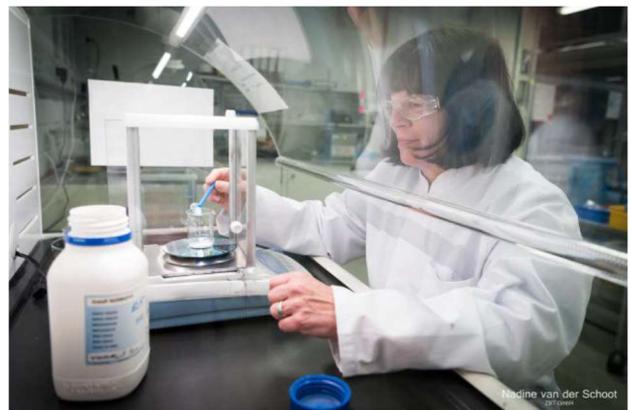
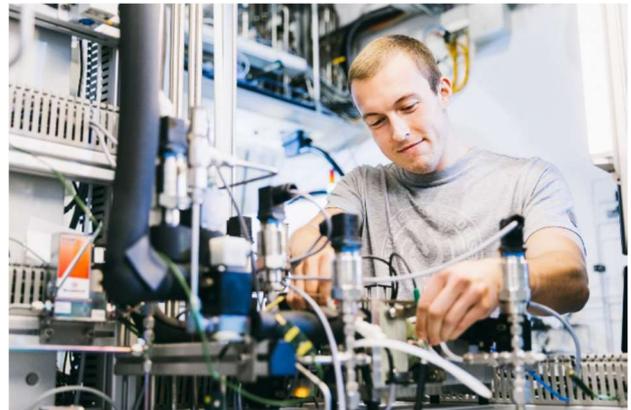


## Gender Equality Plan (GEP)



Duisburg, June 2022

ZBT - THE HYDROGEN AND FUEL CELL CENTER (ZBT GmbH)

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## **1 Preamble**

Legal equality between men and women has now been achieved in Germany. Nevertheless, equality between women and men is still far from being implemented. Germany has made considerable progress in some areas in recent decades, but the opportunities for women and men are still very different in many areas of society. Women are less often represented in leadership positions in business, science and politics and, above all, their numbers there have hardly increased in recent years. In addition, they are often paid less, work part-time more often and do the lion's share of care work. At the same time, men are less likely to enter professions such as educators and primary school teachers. In the indicators on violence against women, Germany performs particularly poorly compared to all other indicators. (bmfsfj 2016; Albrecht and Rude 2022)

For these reasons, it is necessary to further promote gender equality in Germany. Therefore, the ZBT also sees its duty in empowering and supporting women, especially since women are still strongly underrepresented in so-called STEM professions (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), and most of the work at ZBT also falls into this category.

Equality of all genders is enshrined in law in Germany. The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of ZBT is intended to contribute to the further realisation of gender equality and equal opportunities in the company. In this plan, the management commits itself to implementing measures and setting goals that ensure the equality of all genders. The compatibility of work and family is an important instrument for gender equality and is also strengthened and promoted by the ZBT with various measures. With the help of the GEP and the measures listed therein, future employees should have the opportunity to assess the values of ZBT even before they start work. The GEP applies to all areas of responsibility and decisions of ZBT and should also be lived by the staff. Special further training for employees should create an awareness of the topic, positively influence the corporate culture and ensure the implementation of the GEP.

This GEP serves to map the current employment relationship at ZBT and to uncover imbalances in the gender distribution. These imbalances are to be reduced in the long term with the help of the measures described. The achievement of the defined goals is the special task of the employees in management positions and is regularly reviewed. The ZBT also undertakes to update and adapt the GEP after 4 years at the latest (2022-2026).

## **2 Fundamentals of the Equality Plan**

The organisational culture at ZBT stands for respectful interaction and a discrimination-free working environment for all employees. In addition to gender equality, this also concerns the equal rights of all employees regardless of origin, religion and external or other individual characteristics. ZBT values the opportunities that a diverse and varied workforce brings. All employees at ZBT take care to counteract any form of discrimination, e.g. on the basis of gender.

