



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΕΝΩΣΗ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ
ΘΑΛΑΣΣΙΟΥ ΠΕΡΙΒΑΛΛΟΝΤΟΣ
HELLENIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT
PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2026–2029

1. Institutional commitment

The Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMEPA) is committed to advancing gender equality across all its activities, and to fostering a working environment founded on dignity, fairness and respect. This commitment is a natural extension of the values that have guided HELMEPA since its establishment: integrity, transparency, accountability, empathy and *filotimo*, the uniquely Greek sense of honour, dignity and goodwill.

HELMEPA treats everyone with dignity and fairness, regardless of gender, age, background, ability, beliefs or role, and actively promotes equality, inclusion and accessibility. This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) translates that commitment into a structured set of principles, responsibilities and actions.

This GEP is a formal document, published on HELMEPA's website and signed by its top management. It applies to everyone connected to HELMEPA: the Board of Directors, Management, staff, interns, volunteers and external associates.

2. About HELMEPA and scope of the plan

HELMEPA is a non-profit association headquartered in Athens, Greece, established to protect the marine environment and to cultivate a culture of environmental responsibility across the maritime community and society at large.

Current Profile (2026):

- 386 member companies (171 Managing Companies, 41 Associate Members, 174 Supporters)
- 2,583 vessels represented
- 15,000+ individual members (seafarers and maritime professionals)
- 1,000,000+ volunteers and students have joined our actions and educational programmes
- Operations since 1982; Chairperson: Semiramis Paliou; Director General: Olga Stavropoulou

This Plan applies to all persons working within or on behalf of HELMEPA: Board of Directors, Management, staff, interns, volunteers and external associates. It concerns both HELMEPA's internal organisation (as an employer) and the gender dimension reflected in its research, educational and outreach activities.

Legal and policy framework

This GEP is developed with reference to the Greek national legal framework and to HELMEPA's own governing and policy documents. It is aligned with and supported by:

- HELMEPA's Code of Conduct (2025), which sets out the organisation's values and commitment to respect, equal opportunity and a positive, safe and inclusive working culture
- HELMEPA's Articles of Association (Constitution)
- Law 4808/2021 on the protection of work (prohibition of violence and harassment, including gender-based and sexual harassment, in the workplace)
- HELMEPA's Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding and Whistleblowing Policies
- EU Directive 2023/970 on Pay Transparency (transposed to Greek law by Law 5316/2026; main obligations applying from 1 November 2026), requiring transparency in recruitment and employee pay information
- UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality)
- IMO/WMU Handbook on Gender Mainstreaming in the Maritime Sector (2026)

Where relevant, commitments in this GEP are delivered through, and are consistent with, these instruments.

3. How HELMEPA delivers its commitment

HELMEPA gives effect to its commitment to gender equality through four core areas of action:

3.1 Publication and Signature

This GEP is a formal document published on HELMEPA's official website (www.helmepa.gr) in clear and accessible form. Publication signals the organisation's commitment to gender equality and enables accountability towards staff, partners, stakeholders and the wider community.

The Plan is signed by HELMEPA's top management (Chairperson and Director General), which holds overall responsibility for implementation. A version-control table below records adoption.

3.2 Dedicated Resources and Governance

Gender Equality Focal Point: Ioanna Krassaki, Executive Coordinator, ikrassaki@helsepa.gr, is designated as the gender equality focal point responsible for leading and coordinating implementation of this GEP.

Governance and Support: The focal point is supported by a small working group comprising one member of the Board or Management (external oversight) and one staff representative.

This working group meets at least twice annually (April and October) to review progress, adjust actions as needed, and prepare the annual monitoring report for the Board. The Director General holds overall accountability for the implementation of this Plan.

HELMEPA allocates staff time to the focal point for development, implementation, monitoring and review of the GEP, in addition to her executive coordination responsibilities. Where specialised gender expertise is required, HELMEPA may draw on external training providers. Resource allocations are reviewed as part of the annual monitoring cycle.

