APPROVED

Director of the Nature Research Centre

Order No V-59 of 10 August 2023

VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

# CHAPTER I

# GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy (the "Policy") lays down the provisions for the implementation of the Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy at the Nature Research Centre (the "Centre") and the procedure for monitoring its implementation. The Policy shall be applied without prejudice to the requirements of the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania and other regulatory legal acts.
2. The aim of the Policy is to help the Centre's employees to identify cases of violence and harassment and their possible forms, to familiarise them with the prevention measures, the procedure for reporting and examining reports of violence and harassment, the protection of the reporting and/or victimised persons and the assistance to be provided to them, the recommended or approved rules/norms/code of conduct at work, and other information related to the prevention of violence and harassment.
3. Terms used in the policy:
	1. violence: intentional physical, mental, sexual, economic or work-related physical, mental, sexual or economic impact on another person(s), by act or omission of a person(s), which causes or is likely to cause non-material or material damage to the worker;
	2. harassment: unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment on the grounds of sex, race, nationality, citizenship, language, origin, social status, religion, political opinions or beliefs, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin, religion;
	3. sexual harassment: unwanted, abusive, verbal, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature towards a person, with the intention of harming that person's well-being, in particular by creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment;
	4. threat: an imminent situation, danger, including various threatening events (verbal attacks by task-formers or task-performers, other behaviour of concern);
	5. persons employed by the Centre: all staff, students or other persons who have an employment relationship with the Centre.
4. All persons working at the Centre must respect the honour and dignity of others, foster a culture of respectful communication and co-operation, uphold the values of the Centre and declare their intolerance of violence and harassment at work, making it clear that such actions are not tolerated.
5. Relationships between people working at the Centre are based on the principles of understanding, tolerance, goodwill, mutual respect and other values that shape organisational behaviour. In the performance of their functions, the persons working at the Centre shall also be guided by the ethical principles laid down in laws and other legal acts, and shall comply with the ethical requirements laid down for their activities.
6. Recommended principles for the conduct of persons working at the Centre to prevent violence and harassment:

6.1. relationships shall be based on courtesy, honesty, respect, tolerance, trust and cooperation.

* 1. Persons working at the Centre shall not discriminate, harass, bully, intimidate or intimidate each other, or order discrimination against other persons on the grounds of sex, race, nationality, citizenship, language, origin, social status, religion, political beliefs or opinions, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, religion or any other grounds.

# CHAPTER II

**FORMS OF VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT AND EXPRESSIONS OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR**

1. Expressions of violence and harassment and unacceptable behaviour that are not tolerated and are covered by the Policy:
	1. - Physical acts intended to cause pain and/or injury. Physical violence may include, but is not limited to, hitting, pushing, choking, punching, shaking, shoving, knocking, breaking things during an argument, throwing things in anger, destroying property, injuring someone - bodily harm.
	2. Psychological acts - insulting, undermining a person's dignity or self-esteem, making unjustified remarks, threats, prohibitions, intimidation, humiliation, insulting and other inappropriate behaviour aimed at hurting, intimidating, belittling or putting a person in a helpless or powerless position, forcing a person to perform a certain action, to perceive dependence, or to submit to a perpetrator.
	3. Sexual acts - an attack not only on a person's health and bodily integrity, but also on social freedom, personal honour and dignity, i.e. sexual violence has features of both physical and psychological violence at the same time.
	4. Economic actions - humiliation of a person due to economic dependence and/or economic damage suffered/to be suffered as a result of the perpetrator's violence. This may include, but is not limited to, exerting pressure to deal with the person financially, threatening to withhold or terminate incentives, devaluing merit/achievement and qualifications to distinguish him/her from others, devaluing the person's performance beyond his/her merits and qualifications, denying him/her work, etc.
	5. Unacceptable behaviour - behaviour that harms a person's emotional and, in severe cases, mental and physical health. This can include unacceptable or unwanted physical contact (physical touching, stroking, slapping, groping, reaching out to touch (hug), pulling another person closer, etc.) or requesting such physical contact; displaying or sending obscene information; intrusive enquiries about private life, intimate relationships; unwanted comments about appearance, body shape, clothing; offensive jokes, about a person's sexual attitudes/behaviour, bullying, gossip, rumours, slander, abusive gestures; deliberate isolation of a person at work; collection and/or dissemination of information about a person that is not relevant to the person's functions; conduct intended to restrict a person's freedom of choice; influencing a person for the purpose of performing certain non-work-related functions/services; etc.

# CHAPTER III

**IMPLEMENTING VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION**

1. Violence and harassment and unacceptable behaviour are prohibited in all work-related areas and activities of the Centre (as defined in Article 30(2) of the Labour Code).
2. The Centre distinguishes between primary, secondary and tertiary actions to prevent violence at work:

 Primary prevention - actions to prevent and reduce the risk of violence and harassment at work, i.e. improvement of the psychosocial and physical working environment (assessment of the working environment, adoption of flexible work schedules, monitoring of psychosocial and occupational risk factors, involvement of persons working at the Centre in the Centre's activities, provision of feedback etc.), the development of common values of behaviour and culture, communication between those working in the Centre based on respect, attentiveness and openness, and the support of task-formers in problem-solving, reducing the risk of violence and harassment in the Centre.

