



FINAL REPORT ON **GENDER EQUALITY PLAN**

2022–2024

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Introduction

Purpose

The final report serves to evaluate the ICRC Gender Equality Plan for the 2022–2024 period, the aim of which was to systematically promote gender equality, diversity and inclusion in the organisation's research and working environment.

The assessment maps the progress achieved, evaluates the effectiveness of the measures implemented and identifies areas that require further development or long-term support. At the same time, it provides a basis for setting up a sustainable equality management system across the whole of St. Anne's University Hospital and for follow-up activities stemming from the FNUSA Equality and Diversity Strategy.

The document therefore not only evaluates the fulfilment of the individual objectives of the original Gender Equality Plan, but also reflects its broader contribution to institutional change. Among the most significant results are the strengthening of awareness of the principles of equal treatment, greater transparency of processes and the creation of stable structures for the further development of equality, diversity and inclusion in the organisation.

Context and basic information about the Gender Equality Plan

The International Clinical Research Center of St. Anne's University Hospital Brno and the Faculty of Medicine of Masaryk University (ICRC) was established in 2011 as part of the hospital's strategic development. Today it is a major centre in Central Europe that connects cutting-edge clinical and basic research. ICRC has long focused on research into cardiovascular, neurological, oncological and immunological diseases and strives for the effective transfer of knowledge between the laboratory and clinical practice. It currently employs approximately 350 employees, of whom 56% are women and 44% men.

In total, more than 400 employees work in the area of science and research at FNUSA, of whom 61% are women and 39% men.

ICRC operates as an autonomous research infrastructure connecting multidisciplinary international cooperation with teaching and professional education. Its ambition is to be a professional, internationally recognised and visible institution with excellent research results and, at the same time, an attractive employer that creates a safe, stimulating and fair working environment for everyone.

ICRC is committed to the principles of an open, safe and fair working environment, equal opportunities, diversity and support for professional development. These principles are developed in connection with the FNUSA Equality and Diversity Strategy and Gender Equality Plan. Since 2021, ICRC has also held the HR Excellence in Research Award granted by the European Commission, which confirms its commitment to fulfilling the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and a high standard of HR policy, and at the same time represents a commitment to its further development.

The ICRC Gender Equality Plan 2022–2024 was created with the aim of systematically promoting equal opportunities for women and men in both the research and operational environment of the organisation. It set out specific objectives and measures based on European and national recommendations and created a foundation for the long-term development of an institutional culture built on the principles of diversity, inclusion and equal treatment.

In pursuing these plan objectives, the organisation placed emphasis on creating a high-quality and welcoming working environment that respects the individual needs of employees in various life situations. Attention was paid in particular to supporting the balance between work and personal life, transparent management processes and ensuring equal career opportunities regardless of sex, age, nationality, origin or health status.

These principles became the foundation not only for the Gender Equality Plan itself, but also for the subsequent FNUSA Equality and Diversity Strategy, which extended the original GEP framework to the level of the whole institution and ensured continuity in building an open, respectful and inclusive working environment.

Summary of the main results

Assessment of the implementation of the ICRC Gender Equality Plan 2022–2024

The ICRC Gender Equality Plan for the 2022–2024 period represented the first systematic framework for promoting equality between women and men, diversity and inclusion in the institution.

From the outset it was clear that the success of the plan would depend on the degree of its institutional anchoring. It was precisely here that the most significant shift was recorded during the assessed period. A system for managing equality and diversity was successfully built at the institutional level and anchored in the organisational structure.

A key step was the establishment of the Human Resources Development Department (HRDD), which took over responsibility for human resources development and equal opportunities. This centralised agendas that had previously been dispersed across several departments and created a professional basis for long-term and coordinated work in this area.

At the same time, the FNUSA Equality and Diversity Strategy was created and implemented, building on the Gender Equality Plan and extending its framework to include inclusion, support for carers, prevention of inappropriate behaviour and the development of career and personal growth through the St. Anne's Academy.

At the hospital management level, support for the topic of equality and diversity was strengthened. The hospital's top management began to systematically emphasise the importance of these topics and to support related HR development activities. This change was reflected both in public communication towards employees and in the introduction of specific measures, for example the establishment of a network of contact persons for the area of inappropriate behaviour, the development of internal communication and support for employees in caring roles.

Although this shift is significant, the deeper interconnection of the individual organisational units, especially clinical workplaces, and more active involvement of middle management remain a challenge. In order for the principles of equality to truly become a natural part of everyday decision-making, it is necessary to strengthen their integration into all areas of management and communication, rather than perceiving them as an add-on to HR policy.

A persisting challenge for the future remains the full alignment of all strategic and internal documents, including HR processes, with the principles of equality and diversity. Although it was possible to set up a basic framework for monitoring and evaluating activities and to define a system of responsibilities, these mechanisms now need to be deepened further and their practical use developed.

At the same time, it is becoming clear that the greatest obstacle to the full application of these principles is the uneven involvement of the individual units and the persisting differences in the perception of the topic among staff in administration, science and clinical practice. Deepening cooperation across these areas, as well as more active involvement of middle management, is key to ensuring that the principles of equality are reflected in everyday decision-making and do not operate only at the level of HR policy or project activities.

A further limitation is the size and complexity of the institution, which slows down the transfer of information and the practical implementation of changes into everyday practice. For the future, it will therefore be essential to strengthen communication channels, simplify internal processes and ensure that employees perceive equality and diversity as a natural part of the organisational culture rather than as a separate agenda.

Main achievements and challenges

The greatest achievements of the ICRC Gender Equality Plan 2022–2024 include above all the institutional anchoring and systematisation of the equality and diversity agenda across the entire organisation. This shift meant a transition from individual partial activities to a comprehensive system of management, coordination and monitoring of measures.

