



Evaluation by the Commission »Quality Management of Max Planck Gender Equality Plans (GEP)« of the Gender Equality Plan provided by the Max Planck Institute for Software Systems

The Commission awards this Gender Equality Plan the **SILVER** label.

EXPLANATION

The Max Planck Institute for Software Systems has submitted a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) that meets the Max Planck standards: comprehensiveness, institutional fit and sustainability.

Comprehensiveness

All the components that make the GEP an effective monitoring tool for gender equality objectives and measures (status report, analysis, fields and objectives of action, measures, evaluation) are in place. The foreword by the institute's Board of Directors and the Gender Equality Officers addresses the employees and explains the aims and purpose of the GEP. The GEP is available in a clear layout in both German and English. In the German version, the implementation of gender-neutral language is not consistent (e.g. »Mitarbeiter« (p. 14), »Wissenschaftler« (p. 14), »weibliche Kandidaten« (p. 16), »Direktorenstelle (p. 16)). The support of all decision-makers is documented by their signatures.

Institutional Fit

The status report is well structured. It contains a comprehensive set of quantitative and qualitative data that, although incomplete for some of the predefined indicators of the gender situation at the institute, is supplemented by extensive additional data (e.g. key figures for the application process for doctoral positions, parental leave, survey results). This provides a good insight into the gender situation at the MPI. The following gender-specific key figures could further increase the institute's specificity: comparison of position – pay scale, composition of committees and commissions, publications (first and last author), persons quoted in press releases. The implementation status of existing measures has been reported on consistently. However, a data-based evaluation of effectiveness and utilisation has not yet been carried out. This would provide an even better basis for a long-term effective gender equality strategy.

Sustainability

The data collected is analysed comprehensively and accurately, the result consistently serving as a basis for identifying fields of action and goals as well as for developing measures. A large part of the collected data is not analysed. This is understandable in places where the data does not point to obvious inequalities. However, since this is often not apparent to readers without preparation and comparison with suitable reference values, it would make the GEP more accessible if corresponding explanations were added. Some objectives lack the precision necessary for the later evaluation of achievement and the effectiveness of measures.

The GEP includes some promising measures aimed at cultural change (such as destigmatising parental leave through open communication and seminars/discussions, seminars on equity, equality, diversity and inclusion). Structural measures, such as those announced in the last GEP, for example, aligning the application process for doctoral programmes with the institute's gender equality goals, are not currently planned. The measure descriptions contain a great deal of the information necessary for successful implementation and evaluation. It may be helpful to add information on target groups, indi-

cators of success, and actors. The information on costs, resources and financing, timeline as well as evaluation methods and timing could be more precise.

Overall, the – admittedly small – science support sector is largely ignored in the formulation of fields of action, objectives and measures. A concept that does not address an essential group of staff is not suitable for promoting gender equality at the institute. The Commission recommends that measures to improve the gender equality situation in the science support sector should also be developed in the future.

Please note: The Gender Equality Plan contains misleading information. The Federal Equality Act itself does not serve as a basis for the MPIs' gender equality work. The Max Planck Society applies the Max Planck Equality Principles, which adapt the main features of the Act to the specific structure of the research organisation.

The Max Planck Institute for Software Systems presents a convincing gender equality strategy that benefits, among other things, from a comprehensive status report and the consistently derived fields of action, goals and measures. There is room for improvement in the way the science-supporting area is addressed. The formulation of further structural measures could be considered. Successes already achieved, such as the adaptation of the application procedure for the doctoral programmes and the appointment of two women to tenure-track positions from 2022, promise further progress in gender equality. The Commission looks forward to seeing this progress and reading about the continuation of the commitment in the next Gender Equality Plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ulla Weber', written in a cursive style.

November 2024 / Ulla Weber
for the Commission QM-GEP