

G.E.P

Equality and diversity policy. Policy
against Employees' Violence and
Harassment



**HELLENIC REPUBLIC
REGION OF THESSALY**



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Equality and diversity policy

Policy against employees' violence and harassment

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Article 1: Introduction

The Region of Thessaly is one of the 13 administrative Greek Regions. It is the main actor for the development planning and economic growth of the wider Thessaly area, a region with strong presence in agriculture, industry, and tertiary sectors. The region is undergoing a transitional process towards a more sustainable future.

Thessaly is a traditional geographic and modern administrative region of Greece, comprising most of the ancient region of the same name. Before the Greek Dark Ages, Thessaly was known as Aeolia (Greek: Αἰολία) and appears thus in Homer's Odyssey. Thessaly became part of the modern Greek state in 1881, after four and a half centuries of Ottoman rule. Since 1987 it has formed one of the country's 13 regions [2] and is further (since the Kallikratis reform of 2010) sub-divided into 5 regional units and 25 municipalities. The capital of the region is Larissa. Thessaly lies in central Greece and borders the regions of Macedonia on the north, Epirus on the west, Central Greece on the south and the Aegean Sea on the east. The Thessaly region also includes the Sporades islands.

The Region of Thessaly is divided into five regional units, to which its 25 municipalities belong. The regional units are geographically identified Region of Thessaly with the corresponding prefectures, except for the Prefecture of Magnesia, which was administratively divided in Magnesia and Sporades.

Regional Units:

- Regional Unit of Karditsa
- Regional Unit of Larissa
- Regional Unit of Magnisia
- Regional Unit of Sporades
- Regional Unit of Trikala

The Region of Thessaly Administration has 907 employees in total in all units and prefectures. Organizational Chart and Regional Administration Structure / roles and responsibilities are available at: https://www.thessaly.gov.gr/organotikidomi/ypiresies?nav=section_autoteleismonades.

The Region of Thessaly Administration and its social partners wish to develop a dialogue in the field of social responsibility and, specifically, to promote equality at workplace for all employees and intensify prevention and to address all forms of violence and harassment at workplace. The region of Thessaly social responsibility policy responds to the need for solidarity and effective human resources' management at all levels. The promotion of equal opportunities, equal treatment and diversity of employees is considered imperative for the Region of Thessaly, in the context of its function as a partner in EU projects and actions.

The Region of Thessaly Administration and its governor confirms its commitment to general principles regarding equal opportunities over the long term and the rejection of all forms of violence. In this context, Region of Thessaly undertakes to promote and launch actions that support diversity at multiple levels, the upward mobility of its staff and the prevention of all forms of violence and harassment at workplace, which are indicators that Region of Thessaly is working closely with society.

Region of Thessaly Administration takes into account the following:

- Gender equality is a fundamental human right, recognized both internationally and throughout the European Union.
- Gender equality is one of the five values underpinning the European Union, which is obliged to integrate it into all its activities.
- The main goals and objectives of the European Commission's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025.
- The Charter of Fundamental Human Rights promotes equality and prohibits all sexual discrimination.
- The requirements for preventing and responding to all forms of violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment and sexual harassment, as defined by the national Greek legislation with the law by number 4808/2021 (coded with law no 5078/2023)*
- Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance,
- EU Directive 2006/54/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of work and employment.
- Greek Law no 3488/2006 - FEK 191/A/11.9.2006. Implementation of the principle of equal treatment of men and women regarding access to employment, professional training and development, working terms and conditions and other relevant provisions.
- Greek Law no 4604 / 26-3-2019. Promoting substantive gender equality, preventing, and combating gender-based violence - Other provisions.

() As regards the workers and employees of par. 1 in the public sector, as defined in article 14 of Law 4270/2014 (A' 143), regardless of their status, ONLY articles 4 to 8, 13, 14, 15 be applied and Article 12 accordingly.*

REGION OF THESSALY recognizes that National and European rights prohibiting sexual discrimination and encouraging equal treatment in employment, including equal wages for women and men for equivalent work or work of equivalent value, and the commitment made by EU institutions and organizations and trade unions at all levels for establishing equality between women and men, have contributed both to increasing the number of women in the labor market, in order to guarantee better quality of education and for increasing the number of women in the labor market.

We recognize, however, that unfortunately the gender pay gap persists in many sectors of the economy, and in the EU labor market, women are sometimes over-represented in lower paid sectors and under-represented in decision-making positions. In addition, REGION OF THESSALY's long experience in managing and participating in European development projects, employment promotion, social cohesion and solidarity projects, vocational training, social inequality eradication, refugee integration and other projects provided us with additional knowledge and a broader understanding of work and professional opportunities in EU countries.