Managers at ZBT see it as their task to create a conducive working environment and equal opportunities in everyday working life for all employees and especially to promote and challenge the personal skills and potential of the employees. In order for all genders to work together on an equal footing, a more balanced gender ratio must be promoted at ZBT. For this reason, the gender equality plan is also considered a component of personnel development planning at ZBT.

## **2.1 Family and Work / Company Agreements**

As a family-friendly company, ZBT has already introduced various measures to actively support the compatibility of family and work. The employees of ZBT have the possibility to flexibly adapt their working hours and locations to their respective needs through company agreements (Betriebsvereinbarung - BV) that have already come into force. These existing company agreements include in particular the BV Arbeitszeit (Working Hours) and the BV Mobiles Arbeiten (Mobile Working). In addition, there is another company agreement regulating part-time work options, the so-called BV Teilzeit. This ensures that all employees have the opportunity to work part-time.

## **2.2 Gender Equality Plan (EU)**

The European Commission is committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation. As part of the European Commission's [gender equality strategy for 2020-2025](#), it aims to overcome the structural barriers to gender equality that persist in the research sector.

The aim is to improve the European research and innovation system. To this end, gender-equitable working environments are to be created in which all talents can develop. In order to improve the quality of research as well as the social relevance of the results, the gender dimension is to be integrated into projects.

With [Horizon Europe](#), the European Commission reaffirms its commitment to gender equality, which is set as a cross-cutting priority and to which strengthened funding rules are introduced. It is recommended that gender equality be implemented as a management task. As a lived institute culture, gender equality contributes to a better work-life balance and offers equal opportunities for career advancement for all employees. Through a Gender Equality Plan ([GEP](#)), the goals of the research institutions are to be made known. This also includes measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

## **3 Inventory of the employment structure**

In order to formulate goals in the Gender Equality Plan, it is first necessary to take an inventory of the employment structure. Based on this, inequalities in the staff structure can be identified and analysed. In the following, the structures of ZBT's employees are presented in figures. The underlying data is based on personnel data as at the reporting date 31 December 2021.

### 3.1 Inventory of the ZBT

ZBT deals with topics related to hydrogen and fuel cells. The institute was founded in 2001 and has grown continuously since then. The following table shows the inventory of ZBT's employee structure on the reporting date 31 December 2021.

Table 1: Employment structure at ZBT (reporting date: 31 December 2021)

Reporting date 31 December 2021	Number of employees	Number of women	Number of men	Proportion of women %	Proportion of men %
Total (w/o student assistants)	123	25	98	20.3	79.7
Scientific staff (incl. lab assistants, etc.)	81	14	67	17.3	82.7
Non-scientific staff – administration	11	9	2	81.8	18.2
Non-scientific staff – technical services	31	2	29	6.5	93.6
Student assistants	28	5	23	17.9	82.1
Management	3	1	2	33.3	66.7
Head of Department	8	1	7	12.5	87.5
Group management	12	2	10	16.7	83.3

A total of 123 persons, 25 of them women and 98 men, are employed at ZBT as of the reporting date, which corresponds to a share of women of 20.3%. Currently there are no employees who do assign themselves to another gender or to no gender at all, accordingly this category is not shown.

#### General structure

At ZBT, a distinction is made between employees who work in the scientific area and those who work in the non-scientific area. For the latter, an additional distinction is made between the areas of administration and technical services. At 17.28%, the proportion of women working in science is slightly below the average for all employees. Among the non-scientific employees, the proportion of women in administration is very dominant at over 80% and, conversely, the proportion of men in technical services is very high at over 90%. The management is composed of 3 men and one woman, the department heads of 8 men and one woman. The scientific departments are headed only by men. In the area of group management, the proportion of women, at 16.67%, is slightly below the proportion of women among the scientific employees at ZBT. In addition, the ZBT is supported by student assistants. Here, the proportion of women, at 17.86%, is similarly low to that of the research associates (see Figure 1).