3.3 Data Collection and Monitoring

HELMEPA collects and monitors sex/gender disaggregated data on its personnel and reports on this data annually. Data is collected from existing administrative (HR) records and analysed to identify any gaps.

Core Indicators (collected annually, reported in April):

1. Staff numbers by sex/gender, overall and by grade (management/non-management)
2. Board of Directors composition by sex/gender
3. Recruitment: applicants, shortlisted candidates and appointments by sex/gender
4. Participation in HELMEPA Academy training and professional development by sex/gender
5. Uptake of flexible working and family-related arrangements by sex/gender
6. Representation by sex/gender in decision-making committees and working groups

Data Collection Protocol:

- Responsible person: Executive Coordinator (focal point)
- Source: HR records (payroll, recruitment database, meeting attendance logs)
- Timeline: Data collected annually by 31 March; analysis completed by 15 April; report submitted to Board by 30 April
- Confidentiality: Where staff numbers are small, data is presented in a way that preserves individual confidentiality and complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Individual-level data is not published.

The results inform the priorities and actions of this Plan, are reported at least annually to the Board, and feed into the formal review of progress (see Section 5).

3.4 Training and Awareness-Raising

HELMEPA provides ongoing training and awareness-raising on gender equality for all staff and decision-makers.

Training Schedule:

- All staff and new starters (induction): Introduction to gender equality, this GEP, and HELMEPA's anti-harassment and whistleblowing policies. Timing: within first two weeks of employment/engagement.
- Management and recruitment decision-makers: Unconscious gender bias training. Timing: within first 12 months; refresher every 2 years.
- All staff (annual reminder): Awareness of harassment, gender-based violence and reporting channels. Timing: once per year (e.g., International Day for Women in Maritime, May 18).

HELMEPA keeps a record of training delivered (invitations, programmes, attendance lists, training plans) so it can, if requested, provide evidence of implementation to funders.

4. Thematic areas and measures

This Plan addresses five thematic areas. Concrete measures proportionate to HELMEPA's size are detailed below.

4.1 Work-Life Balance and Organisational Culture

HELMEPA supports flexible and family-friendly working arrangements and a respectful, inclusive organisational culture, consistent with its Code of Conduct.

Measure: Compile and communicate to all staff a short internal document setting out available flexible-working and family-leave arrangements (working from home, flexible hours, parental leave, compassionate leave, unpaid leave). Keep the document current and review annually. Post on the internal staff noticeboard and intranet.

Owner: Executive Coordinator (with Director General approval)

Timeline: Document drafted by June 2026; updated annually in March

Indicator: 100% of staff receive the document on joining; annual staff survey confirms awareness

4.2 Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making

HELMEPA promotes gender balance in its management and decision-making bodies and monitors their composition by sex/gender.

Measures:

- Monitor annually (as part of Section 3.3 data collection) the gender composition of management and the Board.
- When forming committees, working groups, or nominating representatives to external bodies, consider gender balance as one factor in the selection process.
- Aim for gender-balanced speaker and panel participation at HELMEPA events and conferences (e.g., Posidonia Conference, HELMEPA Academy seminars).

Owner: Director General (top management)

Timeline: Annual monitoring report, April; committee-formation review as needed

Indicator: Annual report on Board and management gender composition; record of gender balance consideration in committee appointments; speaker-panel gender balance logged at events

4.3 Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression

HELMEPA applies fair, transparent and open recruitment and progression practices and treats all individuals fairly, supporting equal opportunities for professional development.

Measures:

- Use gender-neutral language in job adverts (review templates annually).
- Ensure, as far as possible, gender-balanced selection panels for recruitment and promotion.
- Provide bias-awareness training to all staff involved in recruitment and selection (see Section 3.4).
- Support equal access to training, professional development and career-advancement opportunities for all staff.

