

Gender Equality Plan



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Austrian Institute of Economic Research

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1. Preamble

The employees are the most important resource of the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO). WIFO's success and the achievement of its strategic goals¹ require a culture of openness, diversity and development perspectives, in which respect, tolerance and appreciation characterise everyone's actions. WIFO strives to employ highly qualified and motivated people who can develop within the institute, and aims to contribute to solving socio-economic challenges with the research work carried out at the institute, as well as to create factual bases for decisions in the economy and society.

Innovation is a driver of progress and development, also at WIFO. WIFO is committed to promoting and demanding space for different approaches and multiple perspectives in solving problems. This requires employees who bring different perspectives to solving problems, due to their different life situations, backgrounds and gender. WIFO is aware of the importance of an open gender culture in all areas of activity in order to promote and enable scientific excellence. Diverse scientific, professional and social competences are the basis for the implementation of WIFO's strategy.

For this reason, WIFO is committed to ensuring equal development opportunities for all persons at WIFO, regardless of gender, age, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation or physical or mental disability, in accordance with their qualifications, to eliminating existing disadvantages and to ensuring respectful interaction with one another. WIFO actively promotes the equality of women and men in the institute and the diversity of the workforce in all respects. In the case of equal formal qualifications, women are to be given preference as long as parity has not been achieved.

2. General provisions

2.1 Goals and tasks of gender equality at WIFO

Respect, appreciation and tolerance are part of the institute's culture and are part of cooperative behaviour in the workplace. Sexual harassment, discrimination or violence in any form, including psychological harassment such as bullying, is not part of the institute's culture. Should discrimination, sexual harassment or (psychological) violence nevertheless occur, all WIFO employees have the right to be protected against it. It is the responsibility of managers to punish such behaviour immediately and to contribute to the prevention of such behaviour. Due to the flat hierarchy, every employee has the responsibility to immediately report any form of sexual harassment, discrimination or (psychological) violence to management and to do everything in his/her power to ensure that such behaviour is or can be stopped. In addition, WIFO employees are regularly sensitised to discrimination issues by the Management Board or the Equal Opportunities Officer.

¹ See WIFO (2022). Mission and range of services. Website. https://www.wifo.ac.at/ueber_das_wifo/mission_und_leistungsspektrum.

Gender equality is part of WIFO's culture and should be lived and demanded by all WIFO employees at all levels and in all projects. It also includes cooperation with project partners and other organisations and individuals associated with WIFO. The WIFO Management Board and all managers are committed to promoting and demanding gender equality at WIFO and to reflecting on the gender impact of decisions. The Gender Equality Plan serves as an instrument to promote gender equality at the institute. The Gender Equality Plan will be regularly evaluated and, if necessary, adjusted as part of the preparation of the annual Gender Equality Report to be published from 2022 onwards.

2.2 Promoting and implementing gender equality at WIFO

2.2.1 Use of non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive language

The aim of the provision on non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive language is to achieve equal treatment of women and men with regard to personal designations and also to express gender equality in spoken and written language.

The guidelines are adapted in cooperation with the Deputy Director for External Relations, the Editorial Department, the Equal Opportunities Officer(s) and, if necessary, other functionaries, and are binding for all WIFO publications (studies, monthly reports, research briefs, bulletins, working papers, business cycle survey, etc.) as well as for all external texts (website, press releases, offers, news reports, etc.). The current version of the guidelines is available to staff on the intranet (WIKI).

2.2.2 Accessibility

WIFO has set itself the goal of continuously reducing and, in the medium term, eliminating barriers in order to give people with disabilities the greatest possible access to the WIFO infrastructure and WIFO documents. In this way, WIFO not only reduces (digital) barriers but also ensures that information is accessible to all users in the same quality.

Due to the increasing demand for accessible documents, also from study commissioners, several internal training courses on the creation of accessible documents have been organised, a WIKI page has been set up, a person has been appointed to manage this issue, templates have been adapted and a process for the creation of accessible documents has been developed. The know-how will be further developed through training.

In order to reduce barriers to access and use of the WIFO building, the Facility Management team has been providing barrier-free access to several offices and meeting rooms, the canteen, the library and a disabled toilet for several years.

2.2.3 Standards for managers

Managers at WIFO are aware of their role and their responsibility to treat employees with respect. They do not use their position and the authority associated with it for their own benefit or to take disproportionate advantage of WIFO employees. Managers shall refrain from any discrimination, favouritism, harassment or exclusion in the employment, promotion or

remuneration of employees on the basis of, for example, ethnicity, gender, skin colour, sexual orientation or any other characteristic.