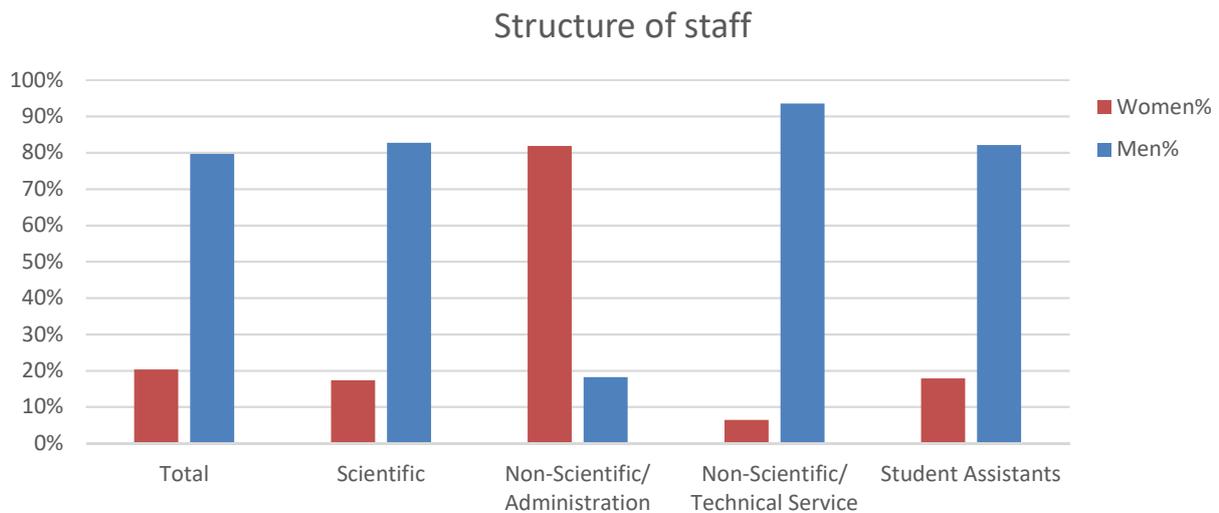


Figure 1: Gender distribution of employees according to subgroups

#### Part-time

ZBT has made it possible to work part-time from the beginning. As of the reporting date, 23.6% of the employees worked part-time (w/o student assistants). 44% of the women have a part-time contract and 18.4% of the men. Figure 2 shows the distribution of part-time workers in the management levels and the scientific and non-scientific areas. In the area of administration, the part-time rate for men is 100%, but the overall proportion of men in this area is only 18.2%.

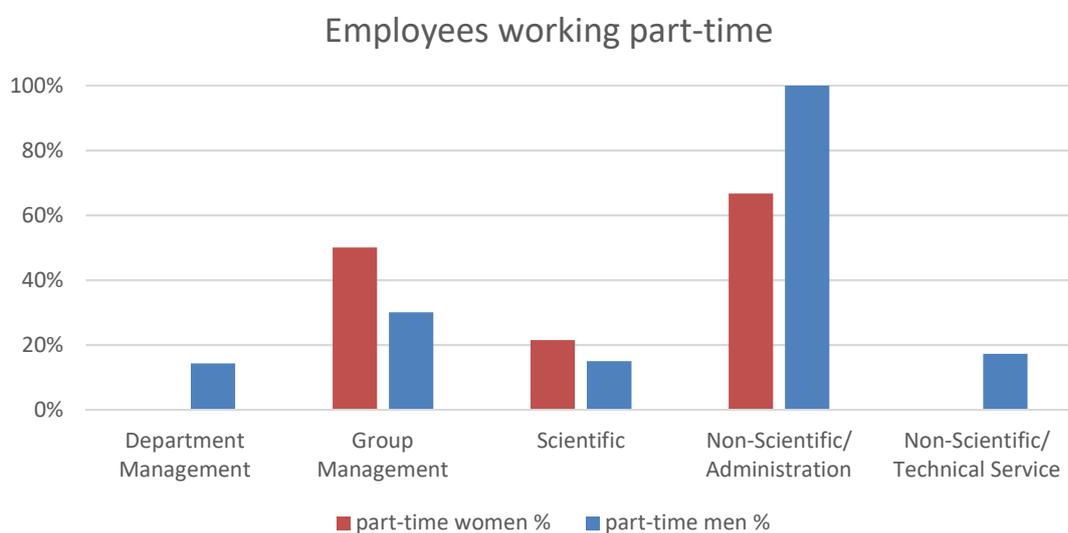


Figure 2: Employees in part-time employment

#### Fixed-term

Fixed-term contracts are common in the academic sector. At ZBT, a total of 44% of all contracts are fixed-term. 48% of women work in a fixed-term position and 43.9% of men.

