



# European Agroforestry Federation

## EURAF's Gender Equality Plan

### Introduction

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of the European Agroforestry Federation (hereinafter as EURAF) is hereby presented as the document showing the commitment of EURAF to ensure equal gender opportunities for all the members of the organisation. The plan was conceived and created on the basis of inputs from the entire EURAF community.

All EURAF activities, without compromising on competence and quality, are founded on the principles of gender equality. EURAF intends to support all members, irrespective of gender (as well as sexual orientation, nationality, age, and other individual characteristics), and believes that its mission to promote agroforestry across Europe will benefit the society the most if the background of the members involved (farmers, researchers, consultants, activists, educators, students, etc.) is as diverse and inclusive as possible and if gender issues are taken into account in the activities being carried out.

The current state of gender equality in research, particularly in the agricultural and forestry sectors, has not reached gender equality, in terms of women's and men's positions and opportunities – this is true in general for Europe, though at different levels in different countries. There exists a great gender imbalance across academic positions. The proportion of women in the decision-making bodies regarding research policy is modest, and considerably more men apply for and receive research grants than women. In the agricultural sector, there are significant gaps between women and men. Women farmholders have significantly smaller farms than men farmholders. Moreover, the share of female farmholders is particularly high on farms with no clear specialisation in livestock rearing or crop production. Indeed, 71% of EU farms with livestock are run by male farmholders, and only 27% by female farmholders.

In order to improve the indicators of gender equality, it is imperative to tackle these issues systematically. The aim of EURAF is to pay more attention to and promote gender equality in all its activities. The responsibility of promoting gender equality is shared by the EURAF Executive Committee (EC) and the EURAF Executive Board.

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Objectives to support gender equality and specific strategies to achieve them are set up by the EURAF Executive Board and approved by the Executive Committee within a proper implementation action plan on gender equality which biannually reported at EURAF General Assembly.

EURAF GEP is implemented through feedback from interviews with members and member organisations, data analysis of EURAF activities and discussions between the EURAF EC and EURAF Board members.

## Diagnosis

EURAF community mainly consists of researchers and agroforestry practitioners across Europe. According to the 2021 membership database, **34% of EURAF members are women, 66% are male**. The EC composition - the organisation's decision-making body formed of national delegates - is more balanced showing 49% of women and 51% men members, while the Executive Board composition is 50% of women and 50% men members.

As regards the president position, for the second time since the Federation was established in 2012, a woman has been elected in May 2022 as EURAF President (EURAF has had two men and two women as presidents).

## Objectives

On the basis of such data, the objectives and underlying principles of the GEP, as well as the measures proposed and adopted by EURAF in order to meet the set objectives, have been listed.

1. Raising gender awareness among members and member organizations, and strengthen the commitment of gender equality within the Executive Committee and the Executive Board.
2. Adhering to the principles of equal treatment.
3. Improving gender balance among the members (also by encouraging Country Delegates to improve gender balance in member organisations of their countries) , keep gender balance within the EC and the Board, and pursue gender balance in committees assigned for specific activities in the future.
4. Improving gender balance among the applicants and recipients of research grants, awards, and funding.
5. Implementing a gender-sensitive communication strategy.

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## **1. Raising gender awareness among members and member organisations, and strengthen the commitment of gender equality within the Executive Committee and the Executive Board**

In order to make fair and inclusive decisions, gender awareness, incl. awareness of possible problems caused by unconscious bias, is of utmost importance for the EURAF EC and Board, and for member organisations' management. Increased awareness helps to prevent discrimination and ensures making fairer decisions. Gender awareness also contributes to achieving all of the other objectives of EURAF GEP. To ensure a better understanding of gender equality among members, EURAF member organisations and country delegates will need to:

- improve their competences regarding gender equality, incl. by participating in training courses;
- integrate gender aspects into the training courses, if applicable;
- assemble existing and compile new need-based information materials on gender equality, incl. materials on the importance of considering unconscious bias and on integrating the gender dimension in academic research and in the agroforestry sector;
- share their experiences, good practices and developments regarding gender equality within EURAF, incl. in in-house seminars, workshops, etc.;

## **2. Adhering to the principles of equal treatment**

EURAF supports equal treatment of all people, refraining from any form of discrimination based on gender (also from indirect discrimination which occurs when seemingly neutral rules give an advantage to some farmers/researchers or target groups).

Among other things, we pay particular attention to the impact that being on parental leave has on one's possibilities within the federation, with special emphasis on research careers. In order to ensure equal treatment, EURAF will:

- examine EURAF's constitution to make sure that it guarantees equal opportunities for everyone;
- take into consideration a justified time of absence from the organizations' activities and research, such as a parental leave or military service, in the preparatory materials relating to making decisions;
- adhere to the principles of equal treatment and proceed only from established criteria when making decisions;

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- collect feedback on the adherence to the principles of equal treatment in the decision-making processes.

