

**INSTITUUT  
NATUUR- EN  
BOSONDERZOEK**

**GENDER EQUALITY PLAN (GEP)**

**Research Institute Nature and Forest (INBO)**

**Version 2022 (last update march 2023)**



**Flanders**  
State of the Art

[www.vlaanderen.be/inbo](http://www.vlaanderen.be/inbo)

## Introduction

The INBO and its management team (MT) recognize the importance of a gender policy, endorse this Gender Equality Plan and support the following actions.

Hilde Eggermont (on behalf of the management team)

This plan goes in effect on 01/01/2022

[Link to GEP on website INBO](#)

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# 1 GEP PROCESS REQUIREMENTS<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 DEDICATED RESOURCES

Funding for gender equality positions or teams: a budget is provided for the execution of the tasks below.

Reserved time for others to work on gender equality: the INBO diversity officer has set aside time in his annual planning. Action points and plans can be discussed in the INBO Welfare workgroup.

## 1.2 DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING

Data on sex or gender of staff across roles and leadership: The HR team creates an annual overview and shares this data with the employees of INBO/EV INBO.

Annual reports and evaluation of progress and outcomes: a global overview is provided by the Diversity Policy Service of the Flemish Government. The INBO personnel department itself keeps data on other matters, such as recruitments at INBO and EV INBO, trainees, doctoral students...

Every year the INBO gender plan is evaluated, based on new data and the needs of the institute.

New data and insights into the needs can be obtained by:

- online surveys (anonymous or otherwise)
- focus groups
- strategic workshops
- ongoing pulse surveys
- feedback opportunities following the introduction of specific measures.

We try to achieve putting the collected data and the new knowledge at the basis of the Action Plan to several purposes: awareness-raising, action design, negotiation.

## 1.3 TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Whole organization engagement: specific topics can be discussed at info moments.

Tackle gender biases of people and decisions: training or lectures can be provided on this subject.

Joint action on specific topics: actions can be discussed in the Welfare working group, other staff members can participate in this depending on the needs.

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<sup>1</sup>Requirements listed in Horizon Europe's EU Research & Innovation Programme 2021-2027

## 2 CONTENT AREAS: OBJECTIVES, TARGETS AND MEASURES

The objectives, targets and measures of this Gender Equality Plan are **SMART**:

**Specific** – the objectives and measures should answer to basic questions: what, why, how, who, when and where.

**Measurable** – establish quantitative and/or qualitative indicators and respective targets.

**Attainable** – make sure the objectives and measures are not out of reach and that it can be achieved (even if requiring more efforts).

**Realistic** – ensure that the objectives and measures are relevant for the organisation and that they are feasible within a certain timeframe and within the available resources.

**Time-related** – indicate when the objectives and measures can be achieved

The content areas consist of:

- work-life balance and organisational culture
- gender balance in leadership and decision-making
- gender equality in recruitment and career progression
- integrating the gender dimension into research and teaching context
- measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment



## 2.1 WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

action Issue to be addressed	Objectives	Measures - Indicators	Targets	Timeline	Division of responsibilities	Problems encountered during implementation	Strategies to solve the problems
Neutral language and communication	We opt for more neutral language, through official messages and via social media. All internal and outgoing communication is genderless	by sample: 20 documents will be screened (mail, intranet, website, social media, ..), 15 have to be gender neutral	75% of sampled documents have to be gender neutral	immediate effect	HR, Communications & Planning department		
<i>Update jan 2023</i>		<i>Sample taken in jan 2023 (8 job offers, 5 texts on the INBO-website, 1 implementation plan and 6 high priority mails)</i>	<i>16 samples were gender neutral. Most lacking were high priority mails.</i>			<i>For some commonly words there are no clear-cut gender neutral words (in Dutch)</i>	<i>Present a list with gender neutral words for commonly used words in our institute (eg on our intranet)</i>
	Communicating the current figures about the following on	annual figures of team diversity	every employee can look up the relevant	januari 2022	HR		

	<p>the intranet so that they are known within the organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ gender balance in managerial and other organization-orientating functions (program coordinators, MT, ...)</li> <li>○ gender balance scientific functions</li> <li>○ gender balance non-scientific positions</li> <li>○ gender balance INBO</li> <li>○ gender balance EVINBO</li> <li>○ gender balance by degree</li> </ul>	policy, internal figures	figures at any time and knows where to look for them				
<i>Update jan 2023</i>		<i>Diversity figures INBO 2021 uploaded to intranet</i>		<i>jan 2023</i>			
Increase overall awareness of the importance of gender equality as a part of INBO's mission	Making gender balance constitutional at all levels of work	annual survey on welfare includes questions about gender equality			HR, Management Team	difficult to formulate a target	
Pursue pay equity among employees	Striving for equality in pay according to job content, regardless of gender	internal promotion if there is a gap between performed tasks and level of function (rank)	equal pay for equal work	annual function weighings	HR & Management Team	fixed government scales, no difference between sexes	

<i>Update jan 2023</i>		<i>4 internal promotions in 2022 (1M/3F)</i>		<i>2022</i>			
Flexible working arrangements	The employee can adjust his working hours to his private situation without permission from a manager	embedded in the work regulations document	Flexible hours for each employee	immediate effect	HR, Flemish Government		
Childcare	The employee has flexible hours to fully care for their child(ren) and has childcare during school holidays so that it does not affect his/her performance at work	embedded in the work regulations document	the employer must provide daycare for children during school holidays, flexible hours for each employee	immediate effect	HR, Flemish Government		