Owner: Executive Coordinator (with Director General oversight)

Timeline: Job-advert templates reviewed March each year; bias training scheduled annually

Indicator: All job adverts use gender-neutral language; selection panels recorded by gender; training attendance tracked

4.4 Integration of the Gender Dimension into Research and Activities

HELMEPA considers, where relevant, the gender dimension in the design and delivery of its research, educational and awareness activities, in alignment with the UN SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and the IMO/WMU Handbook on Gender Mainstreaming.

Measures:

- When designing a new project, study or educational activity, carry out a brief gender-relevance check (e.g.: Do needs or data differ for women and men? Are role models gender-balanced? Are recruitment/participation barriers gendered?). If relevant, integrate findings into the design.
- Ensure HELMEPA's training materials (HELMEPA Academy webinars, HELMEPA Junior content, Poseidon's Challenge game) feature gender-diverse role models and language.
- Monitor participation in HELMEPA Academy and other programmes by gender (see Section 3.3 indicators).

Owner: Programme managers (across HELMEPA Academy, HELMEPA Junior, METAVASEA, etc.)

Timeline: Gender check integrated into project-design template by June 2026; reviewed annually

Indicator: Gender-relevance checklist completed for all new projects; disaggregated participation data collected annually

4.5 Measures Against Gender-Based Violence, Including Sexual Harassment

HELMEPA maintains a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence and sexual harassment, in line with Law 4808/2021 and its Anti-Bullying and Whistleblowing Policies, which provide clear and confidential reporting channels and protection from retaliation.

Measures:

- Remind all staff at least once per year of the channels available for reporting harassment or gender-based violence (email, confidential phone line, named focal point, external ombudsman where available).
- Include anti-harassment and whistleblowing procedures in staff induction and annual training (see Section 3.4).
- Investigate all reports promptly and confidentially; take action to prevent retaliation against those who report in good faith.
- Refer to and reaffirm the principles set out in HELMEPA's Code of Conduct, which commits to "zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, or exclusion in any form."

Owner: Director General / Executive Coordinator (focal point)

Timeline: Annual reminder in writing (e.g., March, aligned with International Women's Day); training as per Section 3.4

Indicator: Annual reminder sent; 100% of staff trained; number and outcome of any reports logged and reviewed

5. Governance, monitoring and review

Overall Responsibility: Top management (Chairperson and Director General) holds overall responsibility for this Plan.

Day-to-Day Coordination: The designated gender equality focal point (Executive Coordinator) leads and coordinates implementation.

Monitoring and Reporting Cycle:

- Annual (by 30 April): Focal point submits a one-page monitoring report to the Board and working group. Report covers: (a) data collected against indicators in Section 3.3; (b) training delivered (Section 3.4); (c) actions taken under thematic areas (Section 4); (d) any barriers or lessons learned; (e) actions for the year ahead.
- Every three years (2029): Full review and update of the Plan. Review considers: emerging legislation, organisational changes, results from monitoring data, and evolving best practice (including the IMO/WMU Handbook on Gender Mainstreaming and Horizon Europe guidance).

This is the first published GEP for HELMEPA (adopted 2026). Future versions, where updated, will be retained and remain available on www.helmepa.gr.

6. Contact

Questions about this Gender Equality Plan may be addressed to the gender equality focal point:

Ioanna Krassaki, Executive Coordinator
HELMEPA, 7 Imittou Street, P. Faliro 17564, Athens, Greece
Email: ikrassaki@helmepa.gr Tel: +30 210 9343088

7. Signature and adoption

This Plan is formally adopted by HELMEPA's top management.

Signed on August 28, 2026



The image shows two blue ink signatures. On the left is a stylized signature, and on the right is a more formal signature. Between the signatures is the official seal of the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMEPA). The seal is circular with a blue border containing the text 'HELLENIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ASSOCIATION' and a small star at the bottom. The center of the seal features a figure holding a torch, surrounded by waves and a sun.

Semiramis Paliou
Chairperson, HELMEPA

Olga Stavropoulou
Director General, HELMEPA

Version	Date Adopted	Notes
1.0	2026	First GEP; adopted by HELMEPA.