



Status of Equality and Non-Discrimination Work

Norwegian Refugee Council

Head Office 2023

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Introduction

To achieve NRC's mission, a diverse and capable workforce is NRC's most important asset. The organisation works systematically to build a positive working culture in which all staff feel valued and supported and have a sense of belonging.

NRC works actively for equality and non-discrimination, promoting equal opportunities regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, faith and beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

NRC's HR policy promotes equality and prevents discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment. The Code of Conduct establishes NRC's commitment to non-discrimination, equal opportunity, fair employment, courtesy, dignity and respect for different customs and cultures.

This report describes the status of NRC's gender equality and non-discrimination work in accordance with Norwegian legal obligations in 2023.

Part 1: State of gender equality

Gender differences – wage, temporary employees, parental leave, part time work, wage growth

At the end of 2023, the gender distribution at NRC's Head Office (HO) in Oslo was 61 per cent women and 30 per cent men. 9 per cent of staff opted to not disclose their gender. Comparatively, in 2022 the gender distribution was 65 per cent women and 35 per cent men. 67 per cent of managers were women and 33 per cent were men, compared to 63 per cent women and 37 per cent men in 2022. The gender distribution among senior management at was 60 per cent women and 40 per cent men, similar to 2022. NRC's Board was composed of 6 women and 5 men in 2023.

Mapping gender differences

NRC has conducted a mapping of gender differences in relation to wage and wage growth, temporary employment, sick leave, parental leave, recruitment, and part time work. The population mapped includes employees on a HO contract.

NRC considers equal work and work of equal value in the design of position levels. The design of the position levels is based on NRC's existing job profiling structure where positions are placed in job categories (grades) based on level and scope of responsibility, complexity of tasks, organisational impact and competence requirements. There are 15 grades in NRC's job profiling structure. Grades with few employees and positions considered to constitute equal work and equal value with regard to responsibility, complexity of tasks, scope and organisational impact, are merged into one position level in the table below. There are six positions levels in NRC. To calculate wage differences, NRC has broken down fixed pay and various additions and benefits for the 2023 financial year.

The staff representatives of the HO unions, Akademikerne and NTL, have participated throughout in the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the salary mapping.

When measuring involuntary part-time work, NRC has reached out to staff working part time to evaluate the reason for their part-time work and if this is their own choice.

Analysis of the mapping of gender differences

The mapping of gender differences among staff at HO does not reveal significant differences in compensation based on gender, and thereby related risks associated with promotion and career opportunities (re. table 1 and chart 1). The overall women's share of men's total cash benefits is 1.5 per cent lower when compared to 2022 and stands at 95 per cent; a 5 per cent difference that is explained by a higher number of years of experience among male staff¹. A significant increase of 20 per cent in this share during 2023 for staff in level one (grades 14 and 15 corresponding to senior managers) allowed for the women's share of men's salary to be equal or larger than 95 per cent across all levels at HO, which is an important achievement. In addition, the women's share of men's salary in levels three and four that group 74 per cent of all staff at HO is 96.3 per cent.

In terms of wage growth, women fixed salaries increased by 7 per cent and by 8.2 per cent for men, a difference of 19 per cent that is driven by the growth of men's salaries in levels 6,5 and 4 (re. chart 2).

The mapping reveals gender equality in staff who are voluntary part-time² and in those that have taken parental leave during 2023 (re. chart 3). This was not the case in 2022, when the percentage of women was larger than the percentage of men in those two situations. Gender inequalities were mapped for staff that are temporary employees and for those that were absent to provide care for a sick child; however, the percentage of women in those two situations reduced in 2023 when compared to 2022 (21 per cent reduction in temporary employees that are women and 4 per cent reduction in women absent due to sick child). A significant gender inequality was mapped for staff on sick leave; reports of sick leave increased in both men and women during 2023; however, the percentage of women on sick leave was 61 per cent higher than men during this year. This difference was also present in 2022, but to a lower degree (57 per cent difference). When considering staff in situations of sickness (staff affected by both sick leave and absence due to sick child), the gender inequality increases, as 24 per cent women and 6 per cent of men in NRC HO were affected by both those situations in 2023 (a difference of 75 per cent).