Therefore, REGION OF THESSALY's management considers necessary to undertake further action, as stated in the EU strategy, on gender equality, in particular with regard to equal pay and women's access to decision-making positions, but also to combat gender-based violence. REGION OF THESSALY's workplace equality policy is based on three key factors:

- combating discrimination to achieve equal opportunities and treatment.
- promoting diversity as a source of wealth for the company.

- Preventing and detrending incidents of gender-based violence and harassment and sexual harassment.

The present policy was designed, based on the above pillars, which expresses the dominant perception of Region of Thessaly's administration department, which is the following: equality at workplace not only contributes to the economic and social performance of the Region of Thessaly's government, but also improves cohesion and contributes to changing attitudes in society.

This Policy applies to the Region of Thessaly organization, and its units and prefectures, as well as to consortia/partnerships, subject to the dominant influence criterion.

Article 2: Policy for Equality and Diversity. Employees' Policy against Violence and Harassment

Chapter 1 - Equality Policy

The Region of Thessaly recognizes that diversity and inclusion help to support creativity and innovation which are an essential component of a successful organization. The HR /Administration Department of Region of Thessaly is committed to encouraging diversity and inclusion and ensuring that there is no discrimination in our organization. We want our staff and our partners to truly represent the diversity of society. We want us to be an organization in which every employee and collaborator feels respected and able to perform the most of their potential.

To this end, this policy provides a framework of equality and fairness for everyone in our activities and at Region of Thessaly workplaces. It expresses our commitment to avoid discrimination on the basis of **age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital status (including civil partnerships), race, ethnic origin, skin color, nationality, religion or belief or sexual orientation**. Furthermore, the scope of this equality policy is extended to include people with limited opportunities, socially excluded people and people with special needs who are under-represented in the modern working environment. A key aspect of equality policy is, of course, the employees' gender, as the main field of reference. This policy applies to employees and freelancers/external employees and to people working inside and outside of Region of Thessaly's premises.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out the conditions required to reduce and unjust if Region of Thessaly disputes that may exist and therefore achieve the following:

- equal opportunities for women and men,
- equal wage for male and female employees, taking into account all aspects of working conditions,
- a better work-life balance for both male and female employees.

Therefore, the Region of Thessaly Administration is committed to maintaining a consistent and honest attitude and behavior on issues related to equality and diversity. The HR / Administration Dept clearly encourages all Region of Thessaly departments and working groups to ensure that the composition of human resources to express the variety existing in society in order to achieve greater diversity. This part includes women, obviously, who despite their developing role in the professional sector, are generally under-represented at senior management levels in our country and the EU. In Region of Thessaly Administration, during all years of operation, we have succeeded in maintaining Employee and Staff ratios and indicators in various areas that differentiate us positively from the average in the services sector. Our main strategy is continuous improvement through the implementation of action plans, as outlined in this Policy to combat stereotypes and promote equality between all men and women and people belonging to special groups, within the Region of Thessaly administration and in the cooperative and partnership schemes in which we participate in the implementation of European projects.

All partners, collaborators and employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect in the Region of Thessaly organization. The recruitment choice, whether as an Region of Thessaly staff member or as a freelancer/external contractor, will be based on the professional competence, level of education, skills and qualifications of each candidate. Access to promotion

opportunities, training or any other benefit will also be based on the individual's competences and skills. All employees will be encouraged to develop their potential and talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilized to maximize the creativity and success of the Region of Thessaly organization.

We, as Region of Thessaly's HR / Administration Department:

- We actively seek to increase the number of people we work with, who come from groups/communities underrepresented in governmental organizations and public bodies, or in particular job roles in our regional government. Emphasis is placed on recruitment and selection of new staff, with preferential recruitment of under-represented groups, usually women and/or people with disabilities.
- We ensure wage and benefit structures, with policies aimed at achieving gender equality that incorporate all issues related to anti-discrimination. Additionally, in conjunction with equal wage, we ensure that the phenomenon known as the 'glass ceiling' ceases to exist and is replaced by career progression for women at the same level as that of men, i.e., based solely on their professional skills.
- We examine and review all formal and informal employment/recruitment practices and procedures to ensure they are fair and help us identify the best talent, without discrimination or segregation.
- We will identify and seize opportunities to increase the diversity of individuals in shaping and making decisions at management and operational level.
- We make reasonable adjustments to the workplace and work organization to enable people with special skills and/or special needs to work in or with our company.
- We actively seek to increase diversity in our networks and recruitment 'pools'.
- We maintain working conditions and a working environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff and external partners are recognized and valued. We regularly review the organization and flexibility of work based on the needs of our staff members.
- We ensure that every employee and external partner is able to work in an environment that promotes dignity and respect for all. We will not tolerate any form of bullying, intimidation, or harassment.
- We ensure that all staff members have opportunities for training, development and upscaling. Emphasis will be placed on promoting and developing the careers of under-represented groups in our industry, usually women. We continuously invest in the organization of personal and professional development policies (including skills assessment and mentoring) .
- We design and implement various family-friendly measures to better reconcile work and family life, better work-life balance for employees. These may include provisions on parental, maternity, childcare and other types of family leave, specific working time arrangements (regulate of part-time work, job sharing, etc.) and childcare arrangements.
- We have put in place programs, action plans and good practice rules to ensure equality and enhance diversity which are reflected in measurable objectives, which are listed in Chapter 3 (Annex). These targets are monitored periodically and reviewed in terms of timescales and achievement.

