



Ethics, gender, diversity plan.

CASRI Deliverable 1.2

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The CASRI Ethics, Gender, and Diversity Plan (EGDP) is a comprehensive framework designed to establish priorities, set concrete objectives, and implement measures to enhance ethics, gender equality, and diversity within the CASRI project. This document serves as a guide for ensuring ethical conduct, promoting gender balance, and fostering a diverse and inclusive research environment.

Deliverable Objective

The primary objective of the EGDP is to create an inclusive, equitable, and ethical framework for all CASRI activities. This includes:

- Ensuring ethical standards in stakeholder engagement and data handling.
- Promoting gender equality and sensitive working conditions.
- Addressing the gender dimension and diversity in research.
- Monitoring and safeguarding gender balance and inclusivity.

Key Findings

- Ethical considerations: CASRI will engage with stakeholders through informed consents, ensuring data is handled in compliance with EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Ethical standards will be maintained throughout all research activities, with regular awareness-raising among partners.
- Gender balance: The consortium currently has a good gender balance (60% women, 40% men). Functional groups such as the International Advisory Board and Work Package Leaders show a balanced gender distribution.
- Supportive working conditions: CASRI will implement flexible work schedules, provide childcare and eldercare support, and ensure predictable working hours. Career planning and mentoring programs will be encouraged, particularly for young scientists.
- Gender and diversity in CASRI research: Gender and diversity considerations will be integrated into research and activities. Identification of research needs and implementation action on gender and diversity will identify and address gendered research needs.
- Monitoring and evaluation: Gender balance and diversity within the consortium will be regularly monitored. These elements will be included in annual reports, and strategies will be adjusted as needed to maintain and improve inclusivity.

KEYWORDS

Ethics, Gender equality, Diversity, Inclusivity

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Full name
CG	Core Group
D	Deliverable
EGDP	Ethics, Gender, Diversity Plan
EGDPTF	Ethics, Gender, Diversity Plan ask Force
ES R&I	Environmental and Sustainability Research and Innovation
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
GA	General Assembly
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IAB	International Advisory Board
NC	National Contacts
NKS	National Key Stakeholders
R&I	Research and Innovation
SP(P)I	Science Policy (Practice) Interaction or Interface
SRIA	Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda
T	Task
WP	Work Package

Ethics, gender, diversity plan

1. Purpose of this document and background information

The ethics, gender, diversity plan is a systematic and strategic instrument that establishes priorities and concrete objectives based on a thorough status quo assessment, and the specific measures that will be implemented to ensure and where needed to improve the ethics, gender equality and diversity within the CASRI project.

1.1 Purpose

The EGDP is grounded in CASRI's commitment to gender equality, diversity, and ethical research practices. It ensures that all processes—from proposal preparation to dissemination of results—include and provide equal opportunities to all genders, promoting a diverse and ethical research environment¹.

1.2 Background related to ethics dimension

Co-design and stakeholder engagement processes in CASRI have inherent ethical dimensions. Activities primarily involve institutional stakeholders, with some engagement from business and NGO representatives. Personal data collected during expert consultations, surveys, and workshops will adhere to GDPR guidelines and ethical principles, ensuring respect for privacy and autonomy.

Template-based informed consents will be obtained from stakeholders before participation, detailing the project context and data handling procedures. Data will be stored and processed to prevent identity reconciliation, with strict protocols for storage and deletion according to GDPR.

All CASRI activities will comply with ethical principles, international and national laws, and the provisions set out in the Grant Agreement. Partners will adhere to the EU's code of ethics on human experimentation, ensuring respect for human dignity, individual autonomy, and the principle of beneficence

1.3 Background related to gender dimension and gender balance in the consortium

CASRI aligns with the EU's commitments to gender equality, promoting gender mainstreaming in management and research activities. As of June 2024, the consortium has a good gender balance, with 60 percent women and 40 percent men. Table 1 shows gender proportions of CASRI partner organisations and in total based on registered members on the project's work platform BSCW Social as of June 2024. Table 2 indicates gender proportions in CASRI functional groups as of June 2024.

¹ This document is based on and quoting in the following from the European Research Council (ERC) Scientific Council Gender equality plan 2007-2013 http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/ERC_ScC_Gender_Equality_Plan_2007-2013.pdf; GENDERA (2010): Practical recommendations for research organisations to lead the change towards gender equality in science and technology http://download.steinbeis-europa.de/gendera_guidelines/01_Gendera_guidelines_English.pdf; genSet (2010): Recommendations for Action on the Gender Dimension in Science <http://bit.ly/dRLaOb>

