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Directorate General Human Resources

ECB-RESTRICTED

To: Executive Board

Via: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

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Date: 24 March 2023

Subject: 2020-2026 ECB gender strategy and EDGEplus certification: update and main findings

Diversity and Inclusion is one of the ECB key interim priorities. Our diversity and inclusion strategy is holistic, embracing all diversity facets and their intersections. It aims at greater diversity and full inclusion both ESCB-wide and within the ECB. One important objective is to achieve gender balance at ECB organisational levels. To meet this objective, on 12 May 2020, the Executive Board approved a new ECB gender strategy (SEC/EB/20/1148/11) covering the years 2020 - 2026. The strategy comprises gender intake and share targets, including interim targets for end-2022 and end-2024, and accompanying measures to reach the targets¹. The ECB has made progress with the strategy: many measures were implemented which helped to achieve the 2022 interim targets at some levels and narrow the gap at others. One of the actions undertaken has been to assess the ECB's gender balance by the external provider EDGE Strategy that has run an assessment and recognised this progress, alongside the ECB's efforts to look into intersectional issues relating to gender equity and other aspects of diversity. It recertified the ECB at the second level "Move" (out of three levels).

This memo updates the Executive Board on the gender strategy and on the key insights from the 2023 EDGEplus (gender and intersectional equity) certification².

The Executive Board is invited to take note of:

- a) the progress with the 2020-2026 gender strategy;**
- b) the findings from the 2023 EDGEplus certification;**
- c) the actions planned at organisational and local levels to achieve gender balance.**

¹ Intake targets = percentage of women we hire and promote at relevant salary band groups. They apply to internal and external campaigns, as well as to recruitment from reserve lists or through the promotion to the next salary band. Share targets = percentage of women working at relevant salary band groups; essentially, they are projections of the female share based on a future 50% female intake to relevant salary band groups.

² EDGEplus (Economic Dividends for Gender Equality) certification is an external leading global assessment methodology and business certification standard for gender and intersectional equity, based on quantitative and qualitative analysis and benchmarking against peer organisations. In 2019, the ECB was certified at the first level "Assess" and in 2021 at the second level "Move".

1. Update on the 2020-2026 gender strategy: measures and targets

By the end of 2022, DG/HR, in collaboration with several stakeholders, had implemented various measures to support greater gender diversity at the ECB while also benefitting other diversity facets. The measures covered four main areas:

- **Attraction and recruitment:** we enhanced our outreach efforts to attract female talent, for example from STEM fields and redesigned our ECB Scholarship for Women to increase the number of scholarships, cover additional fields as well as intersectional aspects.
- **Professional development:** we continued offering the Women's Leadership Programme to staff from F/G-J bands, launched a development programme for staff in administrative roles, re-launched the ECB mentoring programme and introduced guidelines for business areas on inclusive allocation of career-critical tasks.
- **Flexible working:** we increased the special leave for the second parent for birth and adoption of a child from 10 to 20 days.
- **Culture and accountability:** we introduced an inclusion programme for all staff and enhanced our gender scorecards (for example, with additional data and improved accessibility) which we use to monitor the gender targets.

These measures supported the ECB's progress also with the gender targets: at the end of December 2022, we had achieved our ECB-wide targets at some levels and narrowed the gap at others (see also the enclosed slide deck):

- **Regarding our intake targets**, we have met our targets to hire and promote at least 50% of women into the management levels (all management and senior management). We have already reached a corridor of 40-60% at the pipeline level - meaning the (team) lead, expert and analyst levels -, yet have missed the target of 50% slightly.
- **Regarding our share targets** (the percentage of women working at the E/F – L bands), we have achieved our targets at management (all management and senior management) and analyst levels and only slightly missed them at (team) lead and expert levels.