### **3. Improving gender balance among the members, keep gender balance within the Executive Committee and the Executive Board, and pursue gender balance in committees assigned for specific activities**

The aim of EURAF is to reach the greatest possible gender balance among members of the decision-making body (Executive Committee), Executive Board and committees (e.g. scientific committee reviewing conference abstracts) as well as among individual members (also by encouraging country delegates to improve gender balance in their country member organisations), without compromising the competence of the experts. Among the members of committees, EURAF considers 40% as the minimum representation threshold to reach a good gender balance. When convening field-specific panels and activities (eg. lobbying), the gender proportions of various research fields and activities is a further factor to be taken into account: in case of research fields and activities dominated by one gender, the underrepresented gender has to be represented, if at all possible, in the decision-making body at least in the same proportion as it is in the general population of that particular research field and activity. EURAF will keep such principles in mind when convening any EURAF panels and committees.

An integral part of evaluating the applications and competition entries, which are mediated, or for which funds are distributed by EURAF, is played by the Executive Committee and reviewers. Although members of the Executive Committee consist of delegates of members' organisations from different countries, and it qualified reviewers might be difficult to find regardless of gender, EURAF is working to improve the gender balance of its membership. In order to achieve a stronger gender balance among the members of the decision-making body, the Executive Board, and evaluation committees as well as among any other committee to be assigned for specific purposes in the future, EURAF will:

- consciously pay more attention to gender when searching for the experts;
- give priority to a candidate of the underrepresented gender if the candidates are of equal standing;
- ask EURAF member affiliated organisations responsible for nominating the candidates and delegates to also nominate candidates of the underrepresented gender;
- ask the experts suggesting the reviewers and committee members to also recommend persons of the underrepresented gender and, if necessary, draw their attention to the great gender imbalance among delegates, committee members and reviewers.

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- compile statistical overviews and guidelines highlighting the aspects of gender in the process of searching for the members of country delegates, specific committee members, Board members and reviewers in order to acknowledge the issue more widely.

## **4. Improving gender balance among the applicants and recipients of research grants, awards, and funding**

The aim of EURAF is to improve gender balance among the applicants and recipients of research grants, funding and awards in research projects that EURAF makes part of. In order to achieve a stronger gender balance among the applicants and recipients of research grants, funding, and awards, EURAF will:

- present the information regarding research funding calls and contests in an inclusive and gender-neutral manner;
- monitor the gender distribution among the participants of projects receiving grants, awards, and funding;
- present on EURAF website gender-disaggregated data of the projects participants receiving research grants, awards, funding;
- monitor the success rates of men and women participants;
- draw the attention of the decision-makers to possible unconscious bias and to the importance of considering the aspects of gender;
- emphasise the issue of gender imbalance among the participants of projects receiving research grants, awards, and funding during information days and other meetings with the target groups and their representatives in order to raise the awareness of gender imbalance among potential applicants and member organizations.

## **5. Implementing a gender-sensitive communication strategy**

One of the key roles of EURAF is communicating with the society at large, incl. sharing information with farmers, researchers and even policy and decision makers, as well as when promoting agroforestry among children and grown-ups. Gender equality will also be promoted through communication activities. EURAF will keep gender awareness in all its channels of communication and will:

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- monitor the use of language and refrain from reproducing gender stereotypes;
- monitor the gender representation illustrative materials;
- proceed from the principles of gender diversity when writing press releases, news, profile articles, etc.;
- try to ensure gender balance among the speakers at public events, if at all possible. As it is the case with decision-making bodies, to reach a good gender balance, EURAF considers 40% as the minimum threshold for the underrepresented gender;
- emphasise the need to underline the aspects of gender in various materials and statistics: the data, wherever possible, will be disaggregated by gender;
- regularly publish on EURAF website the core indicators of gender equality in different EURAF activities.

## GEP Implementation activities

Proceeding from the objectives and activities above indicated EURAF is committed to improving its GEP for the time period 2022-2024, by specifically:

- ☐ declaring to promote and solicit gender equality in its constitution and urging national associated organisations to do it as well in their constitutions;
- ☐ establishing a committee monitoring EURAF gender issues in the period indicated;
- ☐ reporting gender rates when analysing EURAF's members according to category: researchers, farmers, technicians, students etc.;
- ☐ reporting gender rates on delegates' attendance to EURAF EC monthly meetings;
- ☐ reporting gender rates when analysing EURAF's newsletter subscribers;
- ☐ reporting gender rates when analysing data on specific agroforestry topics;
- ