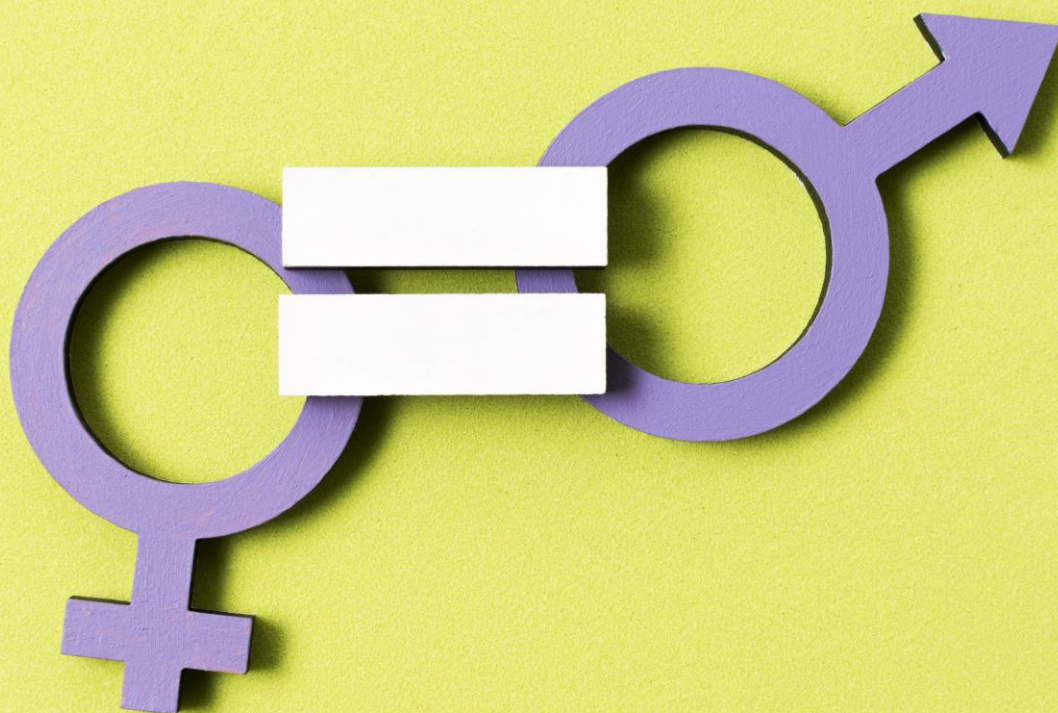


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Executive summary

This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) establishes CENER 21's strategic, operational, and organizational commitment to promoting gender equality, equal opportunities, and inclusive, safe, and respectful working environments. The Plan aligns with the international human rights standards, national legislation, internal procedures and Horizon Europe requirements as well as CENER 21's mission to advance sustainability, energy efficiency, climate action, and circular economy through inclusive and socially responsible approaches.

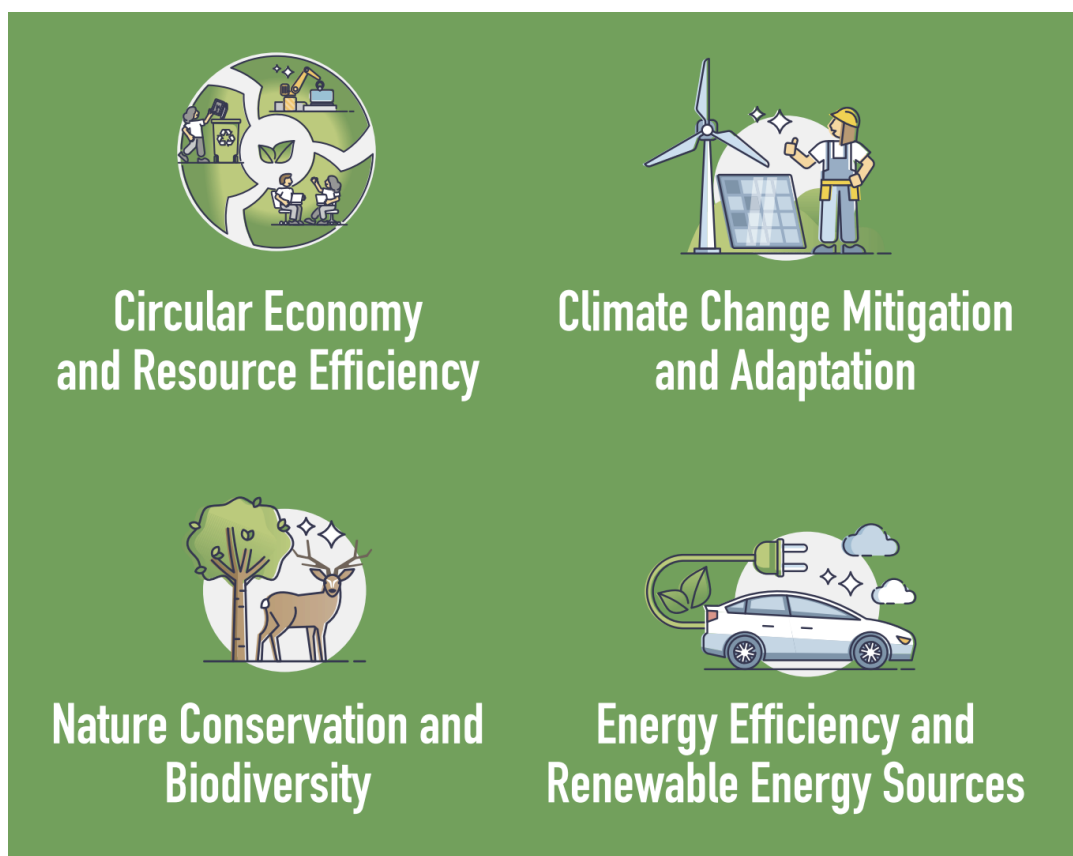
The GEP outlines four mandatory building blocks and five thematic priority areas. It includes a detailed Action Plan with measures, timelines, responsibilities, and monitoring indicators applicable to the organizational structure and scale of CENER 21.