Chapter 2 - Policy against Employees' Violence and Harassment

The Region of Thessaly Administration complies with all measures and obligations relating to the implementation of the provisions of Part II of Law 4808/2021, to prevent and respond to all forms of violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment and sexual harassment. The purpose of this policy is to create and consolidate a working environment that respects, promotes and safeguards human dignity and the right of every person to a world of work free from violence and harassment. Region of Thessaly Administration declares that the right of every employee to a work environment free of violence and harassment is recognized and respected and that it will not tolerate any such behavior, in any form, by any person. For this reason, Region of Thessaly:

- has carried out a systematic assessment of the risks of violence and harassment at work,
- has designed measures to prevent, control, mitigate and address such risks and to monitor such incidents or patterns of behavior,
- has applied a documented Procedure for receiving and examining complaints,
- has implemented information and awareness-raising activities for staff,

This policy is adopted in accordance with Articles 9 and 10 of Law. 4808/2021 and the regulations made pursuant thereto and shall include the persons referred to in par. 1 of Article 3 of Law 4808/2021. The GEP statement is optional for public bodies and Governmental organizations according Law 4808/2021.

Chapter 3 - Validation - Monitoring and Control – Sanctions

This document is prepared by the Administration and HR Department and verified with the signature of regional Governor. Before the final ratification of the text by the head of Region of Thessaly (Governor), this policy is sent and consulted with all Region of Thessaly vice-governors, for improvements, changes, amendments.

In order to effectively implement this policy at Region of Thessaly we have set programs and good practice standards for equality and protection of diversity which are reflected in specific measurable targets/objectives, which are listed in Chapter 3 (Annex). These objectives shall be monitored periodically and reviewed in terms of timetables and their achievement.

At Region of Thessaly, a committee has been set up consisting of 1) a vice-governor, 2) a member of the Regional Council, 3) an Employee Representative, and 4) the lawyer of the Internal Control Dept. of Region of Thessaly's, 5) Head of HR department, provided that there is at least proportional representation, i.e., four of the five members are women. This committee will:

- be responsible for the implementation, evaluation of the effectiveness, review and revision of this policy and the preparation of the action plan.
- ensure that the principles and commitments of this Agreement and group-wide agreements on gender equality.
- monitor and propose indicators necessary for the Group's gender equality policy and propose improvement actions & training programme, if required.

The committee meets periodically every three months and in exceptional circumstances (e.g., complaints) and monitors the success of policy implementation and reviews our progress at least once a year. The committee may establish working groups to develop action plans to help us implement this policy and achieve the specific objectives at Region of Thessaly administration that enhance equality and diversity and prevent all forms of violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment and sexual harassment. The person responsible for ensuring the implementation of the action plans (Article 4) is Region of Thessaly's Governance & Internal Policies Manager. The person responsible for the management of workplace harassment complaints (Liaison) has been appointed by Region of Thessaly's council member and vice governor, Mrs. Maria Galliou.

This policy is fully supported by the Region of Thessaly Governor and regional Council as an official body. Violations of the policy may be considered as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the Region of Thessaly's Organizational manual & Internal Working Rules and the legal framework concerning civil servants and Regional Government employees.

Chapter 4 – Action plans and commitments

Chapter 4.1 - Attitude and behaviors – Communication

Responsibility for compliance with the principle of gender equality in the workplace rests solely with the governor's council and the directors of all organizational Departments. However, the success of this policy is primarily based on changing the attitude and behavior of every person at Region of Thessaly (council members, directors, human resources, employee representatives) regarding the role of men and women both at workplace and in life. From that point of view, regular and constructive dialogue at all levels of REGION OF THESSALY and in the partnerships within the European projects will encourage change. This dialogue will ensure that the objectives of gender equality are fully integrated into all collective agreements, both at the level of Region of Thessaly administration and in all the partnerships and companies involved in its activities.

The Region of Thessaly administration supports innovative measures and policies that contribute to enhancing women's professional experience and their proper integration into the workforce, in particular through learning and apprenticeship programs in all roles, operational and managerial. The HR department analyses any gaps between male and female employees, based on clear and understandable information on wage, training, career development and more. The invisible barriers created through prejudices, stereotypes and the way organizations operate that can stop women and groups of people with different characteristics from progressing in their careers.

