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Answer given by Ms Lahbib

on behalf of the European Commission

(15.7.2026)

Equality and non-discrimination are founding values enshrined in the EU Treaties, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights¹ and the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Commission reasserted its commitment to diversity and inclusion by renewing its Union of Equality Strategies², and by continuing supporting organisations in the EU in cooperation with the 27 Diversity Charters.

Directive 2000/78/EC does not prevent Member States from maintaining or adopting specific measures to prevent or compensate for disadvantages linked to any of the protected grounds. Directive 2006/54/EC prohibits direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of sex in access to employment, including recruitment, and allows positive action in favour of the underrepresented sex as set out in Article 157(4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and under the conditions of the Court of Justice's case law. Accordingly, the described voluntary scheme does not appear to contravene either of these Directives.

The equality data collection and processing are regulated by anti-discrimination legislation and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)³. Monitoring and enforcement of the GDPR falls within the competence of national data protection authorities (DPAs) and courts, without prejudice to the Commission's role as guardian of the Treaties. It is thus for the Greek DPA to examine whether the data processing activities at stake comply with the GDPR.

State aid schemes are, by virtue of Article 107 TFEU, distortive for competition and the internal market, therefore subject to compliance with EU's State aid rules. When designing such schemes, Member States can impose conditions if they are in line with EU law and EU's international obligations.

¹ http://data.europa.eu/eli/treaty/char_2012/oj.

² Including the Gender Equality Strategy https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en#gender-equality-strategy-2026-2030, LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/lesbian-gay-bi-trans-and-intersex-equality/lgbtiq-equality-strategy-2026-2030_en, the Anti-Racism Strategy https://commission.europa.eu/document/f4acc4d4-689e-4db8-8c89-c7243b76ab88_en, as well as the EU Strategic Framework for Roma equality, inclusion and participation https://commission.europa.eu/publications/new-eu-roma-strategic-framework-equality-inclusion-and-participation-full-package_en and the Communication 'Enhancing the strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities up to 2030' https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/disability/enhancing-strategy-rights-persons-disabilities-2030_en.

³ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1–88.