Regarding recruitment the mapping shows significant gender differences (re. chart 4). The percentage of male applicants is 20 percentage points higher than that of female applicants while the percentage of new hires that are male is almost a third of the percentage of female new hires. This trend continues since 2022.

¹ NRC's salary placement procedure gives 30% weight to education level and 70% weight to work experience.

² Do note that there are few part-time employees (14 in total) and all of them are working part time for personal reasons, not for organisational purposes.

There is an important caveat for this analysis; this year's report includes the percentage of staff that did not disclose their gender in NRC's systems. This may have influenced changes in this mapping when compared to last year's; however, this cannot be further elaborated with the available information.

| | % of women per level | Wage differences Women's share of men's salary stated in percentage. | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------|---------------------|---|
| | | Cash benefits | | | | | Natural benefits |
| | | Total cash benefits | Agreed /fixed salary* | Irregular additions** | Bonus*** | Overtime allowances | Total taxable natural benefits**** * |
| Overall = 338 staff | 61% | 95% | 95% | 113% | NA | 232% | 88% |
| Level 1 (grade 14-15) 4 staff | 75% | 95% | 95% | NA | NA | NA | 100% |
| Level 2 (grade 11-13) – 36 staff | 67% | 100% | 100% | NA | NA | NA | 111% |
| Level 3 (grade 10) – 49 staff | 55% | 98% | 98% | 35% | NA | NA | 80% |
| Level 4 (grade 8 -9) – 201 staff | 59% | 96% | 95% | 192% | NA | 260% | 90% |
| Level 5 (grade 7) – 39 staff | 74% | 97% | 97% | NA | NA | 51% | 70% |
| Level 6 (grade 3-6) – 9 staff | 44% | 100% | 100% | NA | NA | NA | NA |

Table 1. Overview of gender distribution and wage at NRC's HO.

* Per 31.12.2023

**Housing allowance, stand by allowance, Acting allowance. These allowances are in limited use.

*** There are no bonus payments in NRC. Irregular additions are applicable only for a limited number of employees and depending on the type of position; thus, the differences cannot be explained by gender.