The HR/administration Dept. of Region of Thessaly undertakes to provide information on this Policy for raising awareness on gender equality and combating gender-based violence and harassment to all councilors, employees, managers, partners in projects, representatives of institutions and trade unions. Once adopted, this policy is communicated to all interested third parties and is available on the official website of the organization (<https://www.thessaly.gov.gr/>).

Chapter 4.2 - Ensuring equal opportunities in recruitment

Recruitment is an important tool for encouraging diversity in employment and is a dynamic process that determines the composition of the Region of Thessaly's staff. In 2023, women represented the 55 % of the workforce with no significant differences between departments, hierarchy and professional categories. In particular, the percentage in the highest hierarchical positions (executive officers, directors, etc.) reached 47,5%. The Region of Thessaly administration is committed to diversify the positions open to women and to promote their better representation at senior management levels of Region of Thessaly. In particular, the presence of women will be encouraged in managerial and operational activities, as well as in jobs where female representation in the EU employment framework is somehow under-represented and therefore under-appreciated. It is also important to remember the principle of European law that the principle of equality does not prevent the practice or adoption of positive discrimination measures for the underrepresented sex in employment and work.

Furthermore, Region of Thessaly administration regards that work-based training and learning programs are the best way to promote diversity. As such, the Region of Thessaly Administration is committed to developing partnership programs with targeted educational institutions and organizations to develop

competencies and skills in women and other groups of people who are underrepresented at certain levels of Region of Thessaly.

The region of Thessaly and its partner organizations also undertake ensuring that equality in career development is strengthened in the context of the age transition, where young people are assigned tasks and responsibilities. Finally, in order to promote the Group's business activities, intergenerational cooperation and the systematic transfer of knowledge and skills (which are essential to maintain the skills, knowledge and "memory" of the company) will be encouraged through mentoring/coaching programs.

As part of the staffing and recruitment process, Region of Thessaly administration is committed to the following principles:

- Particular attention should be paid to the titles of job offers (always mentioning that a role is open to both men and women). HR department will try to ensure that the way in which the HR department does not perpetuate stereotypes of occupations or their supposed characteristics (availability, mobility).
- Clear standards and quotas for external recruitment and selection agencies on diversity, pluralism and gender equality shall be applied, in particular the systematic presentation of a large number of female candidates whose qualifications match the post applied for, wherever possible.
- The Region of Thessaly administration is committed to verifying the impartiality of recruitment through standardized procedures and to take corrective action when necessary. Therefore, Region of Thessaly reiterates that recruitment criteria should be based on qualifications, skills, level of education and professional experience. Therefore, a person cannot be dismissed or excluded from the recruitment process on the grounds of gender, social or cultural origin, name, city of origin and birth, age, disability, political or religious views, sexuality, trade union membership or any trade union activity. Given this and with the aim of attracting more women to Region of Thessaly's organization, the HR/Administration team will provide guidance and awareness training to all staff and hiring personnel.
- A woman's pregnancy (actual, probable or future) cannot be a factor in discriminating against refusal to recruit. It is Region of Thessaly's administration standard policy to prohibit the HR department or other interested party from seeking any information about a candidate's pregnancy.

Chapter 4.3 - Equality between women and men in terms of career development

The Region of Thessaly is committed to better support the professional development of women throughout their careers, thus facilitating their access to all levels of corporate responsibility and fulfilling the goal of gender parity. Region of Thessaly HR /administrative department is committed to:

- encourage voluntary internal mobility to improve employment diversity and facilitate inter-enterprise activities. When reorganizations take place, whether they occur internally or lead to outsourcing of company activities, the Region of Thessaly is committed to ensuring non-discriminatory treatment of employees.

- methodically encourage women's access to senior management positions, decision-making bodies such as the Head of departments, directors and supervisors (managerial positions in general).
- systematic monitoring and career assessment for women during and after maternity leave (and for both men and women in the case of adoption leave). Before leaving with maternity or paternity leave, the responsible manager/head of department must prepare the employee's departure and temporary replacement. Upon return, the manager shall meet with the employee again to provide a summary of significant events that occurred during the period of absence and to discuss their return to work. Depending on the length of the absence, a job evaluation may be conducted, if necessary. Also, any training provided during maternity or parental leave required for its continuation shall be offered again when the employee returns to work in order to maintain its competence and effectiveness. These principles also apply to cases of parental leave.
- take the necessary measures to ensure that pregnant or breastfeeding women can temporarily adjust their working conditions and/or working hours when these pose a risk to their health or safety. (e.g., in cases of exposure to hazards, when business travel abroad is required, when working in pandemic conditions such as Covid19, when commuting to and from the office is time-consuming or arduous, etc.)
- that at the end of maternity, paternity or adoption leave, the employee has the right to keep his/her job or equivalent position under conditions that are no less favorable.
- ensure that gender equality is considered in the working environment and working conditions and in the design of the infrastructure and facilities used by workers (for example, sanitary facilities, breastfeeding rooms, personal protective equipment, etc.). Workplaces must be equally suitable for both men and women at all levels.

