The Gender Equality Strategy and the Gender Equality Plan 2023-2027

Contents

Abbreviations and definitions

CA	Board of Directors (Consiliul de administraţie)
CD	Steering Committee (Comitet de direcţie)
GD	General Director
GE	Gender equality
GEP	Gender equality plan
HoD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
IBA	National Research and Development Institute for Food Bioresources – IBA Bucharest
SD	Scientific Director
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 behavioral, 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 behavioral, 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 2023-2027 was developed by the National Research and Development Institute for Food Bioresources – IBA Bucharest (IBA) 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 provisions of the European Charter for researchers and of the Code of Conduct in the process of the recruitment of researchers[1], 2015-2019, the European Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025[2] and the Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans[3].

At European level, the GE strategy (2020-2025), adopted in March 2020, sets out the vision, policy objectives and actions aimed at contributing to the achievement of real progress in terms of gender in Europe, respectively to the achievement of sustainable development objectives.

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, IBA developed the GE Plan (GEP) for 2023-2027, 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 IBA 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 IBA management 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 organizations (RPOs).

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[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 IBA as relevant for the discussion on gender equality issues:

- Staff numbers by sex/gender at all levels, by domains, function (including administrative / support staff);
- Numbers of women and men in research and administrative decision-making positions (e.g., top management team, boards, committees, recruitment and promotion panels);
- 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. IBA management

	Woman	Man
General Director	X	
Scientific Director	X	
Technical Director		X
Economic Director	X	
Quality Director	X	
Head of Food Chemistry Laboratory	X	
Head of Chromatography Laboratory	X	
Head of Human Nutrition Laboratory	X	
Head of Food Packaging Laboratory		X
Head of Microbiology-ELISA Laboratory	X	
Head of Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Laboratory	X	
Head of Molecular Biology Laboratory	X	
Head of Consumer Science and Sensory Analysis Laboratory	X	
Head of Reference Materials and Inter-laboratory tests	X	
Head of Cereals and flours processing Pilot plant		X
Head of Meat processing Pilot plant		X
Head of Fruits and vegetables processing Pilot plant	X	
Head of Human Resources Development Department	X	
Head of Technological Transfer Center		X
Head of Administrative and Public procurement Department		X
Head of Legal and Human Resources Department		X
Head of Marketing Department	X	
Head of National Service for medicinal and Aromatic Plants and Hive Products (SNPMAPS)	X	
TOTAL	**16**	**7**

2. Women and men – research staff

Table 2. Total number of research staff, per department

	Experienced researchers			Early-stage researchers			Technicians	Total women	Total men
	CS I	CS II	CS III	CS	ACS	Other			
Food Chemistry Laboratory									
Women	2	-	1	1	1	-	2	7	3
Men	-	-	-	-	2	-	1		
Chromatography Laboratory									
Women	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	4	1
Men	-	-	1	-	-	-	-		
Human Nutrition Laboratory									
Women	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	0
Men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Food packaging Laboratory									
Women	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	4	1
Men	1	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Microbiology-ELISA Laboratory									
Women	-	1	2	-	-	-	2	5	0
Men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Consumer Science and Sensory Analyses Laboratory									
Women	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	4	0
Men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Molecular Biology Laboratory									
Women	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
Men	1	-	1	-	1	-	-		
Reference Materials and Inter-laboratory tests									
Women	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Men	-	-	-	1	1	-	-		
NMR Laboratory									
Women	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	3	1
Men	-	-	-	-	1	-	-		
Pilot Plants (Cereals and flours, Meat, Fruits and vegetables)									
Women	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	3	3
Men	-	-	-	2	-	1	-		

Technological Transfer Center									
Women	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	4	2
Men	-	-	1	1	-	-	-		
Human Resources Development Department									
Women	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	4	1
Men	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		
National Service for medicinal and Aromatic Plants and Hive Products									
Women	-	1	3	1	-	-	-	5	1
Men	-	1	-	-	-	-	-		
Research and Innovation Department									
Women	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0
Men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Total women	9	6	14	7	1	3	7	47	18
Total men	2	1	3	5	5	1	1		

3. Women and men – administrative and support services

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

	Women	Men
Administrative and public procurement department	3	4
Financial department	8	0
Legal and human resources department	1	1
Marketing department	1	0
Quality Assurance department	1	0
Public relations	1	0
TOTAL	**15**	**5**

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 institute;
- 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 and working seminars at all levels, with the gender equality function assigned for developing the GEP and including the research institute management, research staff and representatives of research institute administrative and support services. Each and all working groups included even numbers of men and women.