**** Taxable mobile phone and internet. This benefit is optional.

Chart 1. Women's share of Men's salary stated in %

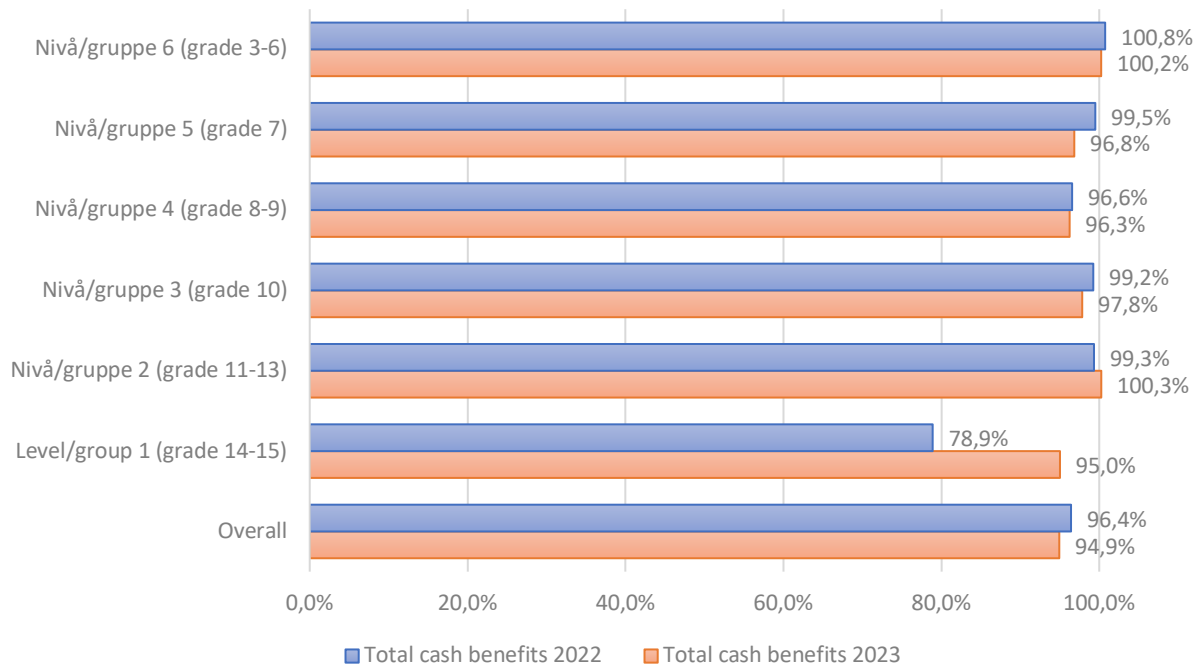


Chart 2. Increase in salary by gender

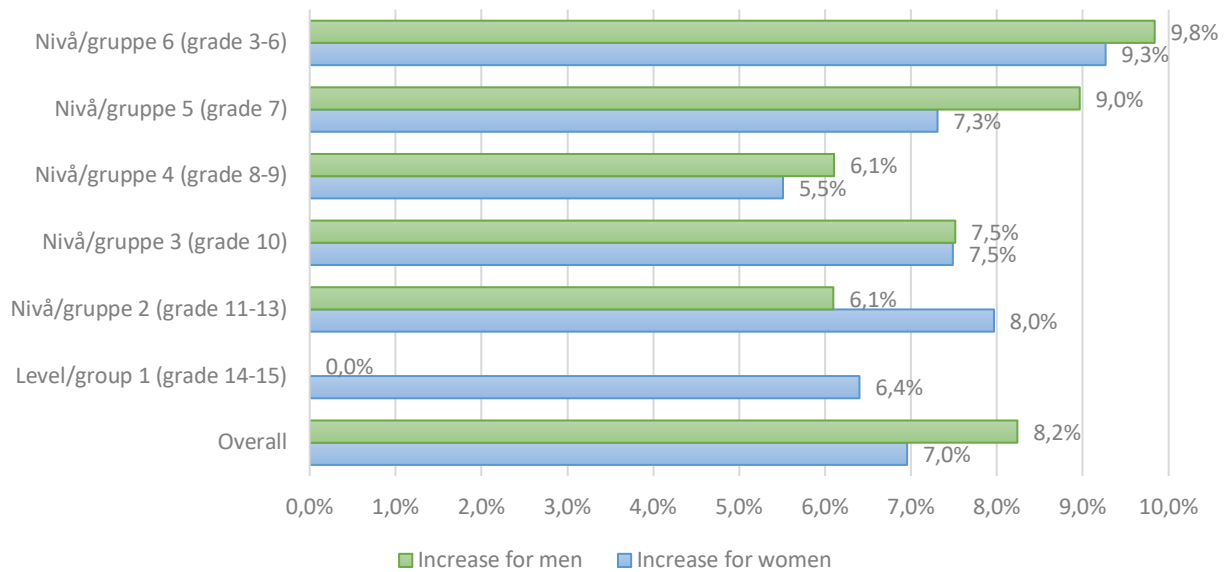


Chart 3. Gender distribution of temporary employees and part-time employees, and for sick leave, parental leave and absence due to sick child

