



The Gender Equality Strategy and the Gender Equality Plan 2022-2025

for the Institute of Agricultural Economics - Romanian Academy
(IEA – AR)

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Abbreviations and definitions

GE	Gender equality
GEP	Gender equality plan
HoD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
IEA - AR	Institute of Agricultural Economics – Romanian Academy
GD	General Director
SD	Scientific Director
CD	Steering Committee (Comitet de direcție)
CA	Board of Directors (Consiliul de administrație)
Sex	Either of the two major forms of individuals that occur in many species and that are distinguished respectively as female or male especially on the basis of their reproductive organs and structures (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/)
Gender	The behavioural, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/)
Sex vs Gender	A clear delineation between sex and gender is typically prescribed, with sex as the preferred term for biological forms, and gender limited to its meanings involving behavioural, cultural, and psychological traits. In this dichotomy, the terms male and female relate only to biological forms (sex), while the terms masculine/masculinity, feminine/femininity, woman/girl, and man/boy relate only to psychological and sociocultural traits (gender) (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/)

Introduction

The Gender Equality (GE) strategy for 2022-2025 was developed by the Institute of Agricultural Economics – Romanian Academy (IEA - AR) on the basis of input from the entire research institute and takes into account everyone who works at our research institute. The GE strategy was built on the provisions of the European Charter for researchers and of the Code of Conduct in the process of the recruitment of researchers¹, 2015-2019, the European Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025² and the Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans³.

The motivation for developing the GE strategy is to ensure that our research institute is a safe place for everyone, and all activities and processes that take place respect the principles of equality, diversity, inclusiveness and non-discrimination.

Based on the GE strategy, IEA - AR developed the GE Plan (GEP) for 2022-2025, with concrete actions and measures, as well as indicators for measuring progress of its implementation and revisions.

Enforcing its mission and values, the GE strategy and the GEP of IEA - AR ensure and promote equality and diversity to knowledge and the acquisition of skills to all. The objectives of the GE strategy are implemented through specific actions that aim at safeguarding an equal and inclusive organizational culture and promoting gender-equality at all levels. As such, the GE strategy and the GEP will pro-actively enable, gender equality awareness raising, skills and competences; gender balance in decision-making structures and processes, including recruitment; gender equality in research; and integrating the gender dimension in the entire research process.

I. Review of requirements, policies and case studies

Prior to developing the GE strategy and the GEP, the management of IEA - AR appointed a working group to conduct a literature review of the existing requirements, policies, recommendations, examples and case studies pertinent to discrimination, inclusiveness and gender equality, with a special focus on research performing organisations (RPOs).

¹ https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/ttf_goal_2_results_v1.0.pdf

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en

³ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffcb06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1>

II. Diagnosis (data collection and analysis)

II.1. Data collection

The following indicators were selected at IEA - AR as relevant for the discussion on gender equality issues:

- Staff numbers by sex/gender at all levels, by domains, function;
- Numbers of women and men in research and administrative decision-making positions;
- Numbers of staff by sex/gender applying for/taking parental leave, for how long and how many returned after taking the leave.

1. Women and men in leadership positions

Table 1. Research institute management

	Woman	Man
Director	X	
Scientific Director		X
Economic Director	X	
Head of Department Agricultural Markets (Senior researcher Ph.D)	X	
Head of Department Rural Economics and Development (Senior researcher Ph.D)	X	
Head of Department Farm and Environmental Economics (Senior researcher Ph.D)	X	
Accountancy	X	
TOTAL	6	1

2. Women and men – research staff

Table 2. Total number of research staff, per department

	Experienced researchers (CS I, CS II, CS III)	Early-stage researchers (CS and ACS)	Total women	Total men
Department Agricultural Markets	/Total Number Women/ 7	/Total Number Women/ 1	8	
	/Total Number Men/ 0	/Total Number Men/ 0		0
Department Rural Economics and Development	/Total Number Women/ 5	/Total Number Women/ 0	5	
	/Total Number Men/ 3	/Total Number Men/ 2		5
Department Farm and Environmental Economics	/Total Number Women/ 5	/Total Number Women/ 1	6	
	/Total Number Men/ 1	/Total Number Men/ 0		1
Total women	17	2	19	
Total men	4	2		6

3. Women and men – administrative and support services

Table 3. Total number of women and men in administrative and support services

	Women	Men
Office administration support (secretaries)	1	1
Accountancy	2	0
Librarians	2	0
TOTAL	5	1

As part of data collection and diagnosis, we conducted institute-wide surveys with the following indicators:

- Number of years needed for women and men to make career advancements
- Numbers of women and men candidates applying for distinct job positions
- Numbers of staff by sex/gender applying for/taking parental leave, for how long and how many returned after taking the leave
- Opinions on the work-life balance in the research institute
- Integration of the gender dimension into research content
- Perception of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment in the research
- Perception (opinion) regarding inclusiveness and discrimination at the research institute

II. 2. Data analysis

We conducted internal analyses of the data collected, and reviews of existing policies addressing gender equality and inclusiveness. The analyses took place in meetings at department level with the gender equality function assigned for developing the GEP. During meetings were present the research institute management, research staff and representatives of research institute administrative and support services.