The conclusions of the internal analysis were communicated to the entire research institute staff – published on our website.

The General Director committed to the development and implementation of the GEP for IBA for 2023-2027.

1. Quantitative analysis of data

The analysis of numerical data illustrated that:

- There are more women than men in leadership positions at department level, despite the fact that women could be more reluctant in taking up additional administrative responsibilities because of work-life balance;
- On average, the number of women research positions, i.e., experienced researcher and early-stage researcher, is higher than the number of men;
- Employed women take significantly more maternity leave than employed men – within the institute.

2. Qualitative analysis of data

The qualitative research showed that:

- Combining work and family life – women more often declare that they are responsible for most of family duties;
- The expectation of international mobility is more difficult for women to reconcile with taking care of children and other dependents;
- Women do more housework; maternal responsibilities delay research work and discourage women from taking up administrative positions;
- Women with children do not take longer trips abroad and become less involved in the social life of the department;
- The gender dimension is not yet well integrated in research;
- The research institute is perceived as a safe place, without gender-violence;
- The research institute is overall perceived as inclusive;

- The strategies of the departments are rather unclear – departments do not communicate that they act on gender equality in any way;
- There is a noticeable lack of procedures and knowledge about the gender equality, inclusiveness and non-discrimination;

To summarize the results of the studies, it can be noted that all the situations mentioned by the respondents and situations analyzed at the institute are, to some extent, factors of discrimination or manifestations based on gender.

The important conclusions of the internal analysis at IBA are:

- We 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 train and educate our staff on gender-equality;

- We need to communicate gender relevant actions and measures actively and efficiently;

- We need to develop a gender strategy and a GEP for 2023-2027, 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 General Director committed to developing the institute strategy for gender equality for 2023-2027, and the corresponding GEP.

IBA decided on creating the function of GE officer at the institute.

Specifically, the GE officer 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 the research institute; assess the progress towards gender equality in the institute.

The institute management mandated the GE officer at the institute and a dedicated working group to develop the GE strategy and the GEP 2023-2027. The GE working group included men and women representatives of research institute leadership and researchers, representatives of research institute administration and support services and they consulted supporting materials elaborated by UEFISCDI.

III.1. GE Strategy 2022-2025

Disclaimer: This document refers ONLY to HE and its eligibility requirements for GEP.

The GE Strategy comprises the following areas of intervention and objectives for 2023-2027:

Area of intervention	Objective(s)
1. Work-life balance and organizational 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 favor 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 2023-2027

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

Area 1. Work-life balance and organizational culture

Objective: Promoting integration of work with family and personal life

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline					Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
1. Availability of policies, procedures and structures at the research institute for promoting integration of work with family and personal life	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	X	Policies, procedures and services for work and personal life integration	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
2. Feasibility plans for the creation of new welfare services, e.g., contract arrangements made by the research institute with service suppliers from family care duties and house chores to child-care (elderly-care) in case of conference or congress, or international mobility	Researchers, technical and administrative staff		X	X	X	X	Policies, procedures, and services for work and personal life integration	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
3. 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	X	X	Standard procedure for ICT-based systems promoting work and personal life integration	GD, HR, HoDs, GE officer, IT services
4. Availability of flexible working times arrangements, from part-time to remote working	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	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
		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
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	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	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
		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
1. Carrying out gender awareness initiatives, briefings and creating guidelines for gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments	Research institute management	X	X	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	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 (scientists, researchers and academics)	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	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
		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
1. Internal training seminars on the use of sex and gender perspective in research, to foster the acknowledgment of its economic, social and innovation value	Researchers, scientific community	X	X	X	X	X	Participation in training seminars on integrating sex/gender analysis methods, by gender and field of research	SD, Researchers, GE officer
2. Development, communication and implementation of standards for the incorporation of the sex and gender variables into research	Researchers		X	X	X	X	Participation in training seminars on integrating sex/gender analysis methods, by gender and field of research Perception of the gender/sex	SD, Researchers, GE officer