TABLE 1 - GENDER PROPORTIONS OF CASRI PARTNER ORGANISATIONS AS OF JUNE 2024

No.	Partner Organisation	Women	%	Men	%	Diverse/ unknown	%
1	UBA	3	43	4	57	-	-
2	Syke	2	67	1	33	-	-
3	SAZP	1	50	1	50	-	-
4	ISPRA	5	100	-	-	-	-
5	EAA	1	33	2	67	-	-
6	MTECT	1	50	1	50	-	-
7	FOEN	-	-	2	100	-	-
8	NRW	-	-	2	100	-	-
9	T6	2	67	1	33	-	-
10	PBL	1	100	-	-	-	-
11	BRGM	2	67	1	33	-	-
12	BAS	2	100	-	-	-	-
13	ME	1	100	-	-	-	-
14	Deltares	1	33	2	67	-	-
15	VL O	2	100		0	-	-
16	EPA Ireland	2	67	1	33	-	-
17	SCNAT	3	100	-	-	-	-
18	EEA	-	-	1	100	-	-
	Total	29	60	19	40	-	-

TABLE 2 - GENDER PROPORTIONS IN CASRI FUNCTIONAL GROUPS AS OF JUNE 2024

Group	Women	%	Men	%	Diverse/ unknown	%
Work Package Leaders	4	80	1	20	-	-
Theme Leaders	2	50	2	50	-	-
Core Group members	6	60	4	40	-	-
National Contacts	8	57	6	43	-	-
International Advisory Board members	2	50	2	50	-	-

Notably, the different functional groups represent a good gender balance. Namely the International Advisory Board (IAB) and the Theme Leads are both 50 percent female and 50 percent male. Amongst Work Package (WP) Leaders there is a female majority of four women to one man. Also, there is a (smaller) majority of female project partners among the National Contacts.

These figures lead to the conclusion that the main focus of the CASRI EGDP should be on qualitative aspects. With regard to the quantitative aspects it is necessary to monitor the developments and to encourage improving the gender balance in some WPs that need special attention. This leads to the following EGDP objectives.



FIGURE 1: GROUP PHOTO CASRI KICK-OFF MEETING, DESSAU-ROSSLAU MARCH 2024

2. CASRI Equality, Gender and Diversity objectives and boundary conditions

2.1 CASRI objectives

CASRI's objectives are to:

1. Raise awareness about the EGDP among partners and potential applicants to improve gender balance.
2. Offer gender-sensitive working conditions and culture.
3. Address the ethics and gender dimension in CASRI research.
4. Monitor changes in gender structures.
5. Ensure diversity and inclusivity in all project activities.

2.2 Boundary condition for the CASRI GAP

The primary focus of the EGDP is on internal project activities, not on external institutions' policies. However, there is a relationship between the two; sub-optimal situations at partner institutes can affect CASRI. Actions directly targeting decision-making and implementation processes on gender and diversity issues within partner institutions are outside CASRI's scope.

3. CASRI Ethics, gender and diversity plan

The EGDP focuses on five main fields of action:

1. Creating the organisational infrastructure and conditions for the EGDP.
2. Actions targeted at raising awareness.
3. Actions targeted at fostering gender-sensitive working conditions and culture.
4. Actions addressing the gender dimension in CASRI research.
5. Actions monitoring and safeguarding gender balance and diversity in CASRI.

3.1 Organisational infrastructure and conditions

Actions at the project level are managed by the Core Group (CG):

3.1.1 *Setup of a Gender Task Force*

This task force will initiate, coordinate, and monitor EGDP actions. It will include members with diverse backgrounds and experiences. The EGDTF members shall have the competency to advise the coordinator or work package leaders to engage in training and awareness-raising with the main aim of challenging gendered myths and stereotypes.

3.1.2 *Training*

EGDTF members will be offered the opportunity to participate in one of the training sessions on gender- and diversity-sensitive research organised by the EC or other recognized experts to receive training on gender-sensitive research and ethical research practices.

EGDTF members and the coordinator will discuss, how to provide training to increase awareness to all CASRI partners.

With regard to the project management, CASRI seeks to improve the quality of its leadership by creating awareness, understanding, and appreciation of different management styles through training, self-reflection and feedback mechanisms. It will make targeted visits to scientific meetings and workshops addressing gender topics in research project management, to further learn about and exchange on gender equality in European research.

3.2 Actions targeted at raising awareness

Awareness is understood to be of priority importance to sensibility and acknowledgement. Therefore, the following actions are foreseen to raise awareness:

3.2.1 *Annual EGDP report*

This report produced by the EGDTF and presented at General Assemblies, will document the actions and results related to the EGDP at the level of the project as a whole and the main bodies (WPs, General Assembly [GA] and IAB).

3.2.2 *Inclusion of Ethics and Gender Issues in Annual Conferences*

Next to the GA-report, these topics will be included in the agenda of annual project conferences to raise awareness among all participants.

3.3 Actions for gender-sensitive working conditions and diverse culture

For researchers with family commitments, the management of CASRI will actively support provisions with flexible working hours and search for provision of child care during meetings and workshops, such as remote networking, webinars and videoconferencing, to reduce the need for periods of absence from families.