Managers take the opportunity to develop their skills through training and coaching as part of their personal development. They treat employees' concerns with trust and respond promptly.

2.3 The Equal Opportunities Officer and his/her position in the organisation

Equality between men and women is a priority issue at WIFO. In particular, WIFO has set itself the goal of increasing the proportion of women among its scientific staff and achieving parity in the long term.

In order to pursue this goal, the position of Equal Opportunities Officer was created with defined communication processes and resources.

2.3.1 Responsibilities and role of the Equal Opportunities Officer

- Contact person for all employees for questions and issues related to the implementation of gender equality at WIFO;
- Development of WIFO's gender equality strategy with goals and actions within the framework of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP²), together with the relevant stakeholders such as the Managing Board, the Works Council and Human Resources Management;
- Preparation of an annual report on gender equality (including proposals for improvement), including
 - Analysis of the current situation at WIFO
 - Workforce structure
 - Extent of employment or distribution of working time
 - Qualification structure, training and participation in conferences
 - Media appearances
 - Committees
 - Presentation of actions taken to promote gender equality
 - Proposed actions to improve gender equality
- Coordinate the implementation of the actions and, if necessary, proactively determine steps to adapt the gender equality strategy and the targets and actions derived from it;
- Interface with the Management Board on potential gender equality issues;
- Organising and chairing task force meetings on defined gender equality issues, as appropriate;

² See European Institute for Gender Equality (2022). Gender Equality in Academia and Research. Website. <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear/what-gender-equality-plan-gep>.

- Participating in the selection process of employees and in the filling of new and subsequent internal positions by approaching women at an early stage, proactively applying for vacant positions, raising awareness that gender equality is taken into account, etc.³;
- Networking with gender equality officers or researching the gender equality policies of comparable organisations to promote knowledge transfer.

In their role, the Equal Opportunities Officer and Deputy Equal Opportunities Officer are required to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information, are not subject to directives and are independent. They have a mailbox to which only they have access.

2.3.2 Communication processes

- Annual communication and reminder to staff that the Equal Opportunities Officer is always available in person or by email.
- Prior to the election of the internal and external coordinators (approximately 3 months before the election): Hold a meeting of eligible staff to proactively motivate them to take on this role.
- Participation of the Equal Opportunities Officer in the Management Board meeting once a quarter to discuss current equal opportunities issues at WIFO.

2.3.3 Resources

- The Equal Opportunities Officer carries out the activity during his/her working hours, with 4 hours per week as a guideline.
- For operational implementation, the Equal Opportunities Officer may draw on the resources and expertise of WIFO staff, in particular for extensive work such as the preparation or maintenance of the Equal Opportunities Plan or the preparation of the Equal Opportunities Report. If necessary, resources are coordinated through the Chief Financial Officer.

2.3.4 Selection procedure and term of office of the Equal Opportunities Officer and Deputy Equal Opportunities Officer

- All persons employed by WIFO may apply for the position of Equal Opportunities Officer and Deputy Equal Opportunities Officer who
 - have a permanent employment relationship and
 - work at WIFO for at least 20 hours per week.
- The position of Equal Opportunities Officer is advertised in the autumn before the start of the next term of office. From the pool of applications, a joint proposal by the Works Council and the Management Board is submitted to the staff for a vote.

³ The Equal Opportunities Officer is provided with the text of the advertisement before it is published in order to give him or her the opportunity to make suggestions regarding equal opportunities. Information on the recruitment process and the involvement of the Equal Opportunities Officer can be found on the WIFO intranet.

- The term of office runs from 1 January to 31 December of the year after next and is renewable.
- The Deputy represents the Equal Opportunities Officer in all matters.
- If the Equal Opportunities Officer leaves office prematurely, the Deputy shall take over until the end of the term of office. An early call for applications to fill the position of Equal Opportunities Officer is possible.

3. Measures to improve equal opportunities

This section is divided into the areas of actions already implemented and those still to be implemented.

3.1 Measures taken

The issue of gender equality has played a role at WIFO for years, even before the appointment of gender officers, as evidenced by the appointment of a women's representative in the early 1990s. However, this position was not filled on a permanent basis. In 2017, a women's assembly was held and action areas with measures were developed. In 2018, two gender officers (one female and one male) were appointed and in 2019, for the first time, they prepared a gender report for the period 2017-2018. In addition to presenting the situation of women and men at WIFO, this report also contained proposals for measures to strengthen gender equality. Based on these proposals, the WIFO management at the time drew up a catalogue of measures. In 2021, the gender officers drew up an updated gender report, which also documented the progress made and the continuing need for action with regard to the implementation of the measures. In the first months of 2022, the role of the Gender Officer was reorganised into that of an Equal Opportunities Officer, including deputation, with more concrete responsibilities, competencies and an expansion of tasks in the area of equality and diversity. Accordingly, gender mainstreaming as a strategic objective should be given a permanent and fixed systematic basis.