In order to achieve this, discussions should be held with the Party prior to the design of the offices in order to identify appropriate equipment and infrastructure for mixed teams, existing or future. The Region of Thessaly Organization's Risk Assessment also includes gender equality and harassment & violence issues, in which the specific impact of working conditions on women is adequately assessed. The appointed person for Risk Assessment analysis and documentation is the OH&S Department.

Chapter 4.4 – Equal access to vocational training

The Region of Thessaly administration is committed to raising awareness among its directors and heads of departments about the equal development of skills and professional qualifications of employees. At the same time, Region of Thessaly undertakes to pay particular attention to the professional training of women and all under-represented groups in the workforce, and in particular to their access to professional training for senior management positions, in order to stimulate their career development. In addition, the conditions for equal access of executives to seminars, professional workshops, conferences and professional skills certification programs are systematically strengthened. The Region of Thessaly's administrative department is constantly investing in planning personal and professional development policies in a fair and equal way for all its staff without discrimination. Training indicators are included in the indicator monitoring system but also in the annual objectives of this policy (Chapter 3).

Chapter 4.5 - Encouraging networks and mentoring of women

In order to facilitate access to high levels of responsibility and to break the "glass ceiling" of men's career advancement from one point in the hierarchy and above, the Region of Thessaly administration promotes the development of internal and external networks of women and gradually implements a mentoring system. To this end, it cooperates with specialized organisations and NGOs, and makes use of studies and training material produced in the context of the implementation of the European projects in which it participates.

The five-member monitoring committee of this policy assigns a mentor who is a trusted person, male or female, with rich and varied experience in the Region of Thessaly, in the role of a mentor/mentee. The mentor's duty is to guide, assist and motivate the mentored employee, passing on his/her business experience and acquired skills and effective behaviors that he/she has developed in his/her professional life.

The Region of Thessaly management promotes the Women on Top programme where women who are top managers/ directors of Region of Thessaly administration are encouraged to share their experiences within the company, as well as with students from schools and universities.

Chapter 4.6 – Employee's representation

The Region of Thessaly administration recognizes that the representative bodies of employees contribute in the long term, through honest democratic dialogue within the company, to the development and strengthening of the company's position. Therefore, Region of Thessaly would like to take the opportunity through this policy to reiterate its promise, which is also a personal commitment of the members of the management, that the exercise of a representative mandate and/or trade union activity within the legal framework will not adversely affect the career of an individual at Region of Thessaly in any sense.

Chapter 4.7 - Equal wage for equivalent performance and skills

Equality and fairness of pay is one of the most important pillars of this policy for the Region of Thessaly administration. Equal wage for women and men at workplace, in terms of basic salary, performance-related pay (Bonus) and other benefits, is a key factor for equality between women and men in society, which has implications for later retirement but also affects work-life balance. The region of Thessaly transparently applies an objective remuneration system that covers all employees and sends a positive message about the company's values and its methods applied for resource's management. A fair and non-discriminatory system that reflects good management practice and contributes effectively to the achievement of business objectives by encouraging productivity in all employees regardless of gender or other discrimination. In this context, Region of Thessaly's HR department systematically communicates the salary scales and the rules for the development and adjustment of salaries and allowances, as well as the criteria for the distribution of the Productivity Bonus based on objective evaluation criteria, so that all stakeholders are aware of it. In addition, any directly or indirectly

discriminatory pay practices shall be investigated and, if found to exist, abolished. For this to happen, the representative bodies and workers' representatives must be informed of the pay grades and scales within the Region of Thessaly. Based on the information available, the Region of Thessaly management is committed to achieving the following:

- Equal wage for equivalent jobs and years of experience, between the two sexes
- Equal pay between women and men in senior and managerial positions
- Provision of a monthly allowance to female workers for each child
- Documented equivalent salary progression for both sexes

Chapter 4.8 - Progressive management of any discrepancies & special cases

The Region of Thessaly is committed to achieving and maintaining equal wage between women and men in the long term. The Region of Thessaly's HR/ administrative department and operational departments make every effort to even out any discrepancies, for equivalent skills and the same job and level of responsibility. This commitment is part of the action plan provided for in Article 4.7.

All recruitment must comply with the principle of full equality of payment between men and women for equivalent skills and at job level or between jobs with the same responsibilities. If an individual case of discrimination occurs in violation of the applicable regulations, the discrepancy must be remedied within a maximum period of 3 months, with retroactive effect.

Maternity leave is normally a neutral period for individual wage increases and performance-related pay increases. The Region of Thessaly administration is committed to ensuring that maternity leave does not have a negative impact on the salary level or career development of the women concerned. To this end, the Human Resources Department will verify that maternity period will not have a negative impact on individual wage increases or the determination of wage related to job performance. Similarly, the Region of Thessaly's HR department will pay particular attention to parental leave periods in relation to changes in the average earnings of the individual employee concerned.