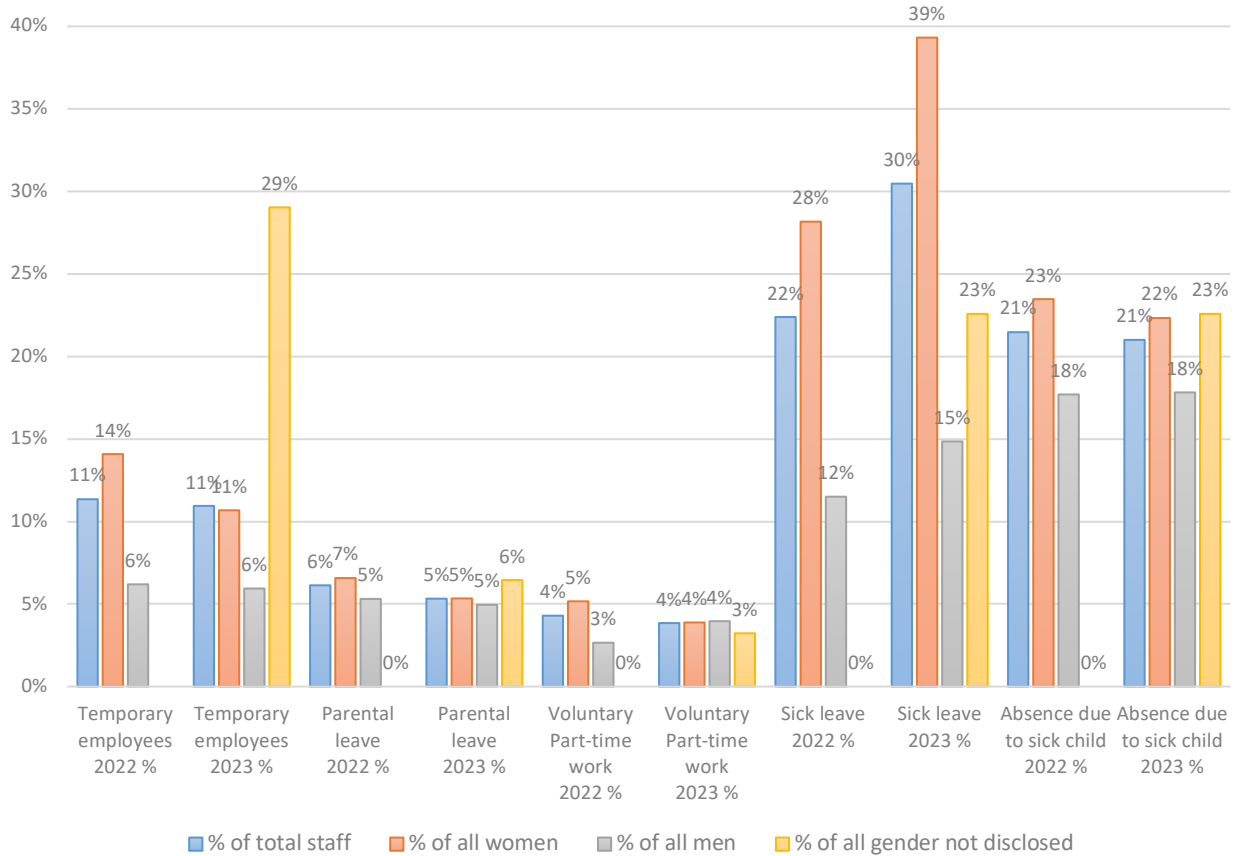
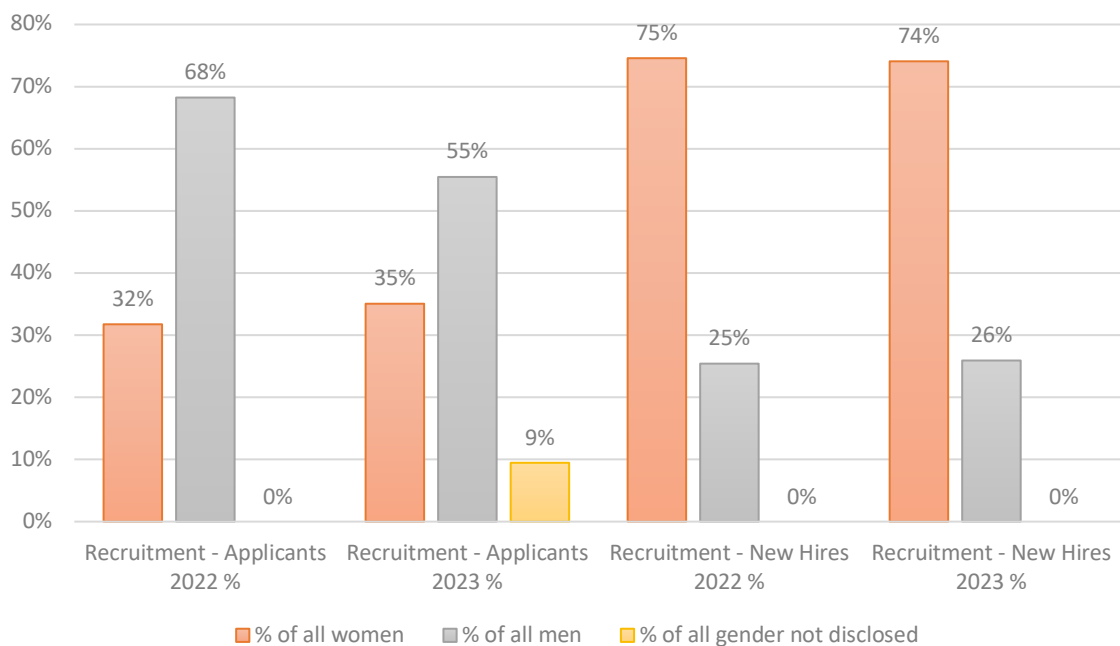


