

Svenska Forskningsinstitutet i Istanbul
İsveç araştırma enstitüsü
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Gender Equality Plan (GEP) 2022–2023

1. Introduction: description of operations

The Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (SFII) is organized as a nonprofit association with its headquarters in Stockholm. It is led by a board of trustees. The institute’s decision-making body is its collegium of scholars, which consists of over one hundred representatives of Swedish and Nordic research conducted within the humanities and social sciences, with a focus on the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The institute’s activities are primarily financed by government grants awarded by the Ministry of Education and to a lesser extent through external research grants.

The SFII comprises two **structures**: a physical infrastructure in Istanbul, which consists of offices, a library, an auditorium, a guesthouse, and facilities for visiting researchers, and a “virtual infrastructure”, which is made up of a collegium of scholars, a board of trustees, as well as other partners and associates in Sweden which in one way or another support or are included in its operations. The staff works both in Istanbul and Sweden. The SFII thus functions as both an infrastructure and a community of scholars, as an independent agent and as collaborative partner.

The SFII’s **collegium of scholars** consists of roughly 150 members who convene twice annually and who are selected by recommendation from existing members. The collegium’s activities in Sweden are organized by a *program planning board* consisting of six members. The institute as a whole is led by a *board* made up of nine members. Six of the board’s members are selected from and by the collegium of scholars and represent its range of areas and different institutes of higher learning; an additional two having experience of and networks within Swedish diplomatic missions are selected by the board itself. The chairperson is appointed by the government.

The SFII has two **properties** in Istanbul at its disposal, both of which are located within the compound of the Consulate General of Sweden in the city center. Within the *Dragoman House*, built in 1886, there is a library, an auditorium, a reception room, workplaces for researchers, an office, and an official residence. The *Annex*, built in 2010, contains ten guest rooms, facilities for both short-term and long-term guests, and seminar rooms. Both buildings are owned by the state and are managed by the National Property Board.

The SFII has a **staff**. In Istanbul, a *director*, a *research officer*, two *caretakers*, and a *deputy director* are employed. In Sweden, a *clerk* and, intermittently, a *deputy director* are employed. The research officer and the caretakers are locally employed; the director and deputy director are stationed abroad

through the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the institute figuring as the responsible authority in Sweden. Via the Consulate General, the institute also has contact with the parties who attend to the local infrastructure: property manager, gardener, and guard. The institute can take on interns who are engaged in a line of study relevant for its activities and who are insured in their home country.

2. Points of departure for the SFII'S work to promote gender equality

2.1. Provisions

In order to ensure a good organizational and social work environment, the SFII focuses on three areas: *Workloads, Working hours & Victimization*. The Swedish Work Environment Authority's provisions "Organisational and social work environment" (AFS 2015:4) and "Work related stress" (ADI 688) are used for guidance in these matters.

Efforts to combat different forms of harassment are based on the seven grounds of discrimination set forth in the Discrimination Act 2008:567. These are sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief system, disability, sexual orientation, and age.

2.2. Relationship to the Consulate General of Sweden in Istanbul

The SFII's operations in Istanbul are located on the grounds of the Consulate General of Sweden in Istanbul and thus follow closely in practice the operations of the CG. The institute's activities for the promotion of gender equality are therefore also guided by the plans established for the Foreign Service as a whole. The work of the Foreign Service shall be permeated by a gender equality perspective that can be summarized with three "R's":

Rights: The Foreign Service shall work to promote women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights, including by striving to combat all forms of violence and discrimination that limit their capacity for action.

Representation: The Foreign Service shall work to promote women's participation in and influence on decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas and seek dialogue with female representatives on all levels, including within civil society.

Resources: The Foreign Service shall work to ensure that resources are distributed in such a way so as to promote opportunities for all women and girls to enjoy human rights without discrimination. The Foreign Service shall also work to promote focused efforts for different target groups. These three "R's" also serve as guiding principles for the activities of the SFII.

3. Objectives for the SFII's work to promote gender equality

3.1 Gender balance in leading positions and decision-making bodies

The SFII's efforts to promote gender equality, seen from a quantitative perspective, entail actively striving to achieve an equal gender balance with respect to legal genders in the workplace in

Istanbul as well as within the organization's various decision-making bodies and structures.¹ At present, two women and three men work in the office in Istanbul. Both the director and deputy director are men. Historically, six of the ten directors have been women. The organization's research officer is female, and the gender balance among the locally employed staff is entirely even. Of the nine ordinary members of the board of trustees, three are women and six are men. The chairperson of the board of trustees is a man, and the vice chairperson is a woman. The program planning board (which leads the collegium of scholars) is presently comprised of seven members of which four are women and three are men. The program planning board's chairperson is a woman.