An absolutely fundamental step was the creation and publication of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP), through which FNUSA became one of the first Czech research institutions to implement this strategic document in line with the requirements of the European Commission. At the same time, a person responsible for the equality agenda was appointed and a working group for gender equality was established, which meets regularly and monitors the fulfilment of the GEP objectives.

The institution also became actively involved at the national level through its active participation in the Community for Change organised by the NKC Gender and Science.

In the area of HR policy, a new directive on selection procedures was issued and a document on transparent recruitment was created, with FNUSA actively supporting gender-balanced selection committees. The onboarding process was also revised and the foundations were laid for a mentoring programme, which subsequently grew into the St. Anne's Academy educational platform.

Significant achievements were also made in the area of work-life balance. The option of part-time work was introduced, with employees in most cases having the possibility to choose and set their working days according to their requirements. At the same time, the whole system of support for carers was extended with the St. Anne's Parents' Club and the Klub-Ko consultation hours. These steps contributed to improving the level of information available to parents on maternity/parental leave and brought the potential for their gradual return to the working environment.

In the area of preventing inappropriate behaviour in the workplace, the Code of Ethics was updated, an internal directive 'Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour in the Workplace' was subsequently created and the option of anonymous reporting via the FaceUp system (an online trust mailbox) was introduced. These steps contributed to strengthening employees' trust in open communication and to a safer and fairer working environment.

Support also focused on foreign employees, for whom a specialised position focused on the care of foreign nationals was established and cooperation with HR partners who help with their adaptation and integration was strengthened.

Overall, the hospital succeeded in laying firm foundations for sustainable institutional support for equality, diversity and inclusion. These achievements were built upon by the FNUSA

Equality and Diversity Strategy, which extended the original GEP framework to the whole institution and created a unified structure for managing, monitoring and developing an inclusive culture.

Implementation of the measures

Overview of the individual measures of the Gender Equality Plan

This part of the document evaluates, one by one, the individual measures and objectives set out in the ICRC Gender Equality Plan for the 2022–2024 period. The assessment focuses on which activities were successfully implemented, which were only partially fulfilled and where implementation was postponed or adjusted in response to the current needs of the organisation or ongoing structural changes.

The analysis also includes the identification of the reasons for the non-implementation of individual measures, a description of the obstacles that affected their implementation, and proposals for further development or transfer to the following period.

The evaluation is based on internal materials, monitoring reports and outputs from working groups as well as consultations with the responsible persons. Where relevant, the connection with the follow-up FNUSA Equality and Diversity Strategy is indicated, which builds on the original GEP measures and develops them further within a broader institutional framework.

The full ICRC Gender Equality Plan 2022–2024 is available to view [here](#).

Institutional framework for the gender equality policy

Table 1: Institutional framework for the gender equality policy section – Part 1

Aim	Measure/activity-description	Timeframe/Deadline	Responsibility	Indicator(s)/Output
1. Implementation of gender equality policies in the ICRC	Create a gender equality plan in the form of a formal document.	Q2/2022	HR	- Official document published on the organization website.
	Appoint a person who will be responsible for the gender agenda within the organization.	Q1/2022	HR	- Creation and filling of the position of Diversity and Inclusion Specialist and incorporation into the organization structure
	Establish a working group focused on gender inequality that will monitor the implementation of the GEP.	Q1/2022	HR	- Establishment of a working group to serve as an advisory body on issues of gender equality and diversity. - Monthly group meeting.
	Get involved in the "Community for Change" initiative organized by the National Contact Center - Gender and Science.	Q1/2022	HR	- Follow the activities of "Community for Change". - Participation in organized events.
	Provide regular updates on the status of GEP implementation.	Q4/2024	HR	- Annual Activity Report, published every year.
	Monitor relevant calls for proposals at the national or European level and submit a project focused on implementing the Gender Equality Plan.	Q3/2024	GSC, HR	- Ongoing monitoring of calls for proposals. - Project submission.
	Conduct a gender audit.	Q4/2024	HR	- Conduct a gender audit every two or three years.

In the area of the institutional anchoring of gender equality, the most significant shift occurred during the 2022–2024 period.

The main achievement of this part was the creation and publication of the GEP on the ICRC website, which became the first comprehensive document defining the objectives, measures and responsibilities in the area of equality between women and men. The document was adopted by the organisation's management and became the basis for the further development of a systematic approach to diversity and inclusion.

The position of Diversity and Inclusion Specialist was created, thereby designating a person responsible for the gender equality agenda, whose aim was to ensure methodological guidance, coordination of activities and support for the implementation of measures across the entire organisation. The establishment of this role also represented a first step towards raising the visibility of the topic of equality and its institutionalisation.

This change was followed in January 2024 by the establishment of the Human Resources Development Department, which took over responsibility for human resources development, developmental education within the St. Anne's Academy and equal opportunities across the whole organisation. The gender equality agenda thus became a firm part of the management system of St. Anne's University Hospital, and not only of the members of the HR unit at ICRC.

For the systematic management and monitoring of activities, a working group for gender equality was established, which meets regularly (usually once a month) and ensures the ongoing evaluation of the fulfilment of the GEP.

The group is made up of the head of the Human Resources Development Department, the head of the ICRC HR Department, the Deputy Director for HR and other persons involved in implementing specific measures. Within the working group, new needs and proposed measures were identified and the transfer of experience between the individual organisational units of the institution was discussed.

FNUSA, including ICRC, also became actively involved in the activities of the Community for Change, a national platform coordinated by the NCC Gender and Science, bringing together institutions implementing a GEP. Participation in its activities made it possible to share good practice, use methodological materials and take part in expert discussion on the development of equality policies in both the academic and healthcare environment.

Gender audits were also an important tool for assessing progress. The first audit was carried out in 2021 by the organisation Gender Nora, which identified the main barriers in the area of equality and diversity and provided basic recommendations for creating the first GEP. This was followed by a second audit in 2023, carried out by the organisation Gender Studies, o.p.s.