Chart 4. Gender distribution in recruitment



Part 2: NRC's work for equality and against discrimination

NRC's principles, procedures and standards for gender equality and non-discrimination

NRC's Global Strategy for 2022-2025 places a strategic emphasis on valuing its workforce and building a diverse, capable team. Efforts are directed towards fostering a positive working culture, achieving gender balance, and ensuring inclusivity at all stages of the employee lifecycle.

NRC's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) statement reads: To best protect and empower people affected by displacement, we value, celebrate, and promote diversity, inclusion, and equity. We will build a positive working culture in which all staff feel valued, empowered, supported, safe and have a sense of belonging.

The organisation's Human Resources (HR) policy actively prevents discrimination and promotes equal opportunities. Diversity and inclusion are integral to NRC's employee lifecycle. Onboarding procedures have mandatory online learning modules. Relevant documents are translated into the four official languages, ensuring equal access for all staff. A global staff survey is conducted biennially, covering various DEI aspects, with feedback driving improvements in the organisational culture.

Inclusivity is ingrained in NRC's values, reflected in performance management, whistleblowing mechanisms, and global recruitment standards. The Code of Conduct emphasises equity and inclusion, while the salary policy promotes non-discrimination. The NRC Global Strategy emphasises investing in development, training, and prioritising national staff and women. The Performance Management site on SharePoint provides comprehensive information on crafting performance and development goals in a SMART way, ensuring alignment with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) principles and integration with staff annual goals. The Head Office Health and Working Environment Committee (AMU) actively monitors issues related to the working environment and inclusivity. Hybrid working policies implemented in 2021 offer flexibility and contribute to work-life balance.

NRC's work to ensure equality and non-discrimination in practice

The structure of NRC's work on diversity, equality and inclusion

In January 2021, NRC established the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Working Group (DEIWG) at the HO to promote DEI goals and meet Norwegian employer obligations actively. The group ensures broad intersectionality, representing gender, ethnicity, national background, and sexual preference, with at least one member from each active union in NRC HO. The Working Group serves as champions, fostering an inclusive workplace by providing feedback on inclusive practices, supporting the drafting of annual equality and anti-discrimination reports, promoting diversity activities, advising on DEI issues, monitoring progress, and maintaining communication platforms with various NRC bodies.