3.2. Recruitment processes, discrimination and equality

All recruitment processes at the SFII, for both staff and external researchers, shall be free from discrimination. All assessments made shall be based on the applicant's merit and skill. The SFII shall promptly develop processes for recruitment and promotion that make both those responsible for recruitment and decision-making bodies alike aware of the risk of extraneous and unconscious factors and structures that can improperly influence the processes. The SFII's board of trustees shall be tasked with creating a clear and up-to-date picture of the obstacles to gender equality and equal conditions in all recruitment processes – both for staff and for external researchers.

3.3. Integration of a gender perspective in research and courses

The work carried out at the SFII rests upon the assumption that gender matters for research, knowledge, and teaching. Different ideas about and expectations on different legal genders can mean that students and researchers are treated differently. In order to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities in its activities, the SFII needs to work consciously with processes concerning gender and equality in research and teaching. In many cases, it is also relevant to integrate a gender perspective in research questions and research projects. In other words, research that will have an impact on people must also have a gender dimension.

3.4. Efforts to prevent gender-based violence and sexual harassment

Within the framework of the systematic work environment efforts carried out at the SFII, a risk assessment shall be made whereby the probability that the SFII will be affected by gender-based violence or any other threat or form of workplace violence will be analyzed and discussed. Based on the results of this risk assessment, a plan of action shall be drawn up having a focus on preventive work to be done regarding these issues. The plan of action shall concretely assess existing risks, remedy the risks, and regularly follow up upon and, when necessary, revise the measures to be taken.

The SFII shall also prevent and handle cases of victimization, harassment and sexual harassment in a professional manner and with compassion. The following efforts shall be made:

¹ Legal gender denotes the gender encoded in the social security number and which is used in register-based statistics.

- Creation and development of clear processes for dealing with and providing support in connection with suspected instances of victimization, harassment and sexual harassment.
- Development of adequate support for the director in the form of tools and documents that, together with the support available locally (via the Consulate General), facilitate the director in their role as employer, both in terms of efforts to prevent and manage cases of suspected victimization, harassment and sexual harassment.
- Development of forms for supporting all of the institute's structures in preventing harassment and sexual harassment.

4. Overarching document

The present document is the overarching action plan for the SFII's efforts to promote gender equality, together with the risk assessment and supporting documents to be produced (see 3.4 above).

5. Resources for implementation

The *board* shall undertake the task of preparing a risk assessment for the probability of the SFII being affected by gender-based violence or other threat or form of violence, drafting additional necessary policy documents, and providing support to the director according to 3.4 above. The work is to be carried out by a group appointed by the board. The board is also tasked with investigating what consequences the existing risks may have for operations.

In practical terms, it is the responsibility of the *director*, with the support of the board, to plan the work together with the staff. The director establishes annual work plans which are then followed up on during employee interviews. It is of particular importance that those employed by the SFII have the opportunity to take breaks and have time for lunch, as work can be stressful at times and entail long working hours. The operations in Istanbul also provide the opportunity to work remotely from home in order to better facilitate a balance between leisure time and working hours. The *board* is to produce a policy document regarding working from home for the SFII during 2023 at the latest.

At the SFII, no one should have to endure being treated in a degrading manner. This might involve not being invited to meetings, the withholding of information, or not being permitted to be a part of the social community. The director shall work actively to prevent this from happening. These efforts are to be based on the above-mentioned documents.

6. Follow-up and evaluation

The SFII shall work to ensure that gender perspectives are reflected in all research and teaching carried out at the institute. The board will be responsible for ensuring that this work is followed up on continuously via annual follow-ups beginning in 2023.

The above points shall be followed up on in connection with compiling the annual report and through reviews and evaluations. In 2023, the board will designate a group to work actively with the implementation of the points. The working group will also:

- be a driving force in the SFII's strategic work to combat discrimination and promote equality, equal conditions, equal rights and opportunities in accordance with internal regulations as well as with applicable laws and regulations.
- develop strategy documents and updated policy documents within the area.
- analyze and follow up on the efforts annually.
- when necessary, appoint and assign tasks to working groups having different areas of expertise.

7. Education and information

This Gender Equality Plan as well as other documents produced according to the above are published on www.srii.org and are shared with the institute's collegium of scholars.

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