The Plan will be publicly available, regularly updated, and integrated into the organization's strategic, HR and project-management systems.

Introduction

Organizational Context

CENER 21 is a not-for-profit enterprise established in 2006 with the mission to contribute to sustainable development in South East Europe working directly with key stakeholders, including international organizations, the government, industry and local authorities deploying expertise in the areas of:



CENER 21 works alongside **policy makers, businesses and business support organisations** across the region to promote, develop and implement a **systemic transition to a greener tomorrow**. Building on nearly two decades of experience, we act as a bridge between policy frameworks and practical implementation, ensuring that strategies are translated into concrete actions. Drawing upon our **regional network of specialists and partners**, we have successfully delivered projects that support SMEs in greening their operations, guide governments in aligning with EU circular economy policies, and strengthen local authorities in improving waste management and resource efficiency. This integrated approach allows us to **combine technical**

expertise, policy insight, and on-the-ground experience, enabling us to empower key stakeholders at every level of the green transition.

The Association Center for Energy, Environment and Resources – CENER 21 was officially established on 12 June 2006 by the Decision of the Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

CENER 21 operates through three key units: the Project Management and Implementation Unit, responsible for overseeing all aspects of project execution, including timelines, milestones and compliance with technical standards; the Communication Team, tasked with public relations, stakeholder engagement and the dissemination of project results; and the Administration Team, which provides support on administrative and financial matters. The composition of teams within the Project Management and Implementation Unit is carefully selected based on the educational background and professional qualifications of each team member. The organizational structure is illustrated in the chart below.