This audit confirmed a significant shift in the institutional framework, an improvement in the area of internal communication and human resources management, but at the same time highlighted the need to further deepen the involvement of middle management and to ensure the long-term sustainability of activities even beyond project frameworks. Further audits are planned at a frequency of every two to three years.

The institution also monitors current calls for the submission of projects focused on the implementation of equality, diversity and flexibility policies. At the same time, however, activities are financed from FNUSA's own resources in order to ensure the continuity and independence of this process.

Overall, it can be stated that the institutional framework for the gender equality policy represents one of the most significant achievements of the 2022–2024 period. Today the organisation has clearly defined responsibilities, a management structure and established monitoring mechanisms. The challenge for the future remains deepening cooperation between the individual units and ensuring that the principles of equality become an integral part of all decision-making and management processes, not just the area of HR policy.

Table 2: Institutional framework for the gender equality policy section – Part 2

Aim	Measure/activity-description	Timeframe/Deadline	Responsibility	Indicator(s)/Output
2. Raise awareness and provide training on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for employees (the gender dimension, the use of gender-sensitive language, gender bias, etc.)	Establish the use of gender-sensitive language in internal documents and in the institution's public communications.	Q3/2023	HR, PR	- Conducting workshops for affected employees - Developing a guide to gender-sensitive language - Revising the institution's website
	Raise awareness of issues related to gender equality and diversity.	Q2/2023	HR	- Launching an informational section in the internal Newsweek magazine to share information about gender initiatives and diversity - Organizing seminars aimed at increasing understanding of gender equality and diversity issues
	Integrate the gender dimension into research and innovation.	Q3/2023	HR, GSC	- Organizing seminars on topics such as integrating gender equality into research, applying specific methods and procedures at various stages of the research process, etc.

Within this area, ICRC focused on strengthening employees' awareness of the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion and on supporting the use of gender-sensitive language in communication and institutional presentation.

These topics were understood as key to creating a respectful working environment and a culture open to all employees regardless of their gender, origin or other characteristics.

Among the significant activities, the online seminar focused on integrating the gender dimension into research, which took place on December 2–9 2024, can be mentioned. The aim of the seminar was to present participants with specific approaches and methodologies for taking the gender perspective into account in the individual phases of the research process – from formulating the research question to interpreting results. The seminar was attended by 73 people, including 37 women, and its outputs will serve as a basis for future educational activities and methodological support for researchers.

The topic of gender-sensitive language was identified as an area requiring long-term development, and it was therefore incorporated into the follow-up FNUSA Gender Equality Plan for the 2024–2026 period.

Within this plan, the creation of a guide to the use of gender-sensitive language, a revision of the organisation's website and the holding of an internal seminar that will familiarise employees with the practical use of these principles in everyday communication are being prepared.

The planned introduction of an informative section on gender equality and diversity in the internal newsletter Newsweek and the organisation of accompanying seminars have so far been moved to the consultation phase. The reason was the ongoing change in the concept of internal and external communication (PR) and the effort to ensure that these topics are integrated into all of the organisation's communication channels in a long-term and systematic way, rather than being carried out in isolation.

Overall, it can be stated that even though not all of the originally planned activities were fully implemented in this period, it was possible to launch a process of systematically raising awareness of gender equality and its integration into research and communication.

Experience from the implementation to date has confirmed that the topic of a gender-sensitive approach is still relevant in both the scientific and healthcare environment and requires long-term awareness-raising, education and management support in introducing new communication standards.

HR policy – selection, recruitment and staff development

Table 3: HR policy – selection, recruitment and staff development section – Part 1

Aim	Measure/activity -description	Timeframe/ Deadline	Responsibility	Indicator(s)/Output
3. Improve the quality of the selection process	Setting Up the Selection Process	Q4/2022	HR	- Development of guidelines for competitive selection processes (Competitive Selection Procedures) - Development of the document “Principles of Open and Transparent Recruitment of ICRC Staff” as part of the OTM-R Policy
	Strive to have HR representatives present at every interview	Q4/2022	HR	- Handbook for Selection Committee Members - Part of the OTM-R Policy
	Strive for gender balance on selection committees.	Q4/2022	HR	- In accordance with the 'Rules of Selection Procedures' directive, records of tender procedures will be maintained to document the composition of the selection committees.
	Enter into employment contracts for the duration of projects whenever possible.	Q2/2022	HR, Management	- Contracts Concluded for the Duration of the Project - This has been in effect since January 1, 2022, provided the employee is funded solely by the project.
	Promote gender balance in leadership and decision-making positions.	Q4/2024	HR	- Monitoring the representation of women and men; annual analysis of the current situation.

	Promote gender balance in research teams, with a focus on supporting women in science.	Q4/2024	HR, Management, Research	- Featuring the careers of successful women on the institution's website - Neutrally worded job postings for new positions - Scheduling counselling sessions at times convenient for carers - Annual status analysis
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In the area of recruitment and career progression, ICRC succeeded in significantly strengthening the transparency, objectivity and fairness of selection procedures, through newly introduced directives, methodological materials and internal oversight of the process.

This area was perceived from the outset of the GEP implementation as key, because a fair recruitment process represents one of the fundamental pillars of equal opportunities.

A fundamental output was the creation and implementation of the directive 'Rules of Selection Procedures', which unified the procedures for all types of selection processes within ICRC. The directive set out clear rules for the composition of selection committees, the transparent conduct of the procedure, the documentation of decisions and communication with applicants.

The follow-up document was the 'Principles of Open and Transparent Recruitment of ICRC Staff', which develops the principles of the OTM-R Policy (Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment) and links them with the requirements of the European Commission within the HR Excellence in Research Award.

Part of the support for professional and impartial selection was also the effort to have members of the HR unit represented on all selection committees and to ensure a gender-balanced composition of the committees. The directive stipulated that each selection should be conducted with regard to the equal representation of women and men, and that the composition of the committee is part of the mandatory documentation. The sensitivity to the issue of diversity thus gradually increased, including in decisions on HR matters.