A Global DEI Specialist Adviser and Strategic Lead was appointed in 2023, who has developed, communicated, and implemented a DEI strategy (looking at internal processes, procedures and policies) that embeds and fosters an inclusive culture throughout NRC's global offices. There are also two DEI employee groups supporting DEI objectives, addressing ongoing and planned issues – one at a global level and the other at a HO level.

NRC's investigations of discrimination risks and barriers to equality and diversity

The global staff survey conducted in 2023 served as a key source of information when investigating potential discrimination risks at the HO. The survey highlighted positive perceptions regarding equal treatment irrespective of various demographics at NRC's HO. However, there is room for improvement in the perception of NRC's commitment to DEI and valuing different perspectives, backgrounds, knowledge, and approaches of all staff, especially when compared to the global organisation's results.

The DEI baseline study, launched in 2023, examines internal people data through an intersectional lens and incorporates data from a global staff survey. The analysis will identify existing data and highlight missing data to prioritise gap areas. An action plan will be developed based on the gap analysis to narrow these gaps in the following year.

Moving forward, analysis of the outcomes of the global staff survey of 2023 and the DEI baseline study will continue and be used to inform strategies and initiatives aimed at promoting equity, inclusion, and respect within NRC's HO. This iterative process of feedback, assessment, and action will contribute to creating a more inclusive and supportive work environment for all employees.

The annual analysis of gender differences in salary, temporary employment, recruitment, parental leave, and part-time work provides furthermore essential insights into risks and barriers to equality and diversity.

Overall, NRC is committed to a systematic and data-driven approach to promoting DEI and addressing discrimination risks at its head office.

Potential risks of discrimination and barriers to equality, diversity and inclusion and measures identified

As an outcome of the baseline survey, the HO DEI Working Group (supported by the Senior Management Group) decided to do further analysis into the risk, causes and measures in the following areas: workplace culture, communication and recruitment.

Workplace culture

The potential risk identified is that NRC's HO may not fully utilise its capacity to promote an inclusive and diverse environment beyond gender. This could impede the ability of employees from various ethnic and religious backgrounds, people with disabilities, and individuals with different perspectives from contributing to their fullest potential, thereby limiting the enrichment of NRC's working environment.

The potential cause identified for the challenges in focusing on diversity and inclusion at NRC is the rapid growth experienced by the organisation in recent years, which may have led to other priorities taking precedence and resulting in less capacity to focus on DEI initiatives.

To mitigate this risk and foster a more inclusive and diverse workplace environment, NRC is taking proactive steps to consider the following actions:

1. Conducting comprehensive DEI training and awareness programmes: Integrating DEI into existing training sessions, workshops, and programmes to educate employees at all levels about the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion beyond gender.
2. Providing accommodations and accessibility support: NRC is at the beginning stages of exploration and scoping the needs for what workplace accommodations look like for employees at recruitment stage and internally (not just restricted to employees with disabilities) to enable them to perform their roles effectively. This may include providing assistive technologies, flexible work arrangements, and accessible facilities to accommodate diverse needs.
3. Promoting inclusive leadership and communication: Encourage leaders and managers to demonstrate inclusive behaviors and foster open communication channels where employees feel comfortable sharing their perspectives and concerns. Leaders should actively listen to diverse viewpoints and incorporate them into decision-making processes to create a more inclusive work culture.