3.1.1 Participatory processes

3.1.1.1 Gender equality e-mail box

A dedicated e-mail box has been set up to provide a simple and easily accessible way for all staff to express their views on equality issues. The Equal Opportunities Officer and Deputy have access to this mailbox. In the event of a change, the correspondence is also retained for knowledge management purposes.

3.1.1.2 E-mail distribution list for women at WIFO

An e-mail distribution list has been set up with all WIFO employees to facilitate women-specific exchanges and to be able to address women directly before the elections for individual internal WIFO functions.

3.1.1.3 Women's meetings

If necessary, women's meetings are convened by the Equal Opportunities Officer, the Management Board or a specially appointed working group at WIFO to discuss the current situation and to develop measures to eliminate inequalities between men and women or obstacles for women. The initiative can be taken by any woman at WIFO.

3.1.2 Human Resources Management

Human Resources Management plays an essential role in the implementation of gender equality policies and measures. WIFO's Management Board is therefore committed to creating and securing the necessary resources. All persons involved in the human resources cycle (from human resources planning to recruiting, onboarding, personnel management, development, administration and off-boarding) ensure that all human resources issues are handled from a gender equality perspective. As part of the exit interviews conducted in the event of a departure, the departing employee is given the opportunity to send the transcript of the interview to the Equal Opportunities Officer.

3.1.2.1 Work-life balance

WIFO offers a wide range of services to help all employees achieve a good work-life balance. Examples include:

- The possibility for all those subject to a flexitime model to freely choose how to divide their working time within a very broad flexitime framework with few constraints.
- Continuation of the long-standing practice of allowing employees to easily change their working hours (beyond the legal entitlement to part-time work) in order to facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life.
- The possibility of working from home, which has been significantly expanded over the years. In addition, as part of the pandemic-specific home office, trust-based working hours have been introduced to ensure greater flexibility.

3.1.2.2 Gender equality in leadership and decision-making positions

- Men and women have always been able to hold leadership and decision-making positions at WIFO, although there has been a change in 2011 to the effect that the function of Research Area Coordinator can also be held by part-time academic staff (at least 75%).

3.1.2.3 Equal opportunities in recruitment and career development

- Since 2017, WIFO's job advertisements for academic staff include an explicit invitation to women to apply and the indication that women with equivalent qualifications will be given preference.
- Avoiding gender pay gaps in new hires and (temporary) employment by classifying all persons in the appropriate pay scale.

- Already in 2014, several years before a legal regulation, WIFO decided to take into account maternity leave of up to 10 months for salary advancement. The legal regulation has been in force since 1 September 2019.
- Modification of the rules for taking up a research semester to facilitate access, especially for parents with care obligations (2013). In particular, it was made possible to apply in two parts and the requirement to stay at a foreign research institution was relaxed.
- Internal survey on the reasons for (not) claiming the research time bonus (FOZP).
- Unrestricted access to e-mails during absences (paternity or maternity leave, educational leave, general leave) and maintenance of e-mail distribution lists (e.g. Women at WIFO, WIFO-Intern, FBs, DL, WA, etc.) to ensure connection to WIFO.
- Part-time employment also during parental leave, educational leave, etc. to ensure connection and knowledge transfer and to enable collaboration on projects.
- Access to all training regardless of gender and level of employment: Women and men can benefit from the same number of training opportunities in terms of time and budget.
- From 2022, the proportion of men, women and diverse candidates will be recorded and evaluated in a structured way throughout the entire application cycle (from the number of applications received, to meeting the minimum criteria, to shortlisting, interviews and recruitment). The aim is to address the gender imbalance in the workforce.

3.1.3 Visibility of WIFO staff in public

- Secondment of women to various bodies through active promotion by the WIFO Management Board.
- Increasing the number of women in the media through active support by the Communication and Editorial Department.

3.1.4 Gender mainstreaming in research

For many research questions, gender-relevant perspectives in different living conditions play a central role. In WIFO's research approaches and research projects, these different living conditions and opportunities are taken into account and included where relevant.