A guide focused on the objective assessment of candidates, the recognition of unconscious bias and the prevention of discriminatory conduct was created for committee members. This document became a practical tool for the education and methodological guidance of persons taking part in the recruitment process.

A further step towards increasing fairness was the introduction of the practice of concluding employment contracts for the duration of projects in cases where this was possible. This measure ensures the stability of employment relationships during project implementation and at the same time supports the efficient management of human resources.

Part of this effort is also the active presentation of women's career achievements on the institution's website and social media, the use of gender-neutral language in advertisements and the scheduling of work meetings at times that take the needs of carers into account.

In the future, it will be key to further develop the training of selection committee members, to deepen their skills in the area of conscious decision-making and to continue the regular monitoring of gender balance in the institutions.

Table 4: HR policy – selection, recruitment and staff development section – Part 2

Aim	Measure/activity-description	Timeframe/Deadline	Responsibility	- Indicator(s)/Output
4. Set up an onboarding process for new employees	Set up onboarding processes for new employees	Q3/2023	HR	- Revision of the FNUSA Employee Onboarding Process Guidelines/Work Procedure
	Prepare a template for an onboarding plan for new employees, including guidelines for evaluation	Q3/2023	HR	- Adaptation Plan, Including Its Evaluation
	Consider establishing a mentoring program for new employees (a special program for female researchers aimed at supporting their career growth) with a mentor at each workplace	Q3/2023	HR, Research	- Analysis and Solution Proposal

In the area of onboarding new employees, we focused on revising and unifying the procedures accompanying the arrival of new staff, with an emphasis on creating a fair, clear and supportive system. The aim was to increase the comfort of newcomers, ensure their quick orientation within the institution and support their motivation as well as their long-term integration into the working team.

Within this activity, the directive 'Onboarding Process of an FNUSA Employee / working procedure' was updated, newly defining the responsibilities of managers, the timetable for onboarding and standardising the process across organisational units. The document reflects the diversity of job positions within the organisation, from administrative through research to healthcare, and helps ensure a unified approach and quality of the whole onboarding process.

At the same time, a model onboarding plan was prepared for new employees, providing a clear framework for guiding newcomers during their first months. The plan contains recommended steps, tasks and milestones, including a final evaluation. It thus contributes to greater systematicity and enables more effective communication between an employee and their line manager. A model onboarding plan was also prepared in an English version for foreign employees.

In mid-2024, the conversational chatbot Arnold was put into practice, ensuring the regular and ongoing collection of feedback from newly arriving employees.

This digital tool makes it possible to evaluate the course of onboarding in real time, identify any problems and respond to them quickly. The implementation of Arnold represents a significant step towards the modernisation of HR processes and makes it possible to obtain more accurate and up-to-date information about employees' experiences in the first months after joining.

Thanks to these measures, it was possible to significantly improve the quality and efficiency of the onboarding processes. The organisation has a clearly defined system that ensures support for new employees and at the same time provides management with objective materials for improving internal processes.

As part of the broader strategy for supporting equality and diversity, a mentoring programme focused on the career development of women was launched in spring 2024.

By introducing an updated methodology, tools for digital monitoring and an individual approach, ICRC confirmed its position as a modern and inclusive employer that works systematically on improving working conditions and developing human resources.

Table 5: HR policy – selection, recruitment and staff development section – Part 3

Aim	Measure/activity-description	Timeframe/Deadline	Responsibility	Indicator(s)/Output
5. Promote equal opportunities for professional development and career advancement	Set up an employee evaluation system	Q3/2023	HR, Research	- Development of a guideline/procedure for the ICRC/training focused on conducting assessment interviews
	Develop development plans and establish a system for regularly updating them; link them to the performance evaluation system and the compensation process	Q3/2023	HR	- Development plans linked to the performance evaluation and compensation system
	Maintain gender-disaggregated statistics on the number of women and men across various job positions	Q3/2022	HR	- Annual analysis
	Track the reasons why employees leave and take gender into account	Q3/2022	HR	- Exit interviews with employees, creation of a form - Recording the reasons for employee departures at the end of each year - Annual analysis

The activities of this section were not implemented in the assessed period. After considering their nature and potential impact, it was evaluated that their implementation would be more effective within a broader institutional framework, i.e. at the level of the whole of St. Anne's University Hospital, and not only within ICRC. This approach will make it possible to unify HR policy and development processes across the organisation and to ensure consistent methodological guidance.

At the same time, it should be mentioned that during the assessed period there was intensive development of other key activities in the area of equality, diversity, onboarding and work-life balance. These projects required considerable human and time capacity, which made it impossible to implement all the planned steps from this part of the GEP within the set deadline.

For the reasons stated, the activities in the area of HR policy, selection and staff development were moved to the follow-up FNUSA Gender Equality Plan for the 2024–2026 period, where they will be incorporated as part of the optimisation and development measures. This step will make it possible to implement them in connection with the already established processes and will ensure their sustainability and greater impact in practice.

Pay policy

Table 6: Pay policy section

Aim	Measure/activity-description	Timeframe/Deadline	Responsibility	Indicator(s)/Output
6. Promote equal pay for men and women	Analyze the compensation system using an appropriate analytical tool (LOGIB).	Q4/2022	HR	- Analysis made
	Collect gender-disaggregated data on compensation and evaluate it regularly.	Q4/2024	HR	- Collection and analysis of data

A key step in this area was participation in the pilot testing of the LOGIB analytical tool, the aim of which is to reveal any gender differences in remuneration. FNUSA thus became the first hospital in the Czech Republic to use this internationally recognised tool.

The first analysis of the remuneration system using LOGIB took place in 2022 and its aim was to map the pay structure across the whole organisation and to identify possible differences between groups of employees. The tool made it possible to objectively assess whether the differences in remuneration are explainable by factors such as length of experience, education, job classification or working hours, or whether they may be connected with gender.