## 2.2 GENDER BALANCE IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING:

action Issue to be addressed	Objectives	Measures - Indicators	Targets	Timeline	Division of responsibilities	Problems encountered during implementation	Strategies to solve the problems
Numerical gender inequality at the management level	Increase the number of women in management positions to 50%	% of women in management positions	50% of women in management positions		HR & Management Team	recruitment stop Flemish government, no new positions without loss of a current position	
<i>Update jan 2023</i>		<i>upper management 5M/1F</i>	<i>16,5% women in management positions</i>	<i>start 2023</i>			
Unconsciousness bias training	Spreading awareness of unconsciousness bias to all employees, regardless of rank	% of employees following an unconsciousness bias training	15% of employees followed an unconsciousness bias training	2024	HR, employee responsible for courses and training		
Workload female management staff	Taking into account the family situation of female members of staff, with regard to working hours, meetings or	in the context of a welfare survey, ask this specific target group about	No management team meetings outside fixed working hours (as	immediate effect	Management Team		



	appointments during school holidays	workload and working hours	described in the agreement framework for hybrid work)				
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## 2.3 GENDER EQUALITY IN RECRUITMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION

action Issue to be addressed	Objectives	Measures - Indicators	Targets	Timeline	Division of responsibilities	Problems encountered during implementation	Strategies to solve the problems
Gender equality amongst the INBO workforce	INBO's target for the number of women is 50% for the general workforce and 50% in managerial positions.	annual figures of team diversity policy, internal figures	40% women in the general workforce, 33% women in managerial positions	2024	HR	recruitment stop Flemish government	
<i>Update jan 2023</i>			<i>32.5% women in the general workforce (88 out of 271 employees; INBO &amp; Own Equity)</i>	<i>start 2023</i>			
Language and communication in external vacancies	For vacancies, we always use a neutral term for the job title	by sample	100% of vacancies have neutral terms for the job title	immediate effect	HR		
<i>Update jan 2023</i>			<i>44 vacancies in 2022</i>	<i>2022</i>			
	External vacancies: • Check whether all questions and selection criteria are gender neutral.	check questions and selection criteria by sample	100% of the questions/criteria in selections are gender neutral, juries are balanced 50/50	immediate effect	HR, Management Team, selection jury		



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The composition of the jury is balanced, both among the substantive jury members and the general composition. Everyone pays attention to different qualities and so it is even better to search for the most suitable candidate.</li> <li>● When there is an equal score among candidates in the recruitment procedure, the female candidate will be chosen until a balanced distribution of both sexes among the INBO employees is achieved.</li> <li>● Since women are more likely to be deterred than men from a long list of requirements for a position, we include the following in vacancies: "If you do not meet one or more of the competences listed below, do not let this</li> </ul>						
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	immediately put you off. Call or email us to coordinate more specifically, so that we can personally assess your candidacy further".						
<i>Update jan 2023</i>			<i>34 vacancies in 2022, involving a jury; 28 were balanced (82%)</i>	<i>2022</i>		<i>A smaller percentage of women in the workforce is more difficult to find a gender balance</i>	<i>HR can count on an extra female member to balance the jury</i>
Language and communication in internal vacancies	When opening up internal functions: checking whether the criteria are gender neutral. We focus on encouraging women to take up internal positions (eg program coordinators, MT positions, etc.)..	check questions and selection criteria by sample	100% of the criteria in internal selections are gender neutral	immediate effect	HR, Management Team, all INBO employees		
Career development female employees	Career development for women is encouraged. They can follow courses on skills development, media management..	% woman in attended courses	50% female employees follow courses on skills development	immediate effect	HR, employee responsible for courses and training		



## 2.4 INTEGRATING THE GENDER DIMENSION INTO RESEARCH AND TEACHING CONTEXT

action Issue to be addressed	Objectives	Measures - Indicators	Targets	Timeline	Division of responsibilities	Problems encountered during implementation	Strategies to solve the problems
Making women's contribution visible	During presentations (of reports), the female employee can be chosen as a spokesperson	equal number internal female and male speakers	50% female spokespersons	immediate effect	INBO employees, Management Team		
<i>Update march 2023</i>			<i>x infomoments given with x female spokespersons (x%)</i>	2022			
	Use different media and communication tools to increase women's visibility in science and technology	by sample	as much as possible	immediate effect	HR, Communications & Planning department	difficult to set a target	
	Create a gender-balance with external lecturers	% female external lecturers	50% female external lecturers	immediate effect	HR, Communications & Planning department		
<i>Update march 2023</i>			<i>2 external lectures, 100% female</i>	2022			



<p>Establish and support women at work groups</p>	<p>In the composition of steering groups, networks, advisory councils ..., we strive for a good gender balance. We make employees aware of this internally so that this becomes an automatic reflex.</p>	<p>% females in steering groups, networks, advisory councils (HR internal figures)</p>	<p>50% females in steering groups, networks, advisory councils</p>		<p>INBO employees, Management Team</p>		
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## 2.5 MEASURES AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

action Issue to be addressed	Objectives	Measures - Indicators	Targets	Timeline	Division of responsibilities	Problems encountered during implementation	Strategies to solve the problems
Increase safety and security among female staff	Highlighting the articles in the employment regulations regarding - threats, violence, unwanted sexual behavior at work or bullying	% of violations of work regulations	no incidents	immediate effect	HR	difficult to measure/set targets	
	Clarify which procedures there are and how they work with regard to threats, violence, unwanted sexual behavior at work or bullying		all employees know the procedures	immediate effect	HR	difficult to measure	
	Make it clear that victims of threats, violence, sexual harassment at work or bullying are not alone	survey internal communication question do you know any confidential	know the procedure, know internal confidential persons	immediate effect	HR, internal confidants		



	and have contacts to help them through every part of the process, from conversations with counselors to legal prosecution	advisers					
<i>Update march 2023</i>			<i>internal mail with additional explanation about the confidential advisers and open question if people are interested in participating</i>	<i>march 2023</i>			



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