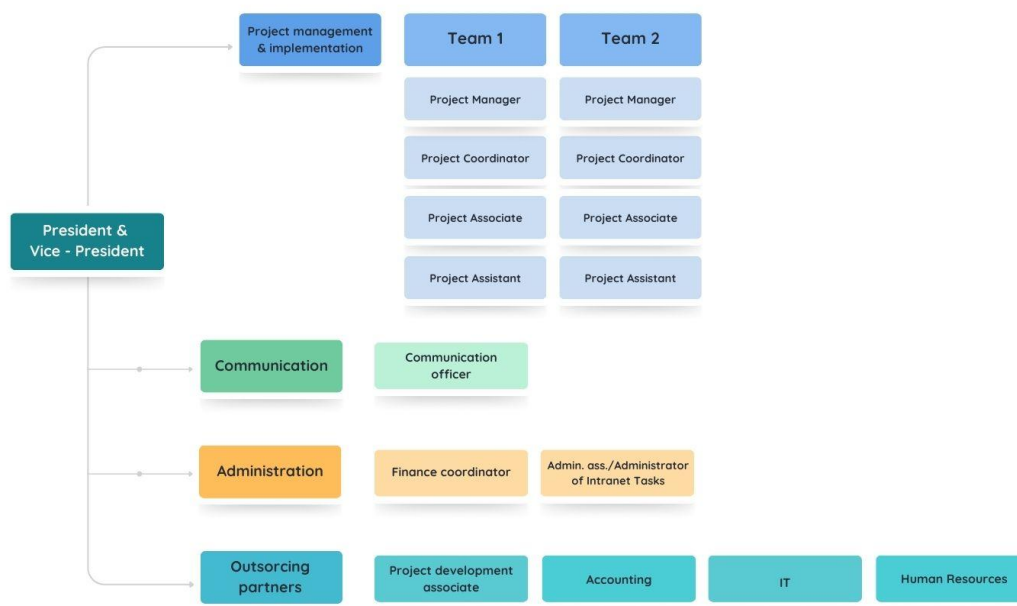


Figure 1. Organogram of the management structure of CENER21

CENER 21 currently counts 12 full-time employees (FTE).

Table 1. Number of employees

Year 2022	10 full-time employees
Year 2023	12 full-time employees
Year 2024	17 full-time employees

Year 2025

12 full-time employees

CENER 21 is led by a president and a vice-president and is governed by a board responsible for strategic oversight and policy formulation. With nearly two decades of experience, CENER 21 has managed both small-scale and large-scale projects with budgets up to 1 million BAM. Financial oversight for each project is ensured by an internal financial coordinator and supplemented by an external accounting firm that we outsource. Additionally, donor projects are verified by First Level Control (FLC) entities, such as the Ministry of Finance and Treasury of BiH or a private revision company, depending on donor requirements. Each procurement is conducted in strict accordance with CENER 21's own procedures, which align with national standards and EU PRAG guidelines. Our extensive experience with EU-funded projects, along with our client-oriented consultancy assignments, ensures we are well-equipped to effectively manage these processes.

Legal, Institutional and EU Policy Framework

This GEP is informed by:

EU-Level Frameworks

- EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025
- European Research Area (ERA) Policy Agenda
- Horizon Europe Gender Equality Requirements
- EU Directive on Work–Life Balance for Parents and Carers
- EU Framework for Gender Mainstreaming
- International Labour Organization (ILO) standards
- UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality)

National Frameworks

- Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (“Zakon o ravnopravnosti spolova u BiH”, Official Gazette of BiH 16/03, 102/09, 32/22)
- Law on Prohibition of Discrimination (Official Gazette of BiH 59/09, 66/16)
- BiH Labour and Employment Framework Policies
- Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina (GAP BiH) 2023–2027

Entity-Level Laws – Federation of BiH (relevant for CENER 21's headquarters)

- Labour Law of the Federation of BiH (Official Gazette FBiH 26/16, 89/18)
- Law on Safety and Health at Work (FBiH) (Official Gazette 79/20)
- Law on Protection from Domestic Violence (FBiH)

Internal CENER 21 Documents

- Rulebook on Work, July 2023
- Hybrid work model guidelines
- Internal communication and project-management procedures

The Plan complements existing internal procedures and introduces new structured measures where needed.

Leadership Commitment to Gender Equality

Official Commitment Statement

CENER 21 recognizes gender equality as a fundamental human right, a prerequisite for sustainable development, and a core component of organizational excellence. Through this Gender Equality Plan, CENER 21 reaffirms its commitment to integrating gender perspectives across all internal processes—from recruitment, team leadership, and professional development to project design, research activities, and public engagement. Our ambition is to create a workplace where every person has equal opportunities to contribute, grow, and lead, supported by a safe, respectful, and inclusive organizational culture. We commit to transparent systems, fair representation, and proactive measures that eliminate barriers and promote dignity, well-being, and equality for all.

This statement has been endorsed by the President of CENER 21 and approved by the Executive Board.

GEP Building Blocks

Public Document & Visibility

CENER 21 will:

- Publish this GEP on the official website (visible on the homepage footer).
- Share the GEP internally via the Intranet (MS Teams).
- Communicate key elements to staff during onboarding and team meetings.

Dedicated Resources

Given the team size, resources will be proportionate and realistic:

- **Gender Equality Focal Point** appointed internally (part-time function).
- **Annual internal training budget** allocated for gender equality and diversity learning.
- **Minimum 2 working days per year** dedicated to monitoring, reporting, and updating the GEP.
- Integration of gender equality tasks into HR, project management, and leadership roles.

Gender Data Collection & Monitoring

CENER 21 will collect and analyse gender-disaggregated data annually, including:

- Workforce composition by role, contract type, seniority
- Recruitment and promotion statistics
- Participation in training and capacity-building
- Salary structure and pay gap analysis (simplified due to NGO salary system)
- Use of flexible work arrangements
- Complaints and prevention records (if any)

Data will be reported in an anonymized format.