### Salary

The salary structures at ZBT are based on the conditions of the collective agreement of the German states (TV-L) in the public service. 81.3% of employees are classified in pay groups E11 to E15. Pay group E13 accounts for the largest share, 50.4% of all employees, as can be seen in the following figure 3.

Distribution of pay groups

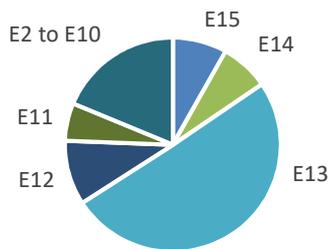


Figure 3: Proportional distribution of pay groups at ZBT

Figure 4 shows the pay groups E11 to E15 broken down by gender. According to this, 72% of all women are classified in pay groups E11 to E15 and 83.7% of all men. In the largest pay group, E13, 36% of all women and 54% of all men are in this group. In contrast, 20% of women and only 7% of men are in E12. A detailed presentation of the pay grades E2 to E10 is not provided, as the respective reference figure (number of employees) is very small. 7% and 8% of men and women, respectively, are assigned to pay grade E14.

Grouping into pay groups

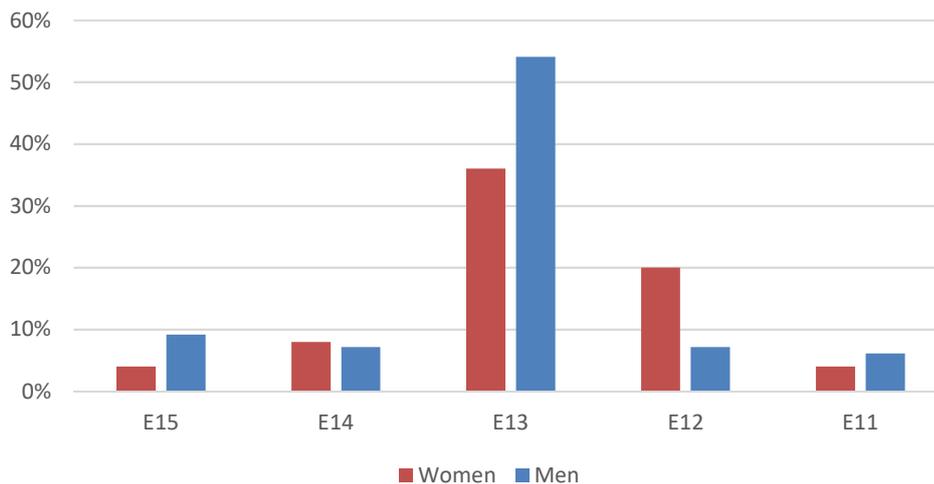


Figure 4: Gender distribution in pay groups E11 to E15

### 3.2 Analysis/summary of employment structure

The employment structure shows that women are clearly underrepresented in ZBT with a total share of 20%. One reason for this is that ZBT is concerned with technical research tasks. The scientific staff, who make up 65.8% of all employees, come from the so-called STEM subjects. The majority are engineers and natural scientists. At the ZBT, the proportion of women in the scientific field is 17.3%, which is below the average proportion of employed female STEM academics in Germany in 2018 (23.4%) (Statista 2022).

ZBT maintains extensive laboratories, workshops and test fields. The employees needed for this operation – electricians, mechanics, etc. – belong to the technical services and represent the second largest group of employees at ZBT with 25.2%. The quota of women in these professions is also low in Germany. In ZBT, the female quota of 6.5% is even lower than that of female STEM professionals in Germany with 11.8% in 2018 (Statista 2022).

The proportion of female student assistants is also relatively low at 17.9%. For example, the proportion of female students at the University of Duisburg-Essen (UDE) in 2017 was 25.4% for engineering sciences, 30.6% for physics and 46.4% for chemistry (UDE 2019).