The results of the analysis confirmed that the remuneration system is set up fairly in most professional categories, with smaller differences being analysed further.

Following the first round, the LOGIB analysis was incorporated into the annual cycle of evaluating HR data, thereby making the hospital, including ICRC, one of the few institutions in the Czech Republic to carry out regular monitoring of equal pay. This approach makes it possible to track trends over the long term, ensure data-based decision-making and respond to any problems in good time.

Work-life balance

Table 7: Work-life balance section

Aim	Measure/activity-description	Timeframe/Deadline	Responsibility	Indicator(s)/Output
7. Promote work-life balance	Consider the possibility of implementing flexible work hours and allowing for work from home	Q3/2023	FNUSA-ICRC Management, FNUSA	- Internal discussion of options at the FNUSA management level
	In cooperation with the NKC - Gender and Science, strive for legislative changes that take into account the reporting of scientific work in a way that is compatible with the reality of scientific work in the Czech Republic	Q4/2022	Research, HR, Management	- Meetings with the National Coordination Center - Gender and Science, provision of support - Collaboration within Alliance4life - Drafting of a document containing recommendations
	Support for collaboration with individuals on maternity or parental leave	Q3/2022	HR	- Creating and updating a parent handbook
		Q3/2022	HR	- A contact database has been created, and these individuals are regularly sent information from the institution, such as the internal Newsweek magazine
	Installation of a children's play area and changing tables on the premises of FNUSA-ICRC	Q4/2022	FNUSA-ICRC Management, FNUSA	- Internal discussion of options at the FNUSA management level
	A contribution toward preschool tuition as one of the benefits	Q3/2022	HR	-Consideration of classifying the contribution as an employee benefit
	Support Carers	Q3/2022	HR, the secretariat	- Organizing activities to support carers -Creating an informational brochure about support options for carers
	Explore options for childcare – setting up a daycare group or preschool	Q4/2023	FNUSA-ICRC Management, FNUSA	- Verification of options within the FNUSA institution

Supporting the balance between employees' work and personal life represents a long-term priority for ICRC. The aim was to create conditions that will enable employees to better combine professional duties with family and caring commitments, and at the same time support a healthy and inclusive working environment.

During the assessed period, internal discussions took place regarding the introduction of flexible working hours, primarily at the level of the organisation's management and the individual clinical and administrative units. Based on this analysis, workplaces where flexible forms of work can be implemented were identified, and conversely those where, due to their operational nature (especially in round-the-clock healthcare operations), this model cannot be applied. For example, from ICRC's perspective, the introduction of flexible working hours may be problematic particularly in view of the frequent combination of shorter working hours of researchers across several research institutions.

A great deal of attention was paid to cooperation with people on maternity and parental leave. A centralised database of the contacts of these people was created, which previously existed only in a fragmented form within the individual departments. This step made possible more effective communication and a better overview of the needs of employees with caring responsibilities.

As part of the support for parents, preparation began on a Guide for Parents and Managers. It should serve staff and HR officers as a clear manual for situations connected with departure, return and adaptation after parental leave. The document will also contain basic information about the possibilities of drawing benefits and flexible forms of work.

This area also included the pilot testing of activities for carers, the aim of which was to support the balancing of the work and family role, self-reflection and personal development. The activities were positively received and became an inspiration for the planned extension of similar programmes across the whole institution.

The planned newsletter with educational and informational content for employees on maternity/parental leave was implemented during the period under the name 'Parents' Bulletin', which regularly brings up-to-date information from what is happening at FNUSA as well as practical tips relating to returning to work, balancing work and family life or opportunities for further education. This format proved to be an effective communication tool and received positive feedback from employees on maternity and parental leave.

At the same time, consultation hours for parents were established under the name Klub-Ko, providing space for individual meetings with the HR department. Here parents can, in a safe and supportive environment, discuss topics relating to returning to work, drawing benefits or the possibilities of adjusting their working arrangements. This step significantly strengthened communication between the organisation and employees with caring responsibilities and contributed to a better level of information and a sense of belonging to the institution.

Both activities – the 'Parents' Bulletin' and Klub-Ko – represent specific and sustainable tools for supporting work-life balance and will be developed further within the follow-up FNUSA Gender Equality Plan 2024–2026, which envisages extending them to the whole organisation.

In the area of ensuring childcare, the possibility of establishing a children's group or nursery was explored. After a thorough review of the operational and legislative conditions, it was concluded that at present it is not possible to provide suitable premises or staffing capacity for this type of facility within the hospital. Likewise, it proved difficult to set aside suitable premises for a children's corner or changing tables. However, the topic remains on management's radar and will be monitored further with the aim of finding a long-term sustainable solution. Likewise, in the future we plan to look into the possibility of providing a contribution towards nursery fees as an employee benefit.

The planned cooperation with Alliance4Life and the NKC Gender and Science, focused on promoting legislative changes in the reporting of scientific work, has not yet been implemented. It turned out that, from our position, it is very complicated to achieve such fundamental changes. However, the institution continues to actively monitor the topics of equality and flexibility and takes part in expert discussions, conferences and round tables.

Organisational culture and workplace relationships

Table 8: Organisational culture and workplace relationships section – Part 1

Aim	Measure/activity-description	Timeframe/Deadline	Responsibility	Indicator(s)/Output
8. Preventing undesirable behaviour in the workplace (bullying, sexual harassment)	Definition of the code of conduct for appropriate and preferred behaviour within the institution	Q4/2022	HR, Legal	-Development of guidelines/code of conduct for appropriate and preferred behaviour
	Define a procedure for institutional incident response	Q4/2022	HR, Legal	-Development of a policy on procedures for addressing negative workplace conduct (bullying, sexual harassment) -Integration with the handling of whistleblowing issues
	Provide support to employees in dealing with complex situations	Q4/2023	HR	-Establishing partnerships with support organizations, such as proFem or konsent
	Setting up the process for handling complaints and compliments	Q4/2022	HR/Quality	-Update to the internal policy/procedure on "Complaints and Compliments"
	Train FNUSA-ICRC employees on issues related to bullying and sexual harassment in the workplace	Q4/2022	HR	-Development of informational materials -Communication campaigns -Organization of training sessions focused on preventing undesirable behavior

Building a healthy and respectful working culture was among the key priorities of the ICRC Gender Equality Plan. The aim of this area was not only to create a formal framework for addressing inappropriate behaviour, but also to support open communication, prevention and the overall strengthening of a safe working environment.