3.2 Measures to be taken

3.2.1 Work organisation

Main theme:	Increased take-up of training opportunities such as research semesters or research time bonuses by WIFO staff
Intervention:	Investigate root causes to understand the problem and then design appropriate interventions.
Background:	In the course of a survey conducted in 2018, it was concluded that there is a gender-specific perceived difference in workload between women and men. This was accompanied by an

	argument for not taking advantage of training opportunities, such as research semesters or research time bonuses.
Responsibility:	Management Board, Equal Opportunities Officer with the support of Human Resources Management
Deadline:	Q1/2023

Main theme:	Reconciling work and care responsibilities for women and men when planning meetings
Intervention:	Timely announcement of the date and duration of the meeting and consideration that the meeting does not start before 9 am or end after 3 pm. The Management Board shall also inform all employees.
Responsibility:	Management Board and all persons who make appointments
Deadline:	Q1/2022

Main theme:	Role of the Equal Opportunities Officer
Intervention:	Writing down the role definition of the Equal Opportunities Officer in the new version of the Personnel Development Plan (PEPL), including a formalised set of competencies.
Responsibility:	Management Board
Deadline:	Q3/2022

Main theme:	Maintain information flow for employees on leave
Intervention:	Possibility of regular communication with staff on leave. Maintain the email distribution list so that the flow of information from the FB or FaB is not interrupted.
Responsibility:	FBK, FaBK, team colleagues, Equal Opportunities Officer, Management Board
Deadline:	ongoing

3.2.2 Work-life balance

Main theme:	Evaluation of the home office works agreement
Intervention:	The home office agreement shall be evaluated by the Works Council and the Management Board after its implementation. The Equal Opportunities Officer should be involved in this process in order to identify initial indications of gender differences in the use of home working days. This should be used as a starting point for further in-depth analysis to identify any gender-specific need for action with regard to integration in the institute's processes and activities.
Responsibility:	Management Board, Works Council, Equal Opportunities Officer
Deadline:	Q1/2023 (or later – depending on pandemic development)

3.2.3 Gender equality in leadership and decision-making positions

Main theme:	Increasing the number of women in management and coordination positions
Intervention:	Ongoing active approach to women prior to the allocation of management positions by the Management Board, the Equal Opportunities Officer, the Works Council and, if necessary, the Executive Board, as well as the promotion of discussions on the subject within the respective bodies (FB-Jour Fixe, DL-Jour Fixe, WA-Jour Fixe, etc.). The aim is to increase the proportion of female employees in management and coordination functions in the event of vacancies, so that the proportion of female employees is at least 50%-50% of the proportion of female employees in the respective coordination group or top management.
Responsibility:	Management Board, if necessary Executive Board, involvement of WIFO committee representatives
Deadline:	With each vacancy of a corresponding position/function

3.2.4 Visibility of WIFO staff in public

Main theme:	Increasing the number of women on boards
Intervention:	Active recruitment and promotion of women to board functions and positions.
Responsibility:	Management Board, if necessary Executive Board

Deadline:	For each vacancy of an equivalent function or position
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Main theme:	Encouraging volunteer committee work
Intervention:	Promotion of voluntary committee work relevant to WIFO during WIFO working hours.
Responsibility:	Management Board
Deadline:	ongoing

Main theme:	Promoting women through the Communication Department
Intervention:	Specific training and support for women through the activities of the Communication Department, in order to make them more visible in the public discourse of counselling and research.
Responsibility:	Communication & Editorial Department
Deadline:	ongoing

Main theme:	Increasing the visibility of women to the outside world
Intervention:	Soft measures (active encouragement / coaching / awareness raising) with a view to participation in external representation, participation in panel discussions, etc.
Responsibility:	Management Board, Equal Opportunities Officer
Deadline:	ongoing

Main theme:	Monitoring women's participation
Intervention:	Monitoring of the participation of women in events and discussion forums at WIFO or with WIFO participation and conclusions for action
Responsibility:	Management Board, Equal Opportunities Officer
Deadline:	Q1/2023

3.2.5 Equal opportunities in recruitment and career development

Main theme:	Involvement of the Equal Opportunities Officer in the recruitment process
Intervention:	Drawing up the recruitment procedure, including the involvement of the Equal Opportunities Officer in the process (reviewing the text of the advertisement), the possibility of taking part in interviews, the decision-making process and the possibility of commenting on the proposed order of the area.
Responsibility:	Management Board
Deadline:	Q1/2022

Main theme:	Application monitoring & derivations
Intervention:	Analysis of applicant data by gender, including recommendations for action in the event of disparities
Responsibility:	Human Resources Management (data provision), Equal Opportunities Officer (analysis and recommendations for action)
Deadline:	Q2/2023 with data recorded for the first time since 01.2022