Looking at the management levels at ZBT, the head of department stands out in particular. Although there is a female head of department for the non-scientific area, all scientific departments are headed by men. Reasons for this are not known. At 16.6%, the proportion of women in group management is only slightly smaller than the proportion of women in scientific employees at 17.3%. At the non-management levels, the unequal distribution in the areas of administration and technical services is particularly striking. In administration, one sees a share of women of 81.8%, but in technical services only 6.67%. This reflects the social framework.

At ZBT, part-time contracts are found at all hierarchical levels except for management. Here, a clear unequal distribution can be seen. 44% of women have a part-time contract compared to 18.4% of men. This reflects the social distribution in Germany, where in 2020 mothers had a part-time rate of 66% or women w/o children of 35% and fathers only 7% (men w/o children 12%) (Federal Statistical Office 2020). In contrast, there is no relevant difference by gender in the fixed-term employment of employees.

In terms of salary structures, the differences in the E12 and E13 pay groups are particularly striking. However, there is a lack of further information on scientific and non-scientific employees, so the analysis will have to be carried out at a later date.

In summary, the low proportion of women at ZBT can be explained by the technical orientation of the institute and the general social context of STEM fields in Germany.

At the same time, however, the proportion of women is still below the comparable figures and should be increased in the future with the help of various measures.

## 4 Goals and measures

The inventory and analysis of the number of employees at ZBT have shown that the proportion of women is still below comparable figures, such as the number of employed female academics in the STEM areas or the number of female engineering students at the UDE. The goal of ZBT is to increase the proportion of women among the scientists and student assistants to 25% (based on the figures for female STEM academics at 23.4% and female engineering students at UDE at 25.4%). In order to achieve this, goals are formulated in the following and the corresponding measures required to achieve the goals are explained.

### 4.1 Work-Life Balance

The goal is to enable employees to have a good work-life balance. However, this is perceived very individually and changes in the course of working life. Parents of small children, but also children of elderly parents, have to coordinate an increased care effort with their working hours. Likewise, e.g. voluntary work or other individual life circumstances can lead to a reconsideration of the relationship between work and leisure time.

The measures outlined below are important parameters for a work-life balance, which are already being lived in ZBT.

#### *Working time model*

Flexible working hours make it possible to combine individual needs, such as those arising from day-care opening times, caring for relatives or convenient transport connections, with working hours. This makes it possible to flexibly organise working hours within the flexitime framework. In consultation with superiors and colleagues, so-called "core time violations" can also be made possible. In addition, flexibility is supplemented by full or half flexitime days.

#### *Holiday*

As a rule, employees' holiday wishes are complied with as long as there are no serious operational obstacles to this. Holiday and flexitime days can also be taken at short notice – in consultation with superiors and colleagues.

#### *Part-time*

Another important building block for the work-life balance is the possibility to work part-time and to adapt individual weekly working hours to one's life circumstances. At ZBT, weekly working hours between 20 and 40 hours are possible in principle and every effort is made to implement the wishes of the employees. In exceptional cases, working less than 20 hours per week is also possible for a limited period of time. Different part-time models are used, in which the daily working hours are reduced or no work is done on individual, fixed days of the week. Individual postponements of part-time days, either for business or private reasons, are possible and increase flexibility.

#### *Mobile working*

ZBT is a research institute where a significant part of the research and development work takes place in the laboratory, workshop or on a test field. This means that on-site presence at ZBT is often essential. On the other hand, there are many activities (writing reports and

proposals, data evaluation, etc.) that can be done at other locations on the computer. Forced by the circumstances of the Corona pandemic, the possibility to work at home was also given for the first time in 2020. Since summer 2021, there has been a company agreement (initially valid until the end of 2022) that allows mobile working up to a maximum of 50% of the monthly average. Mobile working in particular increases individual flexibility and promotes work-life balance. Unfortunately, the current IT infrastructure is not yet sufficiently adapted to the needs of mobile working, so that the desire for mobile working cannot always be implemented.