Measures initiated in 2023

- A DEI session took place with the NRC Board. During this session, the NRC Board discussed NRC's DEI efforts and agreed to establish a set of concrete commitments to drive DEI in the organisation. The objective of making these commitments is to demonstrate to the organisation that the NRC Board takes clear ownership of NRC's DEI efforts, how it will contribute to these efforts and hold the Senior Management Group accountable on DEI.
- Inclusion will continue as a pre-set value-based goal in the performance management process, which will serve as an individual KPI as well as a departmental KPI to incentivise actions towards DEI.
- The new Speak Up Policy has been launched to accommodate employees speaking up about concerns they may have, e.g., discrimination on different grounds. Reports will inform NRC's continued work on DEI.
- A project was kicked off to review the onboarding process at the head office to facilitate smoother onboarding and remove any barriers for a good onboarding experience despite nationality. An external agency has been engaged to accommodate for efficient relocation of new hires from abroad. Ongoing review and work are being done to our onboarding process to ensure DEI is integrated and embedded from the start of this process and throughout the key touchpoints of the employee's experience as a new joiner to our organisation.

RECRUITMENT

NRC aims for an inclusive and equitable environment where all candidates have an equal opportunity to compete for positions based on their qualifications and merits.

The potential risk identified within recruitment is the presence of systematic biases among line managers, hiring managers, and recruiters, which could create barriers to diversity in recruitment processes. This risk may be exacerbated by several factors, including the lack of awareness or consultation with NRC's Global Recruitment Strategy, standards, policy, and guidelines among staff. The composition of recruitment panels may still not reflect the diversity of the candidate pool or diversity beyond gender is not considered, potentially contributing to biased decision-making. Thus, it needs to be defined and this will look different in each region.

NRC's tools and mechanisms need to be able to identify the special categories candidates fall under at the start of the recruitment process. For the candidates that require reasonable adjustments, additional and /or special assistance, needs must be identified as well as an assessment of whether NRC has the capability to support them e.g. continued breast-feeding rooms/spaces. There must be a process to confirm whether the offices they are being recruited to are able to support/accommodate the reasonable adjustments and/or additional support requests from the individuals and/or groups that require them.

To address these potential risks and promote diversity and equality in recruitment processes, NRC has initiated several actions. The NRC's Global Recruitment Strategy

outlines comprehensive measures to enhance diversity in recruitment processes. It emphasises thorough training for managers and recruiters, focusing on bias mitigation. Diverse recruitment panels are proposed to minimise biases, emphasising including candidates from diverse backgrounds. Regular reviews and evaluations are set in a system to identify potential biases or barriers, utilising feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement. Accountability measures involve holding managers and recruiters responsible for promoting diversity, using performance metrics as indicators. A culture of continuous learning is fostered through ongoing updates on emerging recruitment trends, lessons learnt/best practice meetings with teams and departments, etc. NRC will in 2024 launch an internal podcast series which will have topics pertaining to DEI, in addition to a workplace culture series with a focus on DEI topics.

Measures initiated in 2023 and planned for 2024

- The global project to increase number of national staff in senior positions is progressing. The gender distribution shall be reflected at management level. Grade 10 and above in all national pay scales are now aligned with the international pay scale. With this initiative, NRC's target is to make it more attractive for international staff to return to their home country to national positions.
- Performance metrics with promotion of DEI as a key component of success and regular evaluations by hiring managers and candidates, including DEI, have been implemented to refine and improve recruitment practices.
- NRC HO will consider how the process and system to best facilitate for positive discrimination of candidates with different disabilities. The career site testimonial reflects this aim.
- E-learning modules for recruiters were introduced during spring 2023, including bias training and presentation of tools that facilitate assessment of candidates solely based on competence. As of today, 80 recruiters have completed the course.

Promotion, Compensation and Benefits

The documented status of gender equality for HO 2023 does not reveal any significant gender differences or risk regarding promotion or career opportunities, whether in terms of total compensation, part-time work or parental leave. There is an even gender distribution in managerial and expert positions. The differences in percentages for the different parameters reflect the overall gender distribution at HO. The length of experience is a factor when determining salary, which may also serve as an explanation for any differences not related to gender.

The global staff survey in 2023 highlighted reward as an area to explore and, RC acknowledges the potential risk of biases affecting recruitment salaries, and benefits.