During the assessed period, the FNUSA Code of Ethics for Employees was updated, clearly defining the standards of professional, respectful and ethical behaviour of all employees. The code became a fundamental tool for strengthening integrity and a culture of trust in the organisation. The preferred forms of behaviour set out by the code were at the same time incorporated into the new directive 'Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour in the Workplace', which describes in detail the individual steps in dealing with situations such as bullying, harassment or other forms of inappropriate conduct.

To ensure the effective and safe reporting of incidents, the online trust mailbox FaceUp (formerly Nenech to být) was introduced, which makes it possible to submit reports anonymously both in the area of inappropriate behaviour and within the anti-corruption

(whistleblowing) agenda. Thanks to the anonymous form of reporting, employees can report situations without fear of punishment or stigmatisation.

In order to train selected employees, we established cooperation with the Mobbing Free Institute, which provides expert consultations, methodological support and supervision in dealing with specific cases. This made it possible to ensure both internal and external support for employees and management in sensitive matters.

Awareness-raising and educational activity was also a significant part of the activities. Informational materials and leaflets were created that clearly describe the options for addressing inappropriate behaviour, the contact persons and the procedures. These materials were distributed across all workplaces, published on the intranet and sent to all managers.

As part of the education, ICRC organised several training sessions, the first of which was aimed primarily at managers, who according to the internal directive play a key role in dealing with such situations and act as role models of behaviour.

The aim of these training sessions was to strengthen their competences in the area of communication, conflict prevention and coping with crisis situations. The training was subsequently extended to a wider group of employees as well, so that the topic of preventing inappropriate behaviour would become part of the company-wide culture.

Thanks to these steps, ICRC succeeded in creating a comprehensive system for the prevention and handling of inappropriate behaviour, which combines clear rules, safe reporting, expert support and systematic education.

Table 9: Organisational culture and workplace relationships section – Part 2

Aim	Measure/activity-description	Timeframe/Deadline	Responsibility	Indicator(s)/Output
9. Support the integration of foreign workers	Regular training sessions for foreign employees on cultural norms and intercultural issues (to be considered as part of the adaptation process)	Q3/2023	HR	- Provide information about training sessions organized by external organizations
	Establishing partnerships with institutions that support foreign workers during their time in Brno	Q3/2022	HR	- Establishing a partnership
	Training opportunities for foreign workers in English	Q3/2022	HR	- Ensuring the availability of training courses in English

	Bilingual Internal Communication Czech/English	Q1/2022	FNUSA-ICRC	- Internal communication in Czech and English
	Providing an English version of GEP	Q2/2022	HR	- GEP is available to all employees in both Czech and English

Within this area, ICRC focused on improving the communication with and support for foreign employees. The aim was to ensure that these staff too had equal access to information, educational activities and support from the organisation.

At the beginning, an evaluation of the needs of foreign employees was carried out, which showed that their number within the institution is not very high, and that they are dispersed across the individual buildings and departments of the hospital. For this reason, organising regular group meetings proved to be ineffective, both in terms of logistics and because of the limited interest in a mass form of communication.

The most effective approach proved to be the individual sharing of information via HR partners from the ICRC HR Department, who have established personal relationships with the individual employees and are able to adapt the form and content of communication to their needs. This approach proved to be flexible and practical, especially in view of the diverse working arrangements and language skills of employees.

A fundamental step was also the creation of cooperation with an expert whose job is to provide support to foreign employees. This position played a key role in coordinating administrative processes, adapting newcomers and facilitating communication between foreign staff and the institution. Thanks to her initiative, a network of contacts to Brno organisations that focus on supporting foreign nationals and integration in the region was also created.

The demand for internal training in English proved to be relatively low.

In this area we therefore choose to share relevant training offers from external sources and to ensure that information about available opportunities is provided.

At the same time, measures were adopted to improve the language accessibility of internal communication. Key information is newly translated into English, including internal notices and documents relating to working conditions, education or HR processes. Attention was paid to making the Gender Equality Plan available in an English version, so that it would be comprehensible and usable for foreign employees too and could be used in both internal and external communication.

Overall, it can be said that ICRC successfully created a functioning system of support for foreign employees, based on a personal approach, flexible communication and the gradual increase in the language accessibility of internal information. This approach contributes to their better integration into the working environment and strengthens the inclusive character of the whole organisation.

Analysis of data and indicators

Data analysis for 2022

As of December 31 2022, a total of 3,578 people were in employment, of whom 2,700 were women (75%) and 878 men (25%). As Table 1 shows, the representation of women and men differs significantly between the individual categories of employees.

The highest proportion of women was found among non-medical healthcare workers (90%), followed by pharmacists (83%) and administrative and research workers (67%). The category of doctors shows a balanced representation of women and men, with women making up 50% of employees. Conversely, men predominate among operational staff.

Tab. 1: Representation of women and men according to employment categories				
Category	Men	Women	Total	% of women
Doctor	331	326	657	50 %
Pharmacist	6	29	35	83 %
Non-medical healthcare workers	206	1826	2032	90 %
Administrative and research workers	224	455	679	67 %
Operational staff	111	64	175	37 %
Total	878	2700	3578	75 %
N=3 578				

The age structure of employees is similar for both women and men (Table 2). The largest proportion of women falls into the 40–49 age group (30%), whereas among men the 30–39 and 40–49 age groups are most represented (both 25%). The majority of employees of both sexes are aged 30–59. The proportion of employees aged 60 and over is slightly higher among men (13%) than among women (9%).