In order to achieve a further improvement in the work-life balance, the IT infrastructure must be adapted. All employees whose work permits it should be given the opportunity to mobile working. In concrete terms, this means that every employee who wants to carry out mobile work will be provided with a laptop with VPN access. Furthermore, investments will be made in the telephony infrastructure so that employees can also make phone calls via the ZBT access while working mobile.

In order to review the measures, the validity of the company agreements on working hours, vacation, part-time work and mobile working will be reviewed in 2024. The latter agreement is of particular interest, as it has been valid for a limited period of time. Furthermore, it will be checked whether the IT infrastructure has improved significantly and whether mobile devices are available to all employees who want them and whether telephony via ZBT is possible.

## **4.2 Organisational culture**

The organisational culture of a company has a strong impact on the way employees work together and on fundamental values such as respect, recognition and trust. The goal of ZBT is to create an open, trusting working atmosphere in which all employees feel respected and valued.

ZBT has a flat organisational structure consisting of the management, the department management, the group management and the other employees. The principle of the "open ear" applies at all levels, i.e. everyone communicates with everyone, regardless of position, gender or nationality.

In addition, respectful interaction with each other is to be further strengthened in the future by also addressing all genders in written communication. To this end, a uniform 'gender notation' is to be introduced and used by all employees of the Institute, especially for external presentation.

## **4.3 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making**

The analysis of the employment structure has shown that the proportion of women is low, especially at the departmental management level. At the group management level, the proportion of women is also below the future target of 25%. The goal is to increase the proportion of women at management level. However, all positions are currently filled and no foreseeable departures of staff is expected, e.g. due to reaching retirement age. Nevertheless,

in order to strategically increase the proportion of women or to increase the visibility of women in the company, the following measures are being implemented.

Women should increasingly be considered for the management of new projects or encouraged to take over project management. Here, department and group heads in particular have a duty to address the issue of employee motivation and distribution of tasks (see trainings, chapter 4.7).

One goal should be to include women, regardless of their position in the company, in interdepartmental working groups that deal with the future and strategy in the company. The composition of such working groups should ideally reflect the target of 25% women.

Women should also be approached more in areas of responsibility (safety officers, radiation protection, etc.). In this context, it is also important to ensure the visibility of women in the company, clarification of authority to issue directives and, as far as this is possible within the framework of the collective agreement, appropriate remuneration.

In order to review the measures, in addition to the data regularly collected for the inventory (see 3.1), the management of projects will be statistically recorded in the future. Furthermore, information on overarching working groups will be collected and analysed with regard to gender distribution. The same applies to the commissioners. For this purpose, tables are created which are maintained and centrally filed by the administrative level as well as by the chairs of the working groups.

#### **4.4 Gender equality in recruitment and career development**

ZBT is a research institute dealing with technical development around hydrogen and fuel cells. Almost 100% of the scientists come from STEM fields, where the quota of women is generally low (see above). This means that when jobs are advertised, the number of male applications is proportionally greater. Nevertheless, the aim is to make job advertisements attractive to women, e.g. by referring to the GEP or asking them not to include a photo in their application. The Institute's job pages should be designed more attractively and openly overall and refer in particular to the above-mentioned attractive working conditions and also the motivating factors in terms of content ("technical solutions for climate change").

Furthermore, reference should be made to future job advertisements in networks that are particularly used by women. For example, the WiGH (Women in Green Hydrogen) should be mentioned here. Since potential applicants look at the website of a company, this and the external presentation of ZBT should be reviewed and revised with a view to gender equality.

Likewise, applicants of all genders should always be invited to interviews in the future, provided that suitable applications are submitted.

In order to evaluate the impact of the measures and to further expand the monitoring, the gender ratio of the applications received, the applicants invited and the proportion of women in the newly recruited employees will be recorded in the future.

#### **4.5 Integration of the gender dimension in research and teaching content**

Research content at ZBT essentially deals with purely technical issues in which the gender dimension does not play a role. In larger projects, the socio-economic aspect or the gender dimension can play a role alongside techno-economic issues. In this case, appropriately qualified project partners deal with this issue.