							variables in research contents	
3. 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	X	Awarded projects	GD, HoDs, Researchers
4. Disseminate and communicate career good practices - role models for women (scientists, researchers and academics)	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	GE officer, GE delegates, HoDs
5. Workshops on the integration of gender equality and diversity issues in research activity, as support for research staff	Researchers		X	X	X	X	Training seminars or guidelines on integrating sex/gender in research activity	SD, HR, HoDs, GE officer
6. Courses and training tools in all departments and at all levels (experienced or early researchers) on sex and gender variables	Researchers		X	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
		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
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	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. Develop internal electronic tool(s) supporting information and education, as well as allowing the reporting of sexual harassment and discrimination	Researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	X	Dedicated research institute website/platform, number of visits, number of real-case situations reported and solved	GD, HoDs, HR, IT services, GE officer
3. 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	X	Initiatives for raising awareness on female role models Initiatives for raising awareness on gender diversity in research teams	GD, HoDs, HR, GE officer
4. 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	X	Awareness campaign	GE officer

IV. Monitoring and evaluation of the GEP

The implementation of the GEP at IBA, the progress against the GE strategy aims and objectives are regularly assessed, through periodic meetings. The implementation of the GEP will be permanently monitored by the GE officer at the institute. The GE officer together with the GE delegates within each department are responsible with collecting data and input. They will perform a first analysis of the progress of the GEP (against the indicators), gather knowledge and feedback.

The GE functions at the institute will conclude findings reports (once a year), which are then presented to the research institute management (GD, HoDs) 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 (Board of Directors, GD, HoDs), the periodic (annual) GE progress report is published on the research institute website and communicated to the entire scientific community.

Box 1. Intervention areas recommended by the Horizon Europe program for the gender equality plan

The following areas of gender equality are recommended ("mandatory") within HE:

Work-life balance and organizational culture

Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Integration of the gender dimension into research content

Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Source: Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans, https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffcb06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1

List of sources used for the literature review

(in alphabetic order)

Council of Europe Gender Equality Commission, https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/gender-equality-commission

EU FESTA - Gender Issues in Recruitment, Appointment and Promotion Processes – Recommendations for a Gender Sensitive Application of Excellence Criteria, https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/festa_gender_issues_recruitment_appointment_promotion.pdf

EU Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025, https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en

EUA - Universities' Strategies and Approaches towards Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/universities-39-strategies-and-approaches-towards-diversity-equity-and-inclusion.pdf

EUCEN - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in European Higher Education Institutions, https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/web_diversity%20equity%20and%20inclusion%20in%20european%20higher%20education%20institutions.pdf

European charter & code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers, https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/ttf_goal_2_results_v1.0.pdf

European Institute for Gender Equality, https://eige.europa.eu

GARCIA – Mapping organizational work-life policies and practices, https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/garcia_report_mapping_org_work-life_policies_practices.pdf

Guidelines for using gender-sensitive language in communication, research and administration, https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/reutlingen_university_guidelines_for_using_gender-sensitive_language.pdf

Horizon Europe General Annexes, https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2021-2022/wp-13-general-annexes_horizon-2021-2022_en.pdf

Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans, https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffcb06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1

LERU - Equality, diversity and inclusion at universities: the power of a systemic approach, https://www.leru.org/publications/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-at-universities

Science Europe - Practical Guide TO Improving Gender Equality in Research Organisations, https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/se_gender_practical-guide.pdf

Student evaluations of teaching (mostly) do not measure teaching effectiveness, https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/science_open_research_student_eval_teaching_effectiveness.pdf