2. Key insights from the EDGEplus (gender and intersectional equity) certification

To complement DG/HR's internal assessment on gender balance and understand staff views on gender equality and diversity and inclusion, more generally, this year we engaged in the EDGEplus (gender and intersectional equity) certification. The external provider EDGE Strategy has re-certified the ECB at the second level "Move" (out of three levels), recognising its further progress towards gender equality. It also recognised the ECB's efforts to look into intersectional issues relating to gender equity and other aspects of diversity, such as race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, nationality and disability. The main findings of the EDGE assessment are in the slide deck. In sum:

- When compared against the median of 46 EDGE certified finance organisations worldwide, the ECB showed a less balanced gender composition in the total workforce and a notably more balanced gender

composition in top management positions (K-L bands)³.

- EDGE's assessment does not show risks associated with an unexplained gender pay gap at the ECB.
- The ECB's framework of policies and practices on gender equality has improved in leadership development, training, mentoring and succession planning. Organisational culture remains an area for improvement, for example when it comes to how staff perceive the leadership team's commitment to achieve gender equality and how included they feel in the ECB's decision-making processes.
- Regarding the staff survey results (based on a 51% participation rate⁴):
 - there is a widening gap in perceptions, with men being more pessimistic than women particularly when it comes to being given the same opportunities to be hired and fair opportunities to be promoted. In April, DG/HR will analyse relevant data, for example on promotion rates for men and women. Other notable gaps in perceptions: more women than men felt that having a career and a family are compatible for men in the ECB, while more men than women felt that having a career and a family are compatible for women in the ECB. There are similar trends also when it comes to recommending the ECB to men and women.
 - Staff self-identifying as being part of an underrepresented group are less optimistic overall compared with the majority groups.
 - The share of staff who self-identify differently than 'white' varies between 13% at the A-E bands and 6% at the K-L bands. There are similar trends for staff who self-identify as working with a disability, namely there are more staff with disabilities in support and professional functions compared to management.
 - The share of staff who self-identify as belonging to the LGBT+ community varies between 4% at the I-J bands up to 7% at the E/F-G bands, again showing greater LGBTQ+ diversity in non-managerial positions.
 - The organisation is the most multi-generational at the beginning of the talent pipeline, which is not surprising given our historical context.

3. Next steps

The D&I Strategic Intent action plan includes actions covering all diversity facets. DG/HR, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, will continue implementing these actions to further progress on gender balance, address the findings from the EDGEplus certification and support the ECB's underrepresented groups. Regarding gender specifically, the following actions are ongoing or planned for 2023:

- **Culture and accountability:**
 - DG/HR communicated the progress with the gender strategy internally on 8 March 2023 and we will announce it externally at the end of March 2023, together with the EDGEplus certification findings (which will be communicated internally at around the same time).
 - The Area Heads will discuss their business areas' progress with the gender targets in the

³ The benchmarking group includes the following EDGE certified organisations: Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Banco Centroamericano de Integración Económica, Caribbean Development Bank, Council of Europe Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, International Finance Corporation, International Monetary Fund, World Bank Group.

⁴ By comparison, the last survey had a 38% participation rate.

upcoming annual meetings with their Executive Board members.

- DG/HR, DG/C and members of the Women in Leadership (WiL) and Women Organise Women (WOW) networks will work on communication and engagement activities to address the emerging backlash against the gender strategy.
- DG/HR will continue collaborating with WiL and WoW on how to close the gender gap at the ECB. WiL has shared concrete proposals in this regard (see Annex) which DG/HR will assess in the coming months to check their feasibility, also given other measures that are currently being planned or rolled-out.
- DG/HR will continue looking more closely into the gender diversity data and inform the Executive Board on this.
- **Attraction and recruitment:** DG/HR, supported by the D&I Ambassadors and diversity networks, will continue the efforts to attract female talent through career fairs. Business areas will continue implementing their action plans to improve gender balance.
- **Flexible working:** DG/HR will work on enhancing parental leave and introducing carers' leave, as part of the implementation of the 2019 Directive on work-life balance for parents and carers. In this context, we will consider gender diversity and increasing the uptake of flexible working options by men.

Encl.

Presentation on the 2020-2026 gender strategy and EDGEplus certification

Annex – Proposals by the Women in Leadership network to strengthen support for the gender strategy over the next three years