

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT MERICS

We value the diversity of our European society as a whole and strive to reflect this in our work culture and team. MERICS considers itself as part of an intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity of various dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, social and professional background, fundamental ethical convictions, religion and beliefs.

We appreciate the wealth of experience that our employees have and believe that different perspectives a diverse team brings contribute to higher quality and more credible research. While acknowledging existing gaps and challenges to improving diversity and inclusion in the workplace, the institute's leadership regularly monitors, evaluates and reports on the progress towards greater diversity and inclusion at MERICS.

Hiring

We are committed to inclusive hiring practices because we oppose structural discrimination. When recruiting new staff, we ensure that every stage of the application process adheres to equal opportunity principles. We hire based on merit with special care taken to check for unconscious biases.

We strongly encourage candidates with diverse backgrounds to apply. To achieve this, in addition to conventional recruitment methods, we post job advertisements widely through specialized networks.

If, in the hiring process, the top applicants are all of the same gender, we commit to inviting one of the top candidates of the underrepresented gender for an interview as well.

Workplace culture

Those involved in recruitment are expected to lead the change and all our employees are responsible for fulfilling MERIC's diversity strategy. We offer guidance and opportunities for trainings on diversity and inclusion to staff members to ensure that potential biases have less impact on decision making in the hiring process.

MERICS is a place of research and learning. We treat each other with respect, appreciation, and care. We take the provision of a safe working environment very seriously and do not tolerate any harassment or discrimination among colleagues. We have put impartial conflict resolution and feedback processes in place to ensure that employees can voice concerns in a protected space and that issues of diversity and inclusion can be discussed in a confidential and non-judgmental manner.

To ensure that we treat our existing workforce in a fair, equal, and inclusive way, we analyze our salary structure and promotion patterns at regular intervals with respect to all markers of diversity and inclusion mentioned above.

Interactions with stakeholders, funders, research community, and public

MERICS embraces diversity and inclusion in its interactions with external stakeholders, for instance, when engaging speakers for events, appointing committees in project and partner contexts, or selecting individuals who will be publicly visible. We factor diversity promotion and inclusion into partnerships and projects.

We are committed to the following principles:

- **On boards:** If a male employee is invited to represent MERICS on an advisory board, jury, or similar body that to date has been composed solely or predominantly of men, the leadership in the executive team will consult on whether to propose a female colleague instead. The same applies to invitations to give speeches and panels in general.
- **On committees:** MERICS also advocates gender balance and strives to involve ethnic minorities and people of color on committees the institute is involved in, as well as in other external representation formats.
- **In events:** Our goal is to have a 50:50 female to male ratio in the overall number of speakers in all events hosted by MERICS. When there are three or more speakers, at least one of them must be female. We commit to gender balance in moderator and meeting chair roles.
- **Participation:** We are committed to increasing the participation of speakers of color and ethnic minorities.

Language

We are conscious of the way we use language and the effects the use of language can have on diversity and inclusion. We apply the following principles to all relevant institutional texts and documents. Our words, texts and images shall fully represent people with non-binary gender identities as individuals with equal rights and value. We use appropriate markers in the German language to highlight that. We take care to ensure that the language and visual imagery we use reflect the heterogeneity of our ethnically and culturally diverse European society.

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