



College of Europe  
Collège d'Europe

Brugge



Natolin

## Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan

### The College of Europe in Natolin

#### 1. Guiding principles

Since its foundation in 1992 the College of Europe in Natolin has been a multinational institute of postgraduate studies. The very idea of its creation was to create a diverse community of university graduates from different countries who would jointly study the European integration process, and by working and living together come to better understand their respective cultures and countries and ultimately contribute to the European project. In the last ten years the student body every year consequently consists of c. 130 students from c. 30 countries, with an equally international body of staff coming from c. 20 countries.

#### 2. Value based commitments and goals.

The diversity of the Community has always been at the heart of the College of Europe in Natolin and is reflected in the number of countries our students come from, in their diverse social and educational background and in the gender balance. Moreover, it must be noted that over 100 professors, experts and civil servants forming a multicultural “flying faculty” and representing a diversity of teaching approaches, social and educational backgrounds, annually contribute to the academic programme.

Outside of the official academic programme, students are offered a rich set of extracurricular debates, lectures and seminars and conferences. These formats offer a unique forum for discussion and analysis of European affairs, issues related to *inter alia* the fundamental principles of freedom, democracy, equality, dignity, or the respect for human rights, all of which lie at the heart of the European integration process and European values as such.

This care and attention paid to the composition of this small community that lives together on a campus located next to a natural reserve has always been one of the key guiding principles in recruiting students and staff.

Acknowledging the importance of **equality, diversity and inclusion** for the European Project and our mission, we consistently strive to support its potential on the grounds of these values. Therefore, as a community at the College of Europe in Natolin:

- We commit to creating an atmosphere of respect for equality and diversity among students and staff.
- We commit to strengthening an empathetic approach and mutual respect and courtesy in all interactions between the students and staff of the College of Europe Natolin campus.
- We commit to raising awareness and supporting equality, diversity and inclusion among students and staff.
- We commit to identifying any potential gender biases and developing innovative strategies to address them.
- We commit to act against any form of discrimination or mobbing as set out in the Policy of countermeasures against discrimination and mobbing.

### **3. Where we currently stand in implementing the values of equality, diversity, and inclusion.**

The composition of the student and permanent staff bodies, together forming the community, reflect the values that we aim to uphold:

- In the previous academic year (2022-2023) we had students of 33 nationalities (51% female, 49% male), the staff are from 20 nationalities (49% female, 51 % male).
- In the current academic year (2023-2024) we again have students of 33 nationalities (55% Female, 45% male), with the stable composition of staff of 20 nationalities (49% female, 51% male).

This gender balanced and diverse community is a result of systematic care and effort by the administration to uphold and secure the diversity of our community.

In our understanding of diversity, we focus not only gender balance, but we see equality, diversity and inclusion as referring to “sex, age, disability, race, religion, nationality, political belief, ethnicity, religious denomination, language and culture, sexual orientation and parental status”.

To strengthen and uphold these values the role of an Advocate for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion was formally adopted in July 2021.

The Advocate for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is responsible for promoting diversity and counteracting discrimination and exclusion, through:

- 1) conducting an assessment of needs and supporting initiatives on equality, diversity and inclusion;
- 2) offering consultation in the field of care for equality, diversity and inclusion;
- 3) counteracting all forms of discrimination and exclusion;

4) in the event of reporting of an alleged violation of equality, diversity or inclusion, helping to diagnose the problem, choosing the method of its solution, *inter alia* by recommending and carrying out mediation.

In selecting a staff member to take this responsibility, we put great care into selecting a person who has the professional and personal capabilities to address these issues in a professional and empathetic manner.

In case a student or staff member feels these values are not being upheld, or would feel discriminated against, they can follow the procedure outlined in our Policy Against Discrimination and Mobbing.

The Policy was first adopted in June 2017. Since then, the Policy has been reviewed regularly and was updated twice, with the last update was done in the summer of 2021.

The Policy on the one hand complements the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct, by clearly stating the expected values and boundaries in mutual interactions within the community, at the same time offering a clear procedure to report, address and proceed in case discrimination or mobbing would occur.

The Policy and the role of the Advocate for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are introduced during the beginning of each Academic Year.

The College of Europe in Natolin is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for students and staff, especially those with specific **disabilities**. Over the years, based on the feedback from the students and staff, there have been numerous adjustments made in the facilities to allow wheelchair access to the venues.

Students and staff can also benefit from the support of our Academic and ICT departments, who are prepared to provide solutions for students, in particular with speech or hearing impairment.