Training & Capacity Building

CENER 21 will introduce:

- Annual gender-equality awareness training
- Training on unconscious bias in recruitment and team leadership
- Training on preventing sexual harassment and building safe workplaces
- Integration of gender considerations into project development and proposal writing

These sessions will be mandatory for leadership and managers and open to all staff.

Thematic Priority Areas

Work–Life Balance and Organizational Culture

CENER 21 will:

- Maintain and strengthen a hybrid work model.
 - Promote flexible scheduling when project requirements allow.
 - Ensure the right to disconnect outside working hours.
 - Encourage respectful, supportive communication and collaboration.
 - Include well-being considerations in team planning and retreats.
 - Integrate gender-sensitive language in all organizational documents.
- Organizational culture will highlight dignity, cooperation, transparency, and respect.

Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making

CENER 21 will:

- Strive toward **balanced gender representation** in leadership roles (President, Vice President, Project Managers).
- Ensure gender balance in interview panels and selection committees.
- Include a gender-equality criterion in leadership evaluations.
- Promote leadership development opportunities equally to all staff.

Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression

CENER 21 will:

- Use gender-neutral language in all job advertisements.
- Apply transparent, merit-based selection criteria (already defined in internal job descriptions).
- Ensure shortlists include qualified candidates of different genders whenever possible.
- Standardize interview scoring sheets to minimize bias.
- Provide equal access to training, professional development, and mentorship.
- Establish clear advancement pathways aligned with job descriptions.

Integration of Gender Dimension into Research and Projects

In alignment with EU standards, CENER 21 will ensure:

- All research, analytical outputs, and project proposals assess whether gender dimensions are relevant.
- Projects that include behavioural components (e.g., energy use, waste separation, public engagement) integrate gender-sensitive assumptions and data.
- Stakeholder engagement activities (workshops, surveys, public consultations) apply inclusive approaches.
- Gender considerations are reflected in sustainability strategies, climate resilience initiatives, and circular economy models where appropriate.

Prevention of Gender-Based Violence, Harassment, and Discrimination

CENER 21 will:

- Adopt a formal **Anti-Harassment and Dignity at Work Policy**.
- Establish a confidential reporting channel (designated focal point + external option).
- Ensure zero tolerance for harassment, bullying, discrimination, and retaliation.
- Provide mandatory annual training to staff.
- Maintain clear procedures for case management, confidentiality, and protection of all parties.

Action Plan 2025 - 2027

Work-Life Balance & Culture

Measure	Responsible	Timeline	Indicator
Maintain and formalize hybrid work model	President, HR/Focal Point	2025	Hybrid work policy adopted
Introduce right-to-disconnect guideline	Vice President	2025	Guideline developed and shared
Conduct annual well-being survey	HR & Admin	2025–2027	Survey completed; actions taken
Promote respectful communication standards	All Team Leads	Ongoing	No cases of workplace conflict or reported issues

Gender Balance in Leadership

Measure	Responsible	Timeline	Indicator
Ensure gender-balanced shortlists for leadership roles	President	Ongoing	At least 40% representation per gender in shortlisted candidates
Include gender-equality selection criteria	HR	2025	Updated recruitment forms
Offer leadership training equally	Team Leads	2025–2027	Participation by all genders

Recruitment and Career Progression

Measure	Responsible	Timeline	Indicator
Gender-neutral language in vacancies	HR	Ongoing	100% of job ads reviewed

Standardized scoring sheets	HR	2025	Tools updated
Annual training access for all staff	Vice President	2025–2027	Training attendance records

Gender Dimension in Research and Projects

Measure	Responsible	Timeline	Indicator
Gender relevance check integrated into project templates	Project Managers	2025	Updated templates
Training on gender in research	Focal Point	2025	At least 70% staff trained
Inclusive stakeholder engagement	Project Teams	Ongoing	Gender-disaggregated participation data

Prevention of Violence & Harassment

Measure	Responsible	Timeline	Indicator
Adopt Anti-Harassment Policy	President	2025	Policy approved
Establish reporting mechanism	Focal Point	2025	Confidential channel operational
Mandatory training	HR	Annual	100% staff participation

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

CENER 21 commits to:

- Annual review of all gender-disaggregated indicators
- Mid-term review of GEP implementation (2026)
- Final evaluation at the end of 2027
- Presentation of findings to all staff
- Adjusting measures as needed based on organizational growth.



CENER 21

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