The conclusions of the analysis were discussed by Scientific Council of IEA - AR, and then communicated to the entire staff.

The Scientific Council approved the GEP document, and the Director of IEA - AR committed to the implementation of the GEP for IEA - AR, for 2022-2025.

1. Quantitative analysis of data

The analysis of data illustrated that:

- There are more women than men in leadership positions at IEA - AR and department level;
- There are more women than men among research staff, per total; There are more women than men in all departments of IEA - AR, except “Rural Economics and Development” Department, which has even number;
- There are more women and experienced researchers in all IEA - AR departments than early-stage researcher.
- There are more women than men in administrative and support services.

2. Qualitative analysis of data

The qualitative research showed that:

- The gender dimension in IEA - AR is specific because the work in IEA - AR has special features
- IEA - AR is perceived as a safe place, without gender-violence
- IEA - AR is overall perceived as inclusive
- Women declared that combining work and family life is not a problem for them
- The international mobility is not difficult for women if it is on short term
- The participation in scientific activities for dissemination of the scientific work (conferences, seminars, workshops, etc) does not have barriers for women and men
- Women are not discouraged to take up management/administrative positions
- Women are not afraid to take up management/administrative positions
- We did not identify stereotypes and unspoken biases regarding gender, such as beliefs that women are less ambitious, less talented, or that they are less often considered experts, while men are more determined and resistant to stress
- There were not identified stereotypes and prejudices translate into behaviours, such as condescending treatment, refusal to recognise the substantive training of women due to their style of self-presentation, or other reasons
- The strategies of the departments are clear
- Special cases like conflicts are handled in a good way, internal, with help from head of the department and Scientific Council, one of the members of this body being elected as a representative of staff
- There is no lack of procedures and knowledge about the gender equality, inclusiveness and non-discrimination
- Respondents to surveys indicated that rarely happened they had experienced comments or jokes referring to stereotypical beliefs about gender, inappropriate informal attitudes, derisive comments about dress and appearance, but all these did not disturb them and did not affected their work.

To **summarize the results** of the studies, it can be noted that all the situations mentioned by the respondents and situations analysed at the institute are not factors of discrimination or manifestations based on gender.

The important **conclusions** of the internal analysis at IEA - AR are:

- We do not need to revisit the existing policies and procedures, to make gender relevant, and develop new ones covering all identified areas of intervention
- We need to communicate gender relevant actions and measures actively and efficiently
- According to the new EU regulations, we need to develop a gender strategy and a GEP for 2022-2025, with clear actions and targets, and responsible persons

III. GE strategy and GEP

Based on the internal review and the national and European policies and requirements, the Scientific Council committed to developing the institute strategy for gender equality for 2022-2025, and the corresponding GEP.

IEA - AR decided on creating the function of GE officer at the institute plus one GE delegate in each department. The GE officer has a proactive role, and the GE delegates have a consultant role in implementing and monitoring the GE strategy.

Specifically, the GE officer and GE delegates contribute to setting up, implement, monitor and evaluate the GEP; provide practical support and tools to the actors involved in the GEP implementation; cooperate with and engage stakeholders at all levels in order to ensure the implementation of the GEP's actions; raise awareness about the benefits of gender equality in IEA - AR; assess the progress towards gender equality in IEA - AR.

IEA - AR management mandated the GE functions (officer and delegates) at the institute and a dedicated working group to develop the GE strategy and the GEP 2022-2025. The GE working group included men and women representatives of IEA - AR leadership and researchers, representatives of research institute administration and support services.

III.1. GE Strategy 2022-2025

The GE Strategy comprises the following areas of intervention and objectives for 2022-2025:

Area of intervention	Objective(s)
1. Work-life balance and organisational culture	Promoting integration of work with family and personal life
2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making	Promoting gender equality in the institutional culture, processes and practice
3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	Promoting processes to favour and support gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments
4. Integration of the gender dimension into research content	Promoting a gender and sex perspective in research process Promoting the integration of a sex and gender perspective in research activity
5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment	Raising awareness about the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity

III.2. GE Plan 2022-2025

The GE Plan at IEA - AR comprises areas of intervention, objectives, key measures, target audience, timeline, responsible persons, and indicators to measure progress.