 Secondary prevention - the development of an anti-violence and anti-harassment institutional policy. During the implementation of secondary prevention, the persons working in the Centre are informed about the developed Policy and the organised trainings on the prevention of violence and harassment.

The non-task-oriented staff working at ythe Centre receive training on: how to identify potential situations of violence and harassment; possible solutions to violence and harassment; communication skills to prevent and/or reduce violence; how to foster a positive work environment; legal remedies; and the encouragement to report incidents of violence and harassment using the Centre's whistle-blowing tools and complaints procedure. Task-takers shall be trained to: understand and explain the Centre's Preventive Policy Strategy; spot inappropriate behaviour in their own work and in the work of those with whom they work; assess the working environment and provide measures to prevent violence and/or harassment at work; assist victims; ensure confidentiality of information on persons who have experienced violence in accordance with the applicable legislation; support those working at the Centre and foster a mutually respectful working environment.

* 1. Tertiary prevention - recording cases of violence and/or harassment, providing comprehensive support to those who have experienced violence and/or harassment, and reporting breaches of work duties or taking other sanctions against those who have committed them.
1. The Corruption Prevention Specialist is responsible for ensuring that the Centre's prevention of violence and harassment is implemented.

# CHAPTER IV

**PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND HANDLING REPORTS/COMPLAINTS OF VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT**

1. A person who believes that he/she or another person is being harassed and/or abused shall have the right to submit a report/complaint to the Director of the Centre or to the Corruption Prevention Specialist, if the report/complaint is submitted to the e-mail address pranesk@gamtc.lt or in person to the Director of the Centre or to the Corruption Prevention Specialist. The report/complaint may also be submitted anonymously. It is recommended that the report/complaint be made as soon as possible after the date on which the action complained of was taken or became known. It should include an explanation of the situation of the violence and/or harassment experienced, the manifestations and circumstances of the violence, possible witnesses, and available evidence (e.g. audio recordings, correspondence, etc.). All reports/complaints of violence and harassment must be recorded and investigated. Any information relating to the report/complaint shall be treated as confidential and shall not be disclosed to persons who are not involved in the alleged violation and its investigation.
2. The head of a structural unit who observes or detects harassment and/or violence in the unit, whether it is perpetrated against an employee of the unit or by a person working in the unit, must immediately take preventive measures and inform the Director or the Corruption Prevention Specialist of the situation and the measures to be taken.
3. The Director or the Corruption Prevention Specialist shall take one of the following decisions upon receipt of a report/complaint:
	1. - In the event that the person provides only information (notification), requests advice and does not wish to be investigated, apply procedures such as an interview, where the responsible person communicates separately with the complainant, with or without the presence of the complainant, with a view to resolving the differences amicably, or decides to re-acquaint the complainant with the Policy and other documents, with additional attention being paid to the matters complained about.
	2. - The Director shall, by order, set up a committee to investigate the report/complaint received and to submit a report to the Director of the Centre.
	3. - On the instructions of the Director, the Corruption Prevention Specialist shall organise an investigation in accordance with the legal acts regulating the Centre's activities and laying down the procedure for the investigation of official misconduct, breaches of professional duties, and breaches of professional ethical standards.
4. Where violence and/or harassment is identified, the Centre shall take prompt and effective measures to provide assistance to the victim of violence or harassment, to reduce the overall level of stress in the team and to improve the working environment:
	1. - Providing the victim with links and contacts to psychological support organisations, psychological helplines and other necessary measures, taking into account the specific case and the current impact on the victim.
	2. - Facilitating the sharing of experience by organising training sessions and meetings for those working in the Centre, encouraging them to inform those in charge of violence and harassment at the Centre and to seek help and support from colleagues.
	3. - After each investigation of a case of violence and/or harassment, an update of the psychosocial risk factor assessment (surveys) is carried out in the event of other extreme/crisis situations related to violence and/or harassment. The results obtained shall be summarised and, if necessary, the preventive actions provided for in point 9 of this Policy shall be taken, taking into account the identified case.
	4. Violence and harassment are considered a breach of work duties.

# CHAPTER V

# FINAL PROVISIONS

1. All newly recruited staff members shall be informed of the approved Policy and any amendments thereto by signature. Existing staff members shall be made aware of the Policy by electronic means. The Centre's Policy shall be published on the Centre's website.
2. The procedure for the implementation and monitoring of the Policy shall be reviewed and, if necessary, updated in the event of changes in the legislation regulating the Policy, in the light of identified and reported cases of violence and harassment, in the event of changes in their possible manifestations or the emergence of new threats, or at the request of the State Labour Inspectorate of Lithuania. The Corruption Prevention Specialist shall be responsible for reviewing and providing updates to the Director of the Centre on the implementation and monitoring of the Policy.