HO Managers, HR, and Union representatives may lack awareness of potential biases in recruitment and compensation decisions. The clarity and understanding of salary policies/guidelines may be insufficient, especially among Line Managers who form a potentially homogenous group during the HO annual salary negotiations.

Measures initiated in 2023 and planned for 2024

The ongoing project on reviewing the global reward structure and policies including the project work stream on global mobility puts emphasis on an extended DEI-focus when identifying biases, gaps, and future opportunities.

- Minimum standards for national benefits: we look into benefits that would support NRC staff in different phases of their lives and independently of gender, nationality, etc.
- Remote work: looking into opportunities to support people to work from various places and under equal terms and following coherent global principles.
- Resident vs. mobile: main theme is to de-couple a link between nationality and type of contract with clear and coherent set of contract modalities and fair criteria for each of the two categories.
- Global Mobility Framework: To facilitate global talent exchange and staff retention and to promote knowledge transfer and cultural diversity.
- The revision of the HO salary placement process, emphasising stakeholder accountability, transparency, and fairness, was completed, promoting transparency, equality and non-discrimination.
- The anchoring of NRC's digitised performance management process continues and provides standardised tools for Line Managers and staff to facilitate meaningful development dialogues, with a focus on minimising biases in performance evaluation through multiple check-ins and real-time feedback.

Evaluation of measures in 2023 and expectations for the work on diversity, equality and inclusion going forward

NRC is committed to fostering a more inclusive and equitable workplace through its proactive approach to integrating diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) principles into its policies, systems, and processes. This is a breakdown of the outlined measures and expectations for future work:

Integration of DEI Principles:

1. **Proactive Integration:** Embedding DEI principles, objectives, and action plans into policies, systems, and processes demonstrates a commitment to creating a culture where diversity and inclusion are valued.
2. **Establishment of DEI Working Groups:** These groups play a crucial role in unpacking DEI, raising awareness, and aligning on what DEI means to NRC. They provide a platform for collaboration and sharing best practices.
3. **Common Language for Discussing DEI:** Providing a common language for discussing DEI helps bridge the gap between DEI policies and practices within the organisation, ensuring clarity and alignment among staff members.

Measures and Expectations for Future Work:

1. **Metrics and Data Analysis:** Developing global DEI metrics aligned with people analytics data and regularly comparing metrics over time will provide a clear overview of DEI progress.
2. **Feedback and Engagement:** Incorporating actions resulting from the global staff survey for the head office and gathering feedback through various channels will help gauge employee perceptions and areas of concern, enhancing the effectiveness of DEI efforts.
3. **Training and Development:** Evaluating the effectiveness of training programs and identifying areas for additional support ensures that staff members involved in recruitment processes are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to promote DEI.
4. **Policy and Process Review:** Continual review of global recruitment standards, policies, and guidelines ensures alignment with DEI principles and objectives, fostering transparency and equity in recruitment processes.
5. **Representation and Inclusivity:** Regularly evaluating the composition of decision-making bodies to ensure diversity and representation of underrepresented groups promotes inclusivity at all levels of the organisation.
6. **Continued Investment and Commitment:** Allocating resources and support from senior leadership ensures continued investment in DEI initiatives, reinforcing its importance within the organisation.
7. **Continuous Improvement:** Implementing changes based on past evaluations and feedback addresses gaps and enhances the effectiveness of DEI efforts over time.
8. **Transparency and Accountability:** Reporting progress on DEI initiatives with clear goals, benchmarks, and performance metrics promotes transparency and accountability within the organisation.
9. **Fostering a Culture of Engagement and Participation:** Empowering all employees to contribute to DEI efforts fosters a culture of engagement and inclusivity where everyone feels valued and respected.

10. Collaboration and Partnerships: Partnering with external organisations and stakeholders leverages best practices and advances DEI goals on a broader scale, enhancing the impact of DEI efforts.

By ensuring these measures and expectations are met, NRC can continue to build a more inclusive and equitable workplace where all employees can thrive and contribute to their fullest potential.

Oslo, May 2024