Area 1. Work-life balance and organisational culture

Objective: Promoting integration of work with family and personal life

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2022	2023	2024	2025		
1. Availability of policies, procedures and structures at the IEA - AR for promoting integration of work with family and personal life	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	Policies, procedures and services for work and personal life integration	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
2. Implementation of ICT-based systems for enhancing flexibility and improving a better planning of working meetings accordingly to work life balance needs (e.g., management and communications of the meeting schedule/timing)	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	Standard procedure for ICT-based systems promoting work and personal life integration	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer, IT services
3. Availability of flexible working times arrangements, from part-time to remote working	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Policies, procedures and services for work and personal life integration	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer

Area 2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

Objective: Promoting gender equality in the institutional culture, processes and practice

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2022	2023	2024	2025		
1. Appointing delegates in departments, with a proactive and/or consultant role to be responsible for monitoring and ensuring that workplace procedures and practices respect gender equality	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X			Gender equality policy and structures	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer, GE delegates
2. Routine revision of any text, communication, images, from a gender equality and diversity standing point	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Policies, procedures and services for work and personal life integration	GE officer, GE delegates
3. Promotion of initiatives to facilitate a widespread gender competence at all levels of the organization with provision of training to staff and researchers	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Awareness training on gender equality issues	GE officer, GE delegates

Area 3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Objective: Promoting processes to facilitate and support gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2022	2023	2024	2025		
1. Carrying out gender awareness initiatives, briefings and creating guidelines for gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments	IEA - AR management		X	X	X	Gender awareness initiatives and guidelines	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
2. Courses and training on gender equality	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Courses and training for recruitment Courses and training for career progression Courses and training for leadership	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer, GE delegates
3. Disseminate and communicate career good practices - role models for women and men (scientists, researchers and academics)	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	Initiatives for raising awareness on female and men role models Initiatives for raising awareness on gender diversity in research teams	GE officer, GE delegates, HoDs

Area 4. Integration of the gender dimension into research content

Objectives:

- Promoting a gender and sex perspective in research process
- Promoting the integration of a sex and gender perspective in research activity

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2022	2023	2024	2025		
1. Development, communication and implementation of standards for the incorporation of the sex and gender variables into research	Researchers		X	X	X	Participation in training seminars on integrating sex/gender analysis methods, by gender and field of research Perception of the gender/sex variables in research contents	SD, Researchers, GE officer
2. Institutional recognition within the research institute of those projects that have taken the gender dimension into account. (e.g., prizes)	Researchers, scientific community		X	X	X	Awarded projects	GD, HoDs, Researchers

3. Disseminate and communicate career good practices - role models for women (scientists, researchers and academics)	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	Initiatives for raising awareness on female role models Initiatives for raising awareness on gender diversity in research teams	GE officer, GE delegates, HoDs
4. Workshops on the integration of gender equality and diversity issues in research activity, as support for research staff	Researchers		X	X	X	Training seminars or guidelines on integrating sex/gender in research activity	SD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
5. Courses and training tools in all departments and at all levels (experienced or early researchers) on sex and gender variables	Researchers		X	X	X	Courses on specific gender dimensions, per research activity (department)	SD, HR, HoDs, GE officer

Area 5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Objective: Raising awareness about the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2022	2023	2024	2025		
1. Training on discrimination phenomena (including discriminatory language), violence (including that based on prejudice or gender), harassment, and sexual harassment	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	Participation in training, per categories Skills acquired in relation to identifying and responding to discrimination and violence phenomena	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
2. Reinforce de Code of Ethics of the institute with provisions against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Initiatives for raising awareness on female role models Initiatives for raising awareness on gender diversity in research teams	GD, HoDs, HR, GE officer
3. Awareness campaign highlighting diversity and inclusiveness in the scientific community and encouraging prevention of discrimination in various areas	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Awareness campaign	GE officer

IV. Monitoring and evaluation of the GEP

The implementation of the GEP at IEA - AR are regularly assessed, through periodic meetings. The implementation of the GEP will be permanently monitored by the GE functions (officer and delegates) at the institute. The GE officer together with the GE delegates within each department are responsible with collecting data and input. They will perform analyses of the progress of the GEP (against the indicators), gather knowledge and feedback.

The GE functions at IEA - AR will conclude findings reports (once a year), which are then presented to the research institute management and discussed. These meetings will provide valuable conclusions on the implementation of the GEP. These meetings will also provide comments and recommendations that will enable adjustments and improvements to interventions on the GEP for the following year.

The periodic reports allow the continuous review of the impact of the GEP as well as keeping the wider community informed and engaged in the progress towards gender equality. The review of progress reports includes qualitative information as well as quantitative data, such as updates on human resource data disaggregated by sex, monitoring data to keep track of the implementation of key actions.

After their conclusion and adoption by the research institute management, the periodic GE progress report is published on the research institute website and communicated to the entire scientific community.