Tab. 2: Age structure of women and men in the workforce				
Age group	Women	Percentage of women	Men	Percentage of men
18 - 29	415	15 %	162	18 %
30 - 39	622	23 %	218	25 %
40 - 49	806	30 %	216	25 %
50 - 59	602	22 %	168	19 %
60 - 69	243	9 %	94	11 %
70 and more	12	0 %	20	2 %
Total	2700	100 %	878	100 %
Note: The percentages are counted separately for women (N = 2700) and men (N = 878). The column "percentage of women" shows the structure of all women amongst the age groups and the column "percentage of men" shows the structure of all men amongst the age groups.				

As Table 3 shows, the educational structure of women and men differs. Among women, secondary education with a school-leaving examination (42%) and university education (37%) predominate, whereas among men university education (67%) dominates. Women are more often represented in the groups with secondary and higher vocational education, whereas men more often achieve a university education.

Tab. 3: Educational structure of women and men in the workforce				
Highest level of education achieved	Women	Percentage of women	Men	Percentage of men
primary	78	3 %	35	4 %
Secondary without exam	181	7 %	113	13 %
Secondary with school-leaving exam	1123	42 %	100	11 %
Higher vocational education	275	10 %	29	3 %
university	993	37 %	589	67 %
unknown	50	2 %	12	1 %
Total	2700	100 %	878	100 %
Note: The percentages are counted separately for women (N = 2700) and men (N = 878). The column "percentage of women" shows the structure of all women based on education level achieved and the column "percentage of men" shows the structure of all men based on education level achieved.				

A more detailed view is provided by Table 4, which takes into account the professional structure of employees.

Among non-medical healthcare workers, the proportion of university-educated employees reaches 20% for women and 31% for men; among administrative and research workers

61% for women and 82% for men. The results show that the differences in the educational structure are significantly influenced by the differing representation of women and men in the individual professional categories and by the qualification requirements of the individual job positions.

Tab. 4: Percentage of university educated of women and men in the employment categories						
Category	Women with university degrees	Women total	Women with university degree %	Men	Men total	Men with university degree %
Doctor	326	326	100 %	331	331	100 %
Pharmacist	29	29	100 %	6	6	100 %
Non-medical healthcare worker	360	1826	20 %	63	206	31 %
Administrative and research workers	276	455	61 %	184	224	82 %
Operational staff	2	64	3 %	5	111	5 %
Total	993	2700	37 %	589	878	67 %

Data analysis for 2023

As of December 31 2023, a total of 3,544 people were in employment, of whom 2,675 women (75%) and 869 men (25%). As **Table 1** shows, the representation of women and men differs significantly between the individual categories of employees. The highest proportion of women was recorded among non-medical healthcare workers (90%), followed by pharmacists (82%) and administrative and research workers (69%). In the category of doctors, the representation of women and men was balanced, with women making up 50% of this group. In the category of operational staff, on the other hand, men predominated.

Tab. 1: Representation of women and men according to employment categories				
Category	Men	Women	Total	% of women
Doctor	335	333	668	50 %
Pharmacist	6	28	34	82 %
Non-medical healthcare workers	212	1831	2043	90 %
Administrative and research workers	189	422	611	69 %
Operational staff	126	61	187	33 %
Total	868	2675	3534	76 %

N=3 544

The age structure of employees does not differ significantly between women and men (**Table 2**). Among women, the highest proportion was in the 40–49 age group (29%), whereas among men the 30–39 and 40–49 age groups were the most numerous (both 23%). For both groups, the majority of employees were aged 30–59. The proportion of people aged 60 and over was slightly higher among men (14%) than among women (10%).

Tab. 2: Age structure of women and men in the workforce				
Age group	Women	Percentage of women	Men	Percentage of men
18 - 29	399	15 %	153	18 %
30 - 39	572	21 %	204	23 %
40 - 49	784	29 %	201	23 %
50 - 59	655	24 %	190	22 %
60 - 69	250	9 %	99	11 %
70 and more	15	1 %	22	3 %
Total	2675	100 %	869	100 %

Note: The percentages are counted separately for women (N = 2675) and men (N = 869). The column "percentage of women" shows the structure of all women amongst the age groups and the column "percentage of men" shows the structure of all men amongst the age groups.

As **Table 3** shows, the educational structure of women and men differs. Among women, secondary education with a school-leaving examination (41%) and university education (37%) were most frequently represented, whereas among men, university education made up the largest proportion (65%). Women were, compared with men, more often represented among people with secondary and higher vocational education, whereas men had a higher representation among people with a university education.

Tab. 3: Educational structure of women and men in the workforce				
Highest level of education achieved	Women	Percentage of women	Men	Percentage of men
primary	97	4 %	43	5 %
Secondary without exam	188	7 %	118	14 %
Secondary with school-leaving exam	1108	41 %	111	13 %
Higher vocational education	279	10 %	33	4 %
university	992	37 %	564	65 %
unknown	11	0 %	0	0 %
Total	2675	100 %	869	100 %
Note: The percentages are counted separately for women (N = 2675) and men (N = 869). The column "percentage of women" shows the structure of all women based on education level achieved and the column "percentage of men" shows the structure of all men based on education level achieved.				

A more detailed view is provided by **Table 4**, which takes into account the professional structure of employees. Among non-medical healthcare workers, the proportion of university-educated people was 20% for women and 31% for men; among administrative and research workers it reached 61% for women and 82% for men. The differences found in the educational structure are related, among other things, to the differing representation of women and men in the individual professional categories and to the differing qualification requirements of the individual job positions.