Chapter 4.9 - Management of part-time employees and trainees

In Region of Thessaly organization, any employee who wishes to work part-time should not be subject to discrimination, in particular regarding his/her remuneration in relation to the actual number of hours worked. Particular attention will be paid by the HR department to the remuneration of part-time workers, who will receive the envisaged salary increases proportional and comparable to those of full-time workers. The gender ratio (Male/Female) of part-time employees in Region of Thessaly, is similar to that of full-time employees. It is the Region of Thessaly's established policy that the employee's workload should be commensurate with the working hours set out in the employment contract and that consideration should be given to adjusting the workload on a case-by-case basis. The HR department also carefully evaluates requests for part-time and part-time employees to move to full-time positions and vice versa, considering the equality factor and the equal treatment of applicants on the basis of their gender.

The Region of Thessaly encourages internships for students and graduates at many levels of its operation. All interns are employed in accordance with the conditions and requirements of national labor & social security legislation and in accordance with the standards set by the institution/educational institution from which they come from. Region of Thessaly applies the same policy for trainees as for full-time employees regarding equality, support for diversity at workplace, prevention and treatment of all forms of violence and harassment at workplace. In addition, Region of Thessaly departmental managers have received clear instructions to observe and prevent unfair practices and unprofessional behavior towards interns by other employees and supervisors, due to abuse of rights based on hierarchical position.

Chapter 4.10 – Work-life balance

The Region of Thessaly seeks to create a better relationship between the private and professional lives of its employees, considering the complex and diverse nature of family situations in modern society. This objective requires above all a better way of planning work and an innovative policy to improve the quality of life at work. Achieving a work-life balance affects not only women but all employees in an organization. Male employees who wish to play a greater role in their family life may find themselves confronted by their company, whether this resistance comes from management or from their colleagues.

The policies and actions implemented by Region of Thessaly administration for this purpose will be tailored to employees' needs, considering that these needs vary throughout a person's life and that long uninterrupted periods of work and/or irregular working hours do not contribute to a work-life balance. Working conditions should be such that workers can adequately fulfil all their family responsibilities, regarding their parents or children, their civic duties, etc. In order to achieve a good work-life balance for employees, parental and/or paternity leave (for both men and women) should be equally available to all.

In consultation with our social partners and our partners in European projects, the Region of Thessaly administrative department ensures that there are no management policies and contractual clauses that support the idea that only women bear family responsibilities. It is important to clarify that the Region of Thessaly's position on this social issue is that raising children is the same to men as it is to women. This policy examines the application of these principles, as well as the promotion of initiatives taken to provide support for both motherhood and fatherhood.

Chapters 4.11 Suppliers and subcontractors – Partners

The Region of Thessaly administration is committed to ensuring as far as possible that its suppliers, subcontractors, prospective partners and external partners comply with the principles of gender equality and respect for diversity. In this context, Region of Thessaly communicates this policy to its partners and accordingly requests certain key compliance documents (such as organization charts and employment data) and applies a standardized procedure for the screening and evaluation of suppliers and subcontractors. In this process, the evaluation criteria for selecting a partner and entering cooperation include (if the partner is a legal entity) the following:

- The existence of a written work regulation / equality and diversity policy / policy against violence and harassment of employees (GEP)
- Applying a system of social corporate responsibility
- Partner's public image in the labor market
- History of employee's complaints and/or incidents of discrimination, harassment and/or violence in the partner's working environment
- The existence of aggravating court decisions concerning any employment issue

Additional terms and conditions on equality aspects in employment, diversity management and incident prevention are explicitly mentioned in the work contracts and private agreements between the Region of Thessaly and the supplier/subcontractor, where applicable.

In some cases, where the external partner is an individual person, Region of Thessaly applies the same policy as for full-time employees regarding equality, supporting diversity at workplace and preventing and addressing all forms of violence and harassment at workplace.

Chapter 4.12 - Preventing and combating violence and harassment at workplace.

The Region of Thessaly administration has set strict rules regarding the prevention and combating of violence and harassment at work. Any verbal expressions and behaviors of sexual nature that undermine the dignity of employees due to their degrading or humiliating nature, as well as intimidating, hostile, offensive, threatening or violent situations that degrade, insult and morally harm employees and partners of Region of Thessaly are strictly prohibited at Region of Thessaly. This principle is a key pillar of the Region of Thessaly's Code of Conduct which is defined by public servants Work Regulations and civil service code.