#### **4.6 Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment**

As described in 4.2, ZBT strives for trusting and respect-oriented communication in which violence and sexual harassment in any form should not occur. In order to achieve this goal and to identify grievances at an early stage, at least two persons of trust are appointed as contact persons. This could be an equal opportunities officer (see chapter 4.8), as well as members of the works council, for example. Employees can contact these persons confidentially if they have experienced or observed a form of violence or sexual harassment. The persons should not come from the management level in order to avoid dependencies and/or fear of consequences.

Furthermore, trainings should be offered in which employees are sensitised to what is funny and where the fun stops. It would also be desirable to offer training for employees on how to deal with and defend themselves in cases of sexual harassment (or simply inappropriate comments).

To monitor the measures, the appointment of confidential counsellors is documented, as is the number of training sessions offered and carried out.

#### **4.7 Fort- und Weiterbildung**

The goal of ZBT is to establish and maintain a culture of respect, trust and non-discriminatory behaviour regardless of gender, nationality or religion. Achieving this goal can be supported, among other things, by an adequate range of training and further education measures. Individual measures have already been discussed in chapters 4.4 and 4.6. A distinction can be made between different target groups for the corresponding training courses.

##### *Management level*

At the level of management and department heads, topics such as leadership style and motivation of employees should be addressed with special attention to the topic of gender/equal opportunities. But also questioning one's own possibly subconscious attitude ("Women drop out more often because of childcare") is important and should be dealt with in coaching or training.

##### *Women employees*

Special training and further education can be helpful for female staff. These include the above-mentioned training on sexual harassment. On the other hand, further training on the topics of leadership and responsibility as well as self-assertion courses should be offered.

#### *All staff*

The above-mentioned courses on the topic "Where does the fun end?", but also sensitisation regarding different perceptions and needs of the genders ('bitch' versus 'strong man') are useful for all employees. Furthermore, awareness-raising on linguistic equality should take place with the help of training.

Individual employees in special positions (e.g. employees for public relations or with special external representation tasks) should receive additional topic-specific training offers.

ZBT is a member of the Johannes Rau Research Foundation (JRF). The JRF has offered to provide and arrange appropriate training for the JRF institutes. At the same time, ZBT will actively seek training offers (either through an equal opportunities officer or the trusted persons mentioned in chapter 4.6).

To review the measure, the training offers as well as participations will be documented and evaluated.

#### **4.8 Appointment of an Equal Opportunities Officer**

ZBT examines the appointment of an equal opportunities officer (EOO) or a person of trust to deal with the issue of equality of all genders, equal opportunities, etc. With the help of an EOO, it can be ensured that the training offers and participation are documented and that sufficient resources are available for dealing with gender-based issues.

Should the appointment of an EOO be implemented, it will be handled as follows:

The appointment of an EOO is based on the requirements of the Federal Equality Act (BGleiG). Accordingly, an EOO and a deputy are elected. All female employees of the company are entitled to vote and can be elected, as long as they do not belong to the works council or the representation of the severely disabled.

The tasks of the EOO include, in particular, monitoring the introduction and implementation of the above-mentioned measures and following up on the goals set. Further work of the EOO is the coordination of further education and training, the revision of the GEP as well as consulting them in personnel matters, etc.

In order to be able to fulfil these tasks legally, the staff member must be temporarily released for the work as EOO. The goal for this position is a full-time equivalent of about 10%. In addition, the Equal Opportunities Officer should receive further training in equal opportunities law or similar in order to be able to carry out her work competently.

#### **4.9 Social Engagement**

In order to increase the proportion of women in STEM fields, social efforts are needed. Girls must be introduced to technical professions and boys to social professions at an early age during kindergarten and school.

ZBT actively supports this by participating in the 'Girls'Day' for several years now. This gives girls the opportunity to spend a day getting a taste of various professions that have so far rarely been chosen by women.

## **5 Period of validity, updating and final provisions**

ZBT undertakes to continue to update the equality plan with the analysis of the employee structure. This plan has a duration of four years (May 2022 – May 2026) and is to be evaluated internally after half of the time. Depending on the degree of target achievement, new targets and measures can then be developed.

The equality plan will be published on the ZBT homepage and made available to employees internally.

Duisburg, 1 June 2022

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Dr Peter Beckhaus  
Managing Director

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