Moreover, CASRI will consider the personal situations, needs and interests of people of all colours, genders, social backgrounds taking measures when necessary to change the working culture. This includes conceptualizing and structuring PhD and educational activities in a way that allows for pregnancy and maternity/paternity leave.

In particular, the following actions are foreseen:

3.3.1 Time management

CASRI partners will offer flexible work schedules and ensure appropriate workloads and predictable working hours for all scientists within the coordination and support project. Whenever possible and reasonable, CASRI will schedule essential meetings and networking events during the standard working day and hours and organise these meetings efficiently to enable parents to balance work and family and sustain productivity.

3.3.2 Support care responsibilities

The CASRI coordinator and responsible work package Leader will on-demand elaborate on the possibilities for practical childcare and eldercare support for project partners who are required to work abroad or travel to congresses, seminars, conferences or meetings. Enough advance notice of travel will be given to employees so that they can make appropriate arrangements. For all CASRI events where specific targets allow, remote participation will be considered for those, who cannot travel due to care responsibilities.

The CASRI coordinator will invite project partners planning maternity and parental leave breaks to discuss preferred means and timing of staying in contact with the CASRI team and receive updates.

3.3.3 Career planning

CASRI recognises that project partners who wish to work flexible or at reduced hours still need opportunities to learn, develop and to advance in their career. CASRI encourages partners at early career stages in the consortium to actively plan their careers, including the planning of pre- and post-maternity and parental leave breaks, but also as a long-term strategy to support, motivate and maintain ambition.

3.3.4 Mentoring

CASRI will invite project partners at early career staged to request mentoring support, independent of gender, to include them in informal networks, raise motivation and help to define ambitions.

3.3.5 Support for returners

CASRI will avoid making assumptions about a parent's, in particular the woman's availability or reduced capacity following a parental leave or a career break. The project's management is committed to maintain ongoing dialogue and discussion to ensure employees on leave are consulted and informed about opportunities and changes that are taking place.

3.4 Actions addressing gender and diversity in CASRI research

The CG is responsible for the following action at the level of the project as a whole:

3.4.1 Identification of research needs

National Contacts consider the gender balance in expert interviews to collate the data as basis of the CASRI SRIA (in addition to desk studies). WP leaders and EGDTF will be sensible to identify ethics and gender research needs and integrate them into their activities, e.g. templates for national workshop, synthesis of SRIA themes, identification of implementation actions. The coordinator will include CASRI external expert consultation if needed (e.g. if requested by EGDTF).

3.4.2 Implementation action on gender and diversity

In Work Package 5 “implementation actions”, all pilot actions will consider aspects of ethics, gender and diversity based on consultation with EGDTF as per their request with a CASRI external consultant.

3.5 Actions for monitoring and safeguarding gender balance and diversity

Actions to monitor and safeguard the gender balance in CASRI are:

3.5.1 Sensible event planning

Gender equality and diversity will be considered in planning CASRI events – in particular, event organizers will need to strive for gender balanced (minimum 2:1 ratio) of active speakers and presenters.

3.5.2 Monitoring

Gender equality and diversity will be standard elements in the annual reports. Thus, the status will be monitored and any further actions that might be required will be evaluated by the coordination team, WP leaders and IAB during their meetings.

3.5.3 Recruitment

All organisations in the consortium have equal opportunity policies and institutional mechanisms to ensure fair treatment of women and men in their workplaces. CASRI encourages gender sensitive staff recruitment approaches by the partner institutions. Gender aspects (e.g. equal proportion of women and men) shall always be considered when new staff members will be chosen. Measures will be taken to increase the awareness about the CASRI EGDP among applying researchers of underrepresented gender to encourage them to apply for CASRI vacancies.

4. Compliance with ethical principles and relevant legislation

Throughout CASRI, high ethical standards will be maintained in the conduct of research involving human participants as well as in the collection, handling and storage of data. Planned project meetings will be used to raise and ensure awareness of CASRI partners for ethical principles and standards. Participants, as well as all partners and collaborators in this research, will be treated with the utmost respect and dignity at all times. All research will be conducted in accordance with the code of ethics on human experimentation established by the EU².

All parties involved in CASRI will commit to strictly following these ethical codes in all data collection. This implies that all research will adhere to fundamental ethical principles of respect for human dignity (including the principles of non-exploitation, non-discrimination and non-instrumentation), respect for individual autonomy (entailing the giving of free and informed consent, and respect for privacy and confidentiality of personal data) and the principle of beneficence with regard to the improvement and protection of health. The consortium will strictly adhere to international regulation, conventions and declarations and will properly address any other currently unforeseen ethical issues that may be raised by the proposed research.

² Cf. https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ethics-and-data-protection_he_en.pdf



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