In this context, the Region of Thessaly's Implementation Committee of this policy:

- conducts an assessment of the risks of violence and harassment at work, which is included in the organization's overall Risk Analysis. The analysis is carried out using specific quantitative indicators and factors and is part of the Occupational Risk Assessment at work and is based on international standards.
- shall take specific measures to prevent, control, mitigate and address such risks and to monitor such incidents or patterns of behavior. These measures include training and information, psychometric tests in prevention and multilevel assessment of candidates, disciplinary measures, methods of surveillance and control at workplace and the use of workplace as a place for working.
- plans and implements annually informative, training and awareness-raising activities for Region of Thessaly's staff and partners.
- records and communicates within the Region of Thessaly information on the rights and obligations of employees and the employer, as well as the persons exercising managerial rights or representing the employer (Region of Thessaly Council), to the extent of their own responsibility, in the event of the manifestation or reporting or reporting of incidents of violence and harassment at work, as well as on the relevant procedure for handling such incidents thereafter.

- has designated a specific reference person ("contact person") to guide and inform employees on how to prevent and deal with violence and harassment at work (see Article 3)
- it has internal procedures in place to protect the employment and support of workers who are victims of domestic violence, to the extent possible, by any appropriate means or reasonable accommodation. In this context, the Region of Thessaly committee cooperates with special partners (psychologists, social workers, etc.) and the competent social services in the Municipalities of Larissa, Volos, Trikala and Karditsa.

To meet the above commitments and rules, the Region of Thessaly Administration has developed a Violence and Harassment at Work Response Plan and a Complaints Reception and Review Procedure. To this end, the committee implementing this policy (Article 3) works with experts in specific issues, who are trained in harassment issues, and with the relevant departments. A key pillar of the Region of Thessaly's policy is the prevention of sexual harassment, where the emphasis will be not only on the immediate implementation of appropriate procedures to resolve incidents of harassment in the workplace but also on preventing it from happening again.

The five-member committee and the contact person, as mentioned in Article 3, are exclusively responsible for the prevention and response procedures, but also for the management of incidents of violence and harassment at work, in cooperation and support of the Region of Thessaly's legal advisor. Of course, this does not prevent the intervention of other interested parties within the organization who may, if they wish, approach the employees involved in the incident, such as the Human Resources department or trade union representatives. The 'liaison' is the first recipient who is informed and evaluates each complaint or incident that has been observed and reports it to the committee which decides to inform the Governor and the legal advisor. Subsequently and within 24 hours, actions are taken to investigate, verify and record the incident, followed by actions including: disciplinary measures, legal actions and involvement of competent services, direct support for victims of violence, work organization measures, etc. The management department promotes transparency and encourages all initiatives to raise awareness among staff on the issue of violence and harassment in the workplace. The main pillars of the response to incidents of harassment and violence at the Region of Thessaly administration, are as follows:

- a) Reliable and available communication channels within the organization and with external parties. Duties and responsibilities and persons responsible for managing incidents are clearly defined and effectively communicated to all employees. The documentation of responsibilities and communication channels is documented in this document, in the Region of Thessaly's organizational chart and Job Descriptions and in the Internal Work Rules. Region of Thessaly's Organizational Structure according FEK no 4163 (9-1-2021)
- b) Investigate and examine complaints impartially and protect the confidentiality and personal data of victims and complainants. The personal data of the cases are processed only by competent people on the basis of the Region of Thessaly's Privacy Policy approved by the administration. (Region of Thessaly, GDPR Terms & Conditions).
- c) Prohibition of retaliation against the affected person. With the approval of the management, measures are taken to protect the complainant either through measures to organize the work (dismissal, change of department, etc.) or through confidentiality measures (anonymization, etc.) or other legal and judicial remedies.

d) Systematic recording and evaluation of the consequences of identified violations at individual and company level. Each incident is evaluated in terms of its extent, the consequences for the person affected and the function and image of the Region of Thessaly.

e) Strict disciplinary measures and sanctions for established offenders without tolerance, depending on the nature and characteristics of the incident, as provided by the public servants Work Regulations and civil service code.

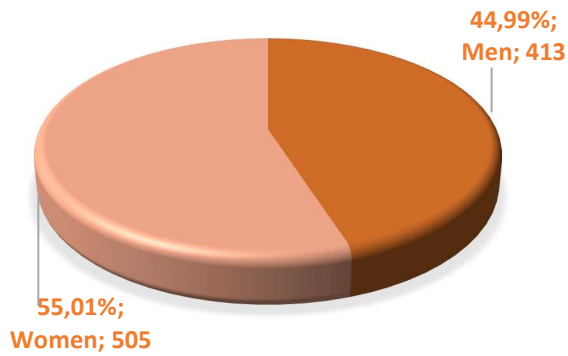
f) Cooperation and provision of any relevant information regarding the incident to the competent authorities, social services and the Police, if requested, with the supervision and mediation of the Region of Thessaly's Legal Advisor.