#### **4. Equality, diversity, and inclusion Plan - moving forward.**

Our Equality, diversity and inclusion plan is based on continuing good practices and developing new ones.

##### **4.1. Raising awareness and monitoring of equality, diversity, and inclusion in the community**

###### **4.1.1. To be continued:**

At the beginning of each academic year several initiatives are implemented with the aim of underlining the importance of these values and supporting students and staff in taking responsibility for upholding them in the daily life of the campus community.

#### **4.1.1.1. Cross-Cultural Communication Workshop**

The objective of this workshop is to provide participants with an awareness and an understanding of the issues that allow them to communicate effectively across cultures. The learning outcomes associated with this workshop are the following:

- **Identity and Intercultural Communication** - explaining the concepts of culture and identity and providing an understanding of the socialization and categorization of individuals into cultural groupings and its consequences for communicating cross-culturally.
- **Understanding Cultural Difference** - providing an appreciation of general cultural differences and how these impact the patterns of interaction and the communication process.
- **Intercultural Effectiveness and Competence** - enabling participants to better understand and be prepared to deal with a broad cross-section of people from a range of cultures.

#### **4.1.1.2. Consent & Boundaries Workshop**

This workshop is a milestone in our Natolin-resident community. It is a crucial part of our programme to ensure that the College is a safe space for all. The program is designed in an interactive way that allows to exchange and express views freely, while acquiring new knowledge. By the end of the workshop, participants will have a space for reflection on the importance of consent and personal boundaries, and they will get to know the concept of consent. Moreover, the workshop will give a clear explanation of how to give consent and how to act when they see potentially dangerous situations.

#### **4.1.1.3. A meeting with the Advocate for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion with students and staff to inform them about:**

- The College of Europe in Natolin holds a strong stance and commitment on upholding values of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Whom they can reach out to if they feel these values are not respected (Advocate for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion)
- What policies and procedures are in place to safeguard these values in the community (Student and Staff Code of Conducts, Policy Against Discrimination and Mobbing)

#### **4.1.2. To be implemented:**

- 4.1.2.1. A review session with the students and with the staff, organized by the Advocate for Equality, Diversity during the first semester to discuss their respective experience in the community during the first weeks and to address any concerns that might have surfaced.
- 4.1.2.2. A review session with the Heads of departments, to assess if from their perspective there are any issues regarding the upholding of these values and

if so, to discuss and decide on how to approach them.

## **4.2. Reviewing and drawing conclusions - Natolin Consultation Days**

### **4.2.1. To be continued:**

**4.2.1.1.** Every year in the last month of the academic year, students receive a comprehensive “End of the Year Survey”, where they assess and comment on their campus experience, the academic and service offer. Part of the survey is dedicated to inquiring about any potential issues that might have occurred during the academic year regarding equality, diversity, and inclusion in the community – i.e., discrimination or breaching of boundaries. The results of this survey are analyzed in detail by respective departments to identify what went well and what could be done differently, and to prepare proposals of solutions or improvements for the next academic year. The month of July is dedicated to numerous consultation sessions, when various working groups reflect on the passing academic year, discuss the above-mentioned proposals for improvements and decide which are to be implemented in the coming year.

### **4.2.2. To be implemented:**

4.2.2.1. A separate section will be created in the Student End of the Year Survey with a wider breadth of questions regarding the experience of students in respect of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

4.2.2.2. The Advocate for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion will prepare and send a separate survey sent to staff members (Staff Equality Diversity and Inclusion Survey) to inquire about their assessment of how from their perspective these values were observed and upheld during the academic year.

4.2.2.3. The Advocate will meet with respective Heads of organisational units to discuss the survey results and inquire about any additional comments or observations. Individual, face-to-face meetings give the opportunity to discuss more comfortably any challenges or needs identified in respective departments.

4.2.2.4. Based on the End of the Year Student Survey, the Staff Equality Diversity and Inclusion Survey and individual meetings with Heads of organisational units, the Advocate will prepare a summary with recommendations and present them at a respective consultation meeting to the Heads of organisational units and the Vice-Rector. The decisions taken during this meeting will be then implemented by the Advocate or respective Heads of organisational units in the new academic year.

List of documents (supplementing a comprehensive approach of the College of Europe in Natolin in the field of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion):

- Work Regulations of the College of Europe
- Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Guidelines
- Student Codes of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter
- Policy Against Discrimination and Mobbing
- Erasmus+ Charter