Tab. 4: Percentage of university educated of women and men in the employment categories						
Category	Women with university degrees	Women total	Women with university degree %	Men	Men total	Men with university degree %
Doctor	333	333	100 %	335	335	100 %
Pharmacist	28	28	100 %	6	6	100 %
Non-medical healthcare worker	383	1831	20 %	67	212	31 %
Administrative and research workers	247	422	61 %	149	189	82 %
Operational staff	1	61	3 %	6	126	5 %
Total	992	2675	37 %	563	868	65 %

Year-on-year changes in the representation of women and men

Between December 31 2022 and December 31 2023, there was a slight decrease in the total number of people in employment, from 3,578 to 3,544 people. The decrease affected both women and men, with the representation of both groups in the total number of employees remaining unchanged – women made up 75% and men 25% in both years. In terms of overall gender representation, there was therefore no significant year-on-year change.

More marked changes can be observed in the representation of women and men in the individual professional categories. The proportion of women among pharmacists decreased slightly from 83% to 82%, whereas among administrative and research workers it rose from 67% to 69%. Among non-medical healthcare workers, the proportion of women remained stable at 90%. There thus persists a markedly different representation of women and men between the individual professional groups: some categories are significantly represented by women, whereas among operational staff men predominate. In the category of doctors, the representation of women and men remained balanced at 50%.

The age structure of women and men changed only slightly year-on-year. Among women, the proportion of the 40–49 age group fell from 30% to 29%. Among men, the proportion of people in the 30–39 and 40–49 age groups both fell from 25% to 23%. At the same time, the proportion of people aged 60 and over rose, from 9% to 10% among women and from 13% to 14% among men. The year-on-year development thus indicates a slight shift in the age structure towards higher age groups, with the representation of people aged 60 and over remaining higher among men than among women.

Changes are also apparent in the educational structure. Among women, the proportion of people with secondary education with a school-leaving examination fell from 42% to 41%, whereas the proportion of university-educated women remained at 37%. Among men, there was a decrease in the proportion of university-educated people from 67% to 65%. Nevertheless, even in 2023 the difference in the educational structure by gender persists, especially in the higher representation of university-educated people among men.

Overall, the year-on-year development in 2022 and 2023 can be characterised as **rather stable in terms of the overall representation of women and men**, with partial changes appearing especially in some professional categories, the age structure and the educational composition. From a gender perspective, what persists above all is the differing representation of women and men in the individual professional categories and the differences in the educational structure. Year-on-year, however, there was no fundamental change in the overall ratio of women to men in the available data.

Proposals and recommendations

On the basis of the activities implemented and the experience gained, in the following period we will continue to consolidate the institutional framework for promoting gender equality and to systematically build on the steps taken so far. We further want to strengthen the role of the working group for gender equality, which should serve as the main monitoring and coordination body for the implementation of the GEP.

In terms of communication and awareness-raising, we consider it appropriate to focus on introducing gender-sensitive language into internal and external communication, which we already plan to implement through the follow-up FNUSA Gender Equality Plan 2024–2026. We plan to create a comprehensible guide and offer training tailored to the various target groups across the organisation. We also want to further develop the integration of the gender dimension into research and the PR strategy.

In the area of HR policy, we propose to continue strengthening the transparency of recruitment and to support the gender-balanced composition of selection committees. It is desirable for HR unit staff to systematically take part in all interviews. We also plan to fully implement the onboarding plan for new employees and to develop the mentoring programme, ideally across the whole institution and not just within individual departments, which again we plan to implement through the follow-up FNUSA Gender Equality Plan. At the same time, it is appropriate to continue the regular collection and evaluation of data on employees, even if at longer than annual intervals (e.g. once every two years).

In the area of equal pay, it is important to regularly repeat the analysis using the LOGIB tool, to communicate the results transparently and, where appropriate, to propose corrective measures. We further recommend creating a simple procedure for how to respond in the event that differences are found and where to seek support in setting up a fair remuneration system.

Work-life balance remains a substantial area. We will further develop the possibilities of flexible work, especially for people caring for children. It is appropriate to extend good practice – e.g. the newsletter for people on maternity/parental leave – to the whole organisation. We consider it a key step to continue searching for a way to provide direct support to employees' families, for example in the form of a contribution towards nursery fees or by building changing tables, as soon as the operational and legal conditions allow.

In the area of organisational culture, we want to further maintain and strengthen the mechanisms for addressing inappropriate behaviour. The Code of Ethics and the directive remain important tools, knowledge of which should be regularly refreshed through training. Above all, the education of managers and the strengthening of their competences in the area of dealing with conflict situations is key.

In terms of support for foreign staff, we will continue to use an individual approach via HR partners and specialised support. It is appropriate to create a basic information package in English and to continue with bilingual communication of important internal messages. For training offers in English, it remains possible to rely rather on the offerings of external organisations.

We will continue developing the activities already set up, systematising data collection, supporting diversity and inclusion across the whole institution and at the same time seeking new opportunities for cooperation – for example through involvement in national and international initiatives. We also emphasise the need for the strategic planning of activities so that they are realistically planned with regard to staffing and capacity possibilities, and so that the sustainability and long-term impact of the Gender Equality Plan is strengthened.

Conclusion

In the 2022–2024 period, ICRC made significant progress in implementing the Gender Equality Plan. The greatest shift was recorded especially in the institutionalisation of the equality management system, in creating conditions for work-life balance, in introducing mechanisms for addressing inappropriate behaviour and in strengthening the transparency of HR processes.

At the same time, the evaluation showed that although it was possible to build firm foundations and introduce key processes, there remain areas that require further attention. Above all, the deeper integration of the principles of equality into the organisational culture, the strengthening of capacities for data analytics and making communication and feedback more effective.

These challenges will be addressed within the follow-up FNUSA Gender Equality Plan 2024–2026, which builds on the results of this period and develops them into specific, sustainable measures. ICRC thus confirms its long-term commitment to being a modern, inclusive and respectful institution that creates equal opportunities for everyone and actively contributes to the development of a culture of equality in research and healthcare.