Annex/Indicators

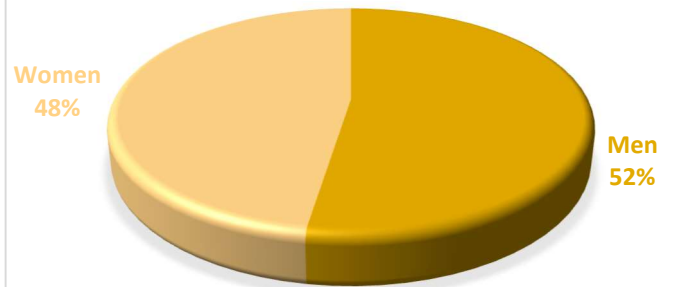
Measured Statistical indicators of Policy/GEP implementation, targets and improvement rates

Annual Index	Numerical Price		(%)		TARGET# annual change
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Year 2023					
Council	42	9	82,35	17,65	
Total Staff number	413	505	44,99	55,01	
Management positions (directors / Supervisors)	21	19	52,5	47,5	
Age Mean Average	55,9	52,76	51,45	48,55	
Interns	15	14	51,72	48,28	
Contract for an indefinite period	87	76	53,37	46,63	
Fixed-term contract	31	55	36,05	63,95	
Project Contract / Invoice for services rendered					
Part-time Contracts					
Job offers / Incoming CVs for evaluation					
Departures / Redundancies	23	11	67,65	32,35	
Recruitments	6	8	42,86	57,14	
Promotions/upgrades with salary impact	183	229	44,42	55,58	
Work with travelling abroad					
Trainings. Number of hours dedicated to trainings	2411	3670	39,65	60,35	
Certified Vocational Educational Trainings (number of projects)	123	162	43,16	56,84	
Educational leaves (days)	88	171	33,98	66,02	
Sick leaves (days)	2808	3164	47,02	52,98	
Parental leaves (number of men and women who use them)	48	154	23,76	76,24	
Maternity - Paternity leaves (days)	220	758	22,49	77,51	
Beneficiaries for having children (number of children counted)	206	0	100	0	
Incidents of violence/sexual harassment at work (victims)	332	0	100	0	
Beneficiaries with child benefit (number of children counted)	178	227	43,95	56,05	
Incidents of violence/sexual harassment at work (Number victims)	0	0	0	0	

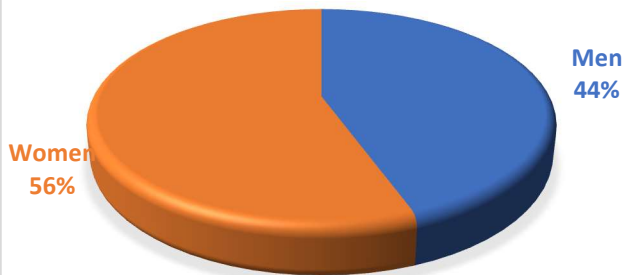
TOTAL STAFF NUMBER



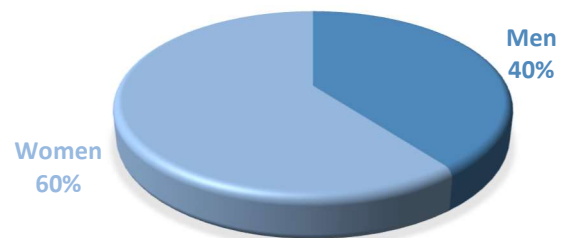
MANAGEMENT POSITIONS (DIRECTORS / SUPERVISORS)



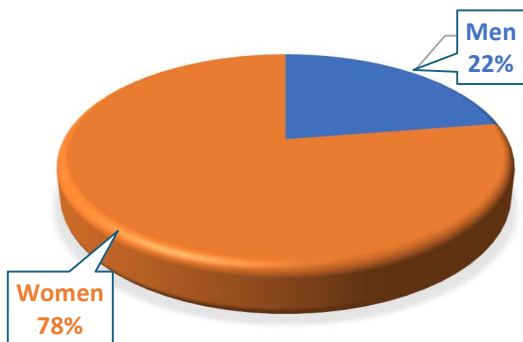
PROMOTIONS/UPGRADES WITH SALARY IMPACT



TRAININGS. NUMBER OF HOURS DEDICATED TO TRAININGS



MATERNITY - PATERNITY LEAVES (DAYS)



BENEFICIARIES WITH CHILD BENEFIT (NUMBER OF CHILDREN COUNTED)



GEP Committee

Vice Governor: Maria Galiou

Regional council member: Andrianna Komitsa

Employees representative: Christos Markou

Head of Human Resources Dept.: Sultana Chalivera

Lawyer / Internal Control Dept.: Paschalia Tziotzeli

Larisa, 15-02-2024

The Region of Thessaly Governor

Dimitrios Kouretas



**THE GENDER
EQUALITY PLAN**



**HELLENIC REPUBLIC
REGION OF THESSALY**