Main theme:	Women's quota regulation
Intervention:	Elaboration of a concept paper on the extent to which a quota system for women in various bodies and functions could be established.
Responsibility:	Equal Opportunities Officer, Management Board
Deadline:	Q2/2023

Main theme:	Development of key figures for income analysis
Intervention:	Development of a set of indicators for the analysis and discussion of men's and women's incomes
Responsibility:	Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Management
Deadline:	Q4/2022

Main theme:	Monitoring staff development activities
Intervention:	Survey and analysis of reported (usually paid) continuing education measures of WIFO employees, including research semesters and research time bonuses.
Background:	Possible inequalities may result in women and men not taking advantage of training in the same way, which in turn affects their own career development. The purpose of monitoring staff development is to identify inequalities, provide timely and targeted support to groups and develop appropriate recommendations for action.
Responsibility:	Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Management for Data Collection
Deadline:	Ongoing with Gender Equality Report

Main theme:	Promoting women in project management
Intervention:	Annual evaluation of project leadership by gender, analysis of national and international project leadership and, in the case of disparities, recommendations for action to encourage and, where necessary, support women to become project leaders.
Responsibility:	Management Board, Equal Opportunities Officer
Deadline:	Q1/2023

3.2.6 Integrating the gender dimension into research

Main theme:	Gender issues in research
Intervention:	Increased consideration of gender issues in WIFO research, e.g. when reviewing project proposals, through scientific coordination and feedback to the project management, if necessary.
Responsibility:	Management Board, Equal Opportunities Officer with the involvement of the FBK
Deadline:	ongoing

Main theme:	Integrating gender into research
Intervention:	Advising researchers on the integration of gender aspects when submitting research proposals and communicating research results to researchers, e.g. in the course of events.
Responsibility:	Management Board, Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Management
Deadline:	Q3/2023

4. Gender Equality Report

The Gender Equality Report consists of two sections: the evaluation and analysis of the indicators, and a description of the various measures taken or recommended.

The first Gender Equality Report was produced in 2019 for the period 2017 and 2018. The second report will follow in 2021, covering 2019 and 2020. From the transition year 2022 onwards, a report will be produced annually. The Equality Report is based on data from the previous year. The data is provided by the Human Resources and Accounting Departments on 31 March each year and is evaluated, interpreted and, if necessary, recommendations for action are developed by the Equal Opportunities Officer with the support of a scientific assistant.

The following indicators will be used to evaluate the achievement of the objectives, although other indicators may be developed in consultation between the Equal Opportunities Officer and the Management Board:

Staff structure

By subject area (1-5) and function (Management Board, scientific staff, scientific assistance, service area), proportion of women and men

- Number of staff in heads (full-time and part-time employees)
- Number of staff in full-time equivalents (FTE)
- Number of arrivals and departures
- Number of staff returning from leave in heads

Extent of employment or distribution of working time

- Part-time rate women and men (and total)
- Part-time rate for women and men by function
- Increase in hours

Reconciling work and private life

- Use of parental leave in days (women and men)

- Number of homeworking days used by WIFO groups, broken down by women and men and by full-time and part-time work

Qualification structure and training

- Degrees of the academic staff
- Utilisation of research semesters in heads and months (women and men)
- Research time bonus, allocation and take-up (women and men)
- Use of educational leave in days (women and men)
- Attendance at national and international conferences (women and men)
- Use of national and international project service trips (women and men)

Media appearances / external presentation

- Number of media mentions by gender
- Academic activities by gender

Bodies (evolution over time)

- Women and men in executive positions (Management Board)
- Editor-in-Chief WIFO Monthly Reports
- Women and men on the WIFO Executive Board
- Women and men in the Scientific Advisory Board
- Women and men on the Works Council (by function)

Compensation & project work

- Number of women and men with project management functions in third-party funded and contract research projects, of which full-time and part-time.
- Number of women and number of men in the relevant pay scale branch and the median income of fully employed women and men in the relevant pay scale branch, taking into account age and, where applicable, credited time of previous service (if less than 6 persons in a pay scale branch, grouping with the most appropriate pay scale branch).

5. Evaluation and continuous learning and implementation process

In addition to analysing the results of the equality report, measures for the following period will be developed and implemented together with the WIFO management and possibly other bodies such as the Works Council. In this way, focal points are to be defined for a certain period.

6. Entry into force and validity

The Equal Opportunities Plan applies to all scientific and non-scientific staff, regardless of whether they are employed by WIFO or have another contractual or partnership relationship with WIFO.

The Equality Plan will come into force on 21 February 2022.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Felbermayr', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Univ. Prof. MMag. Gabriel Felbermayr, PhD
Director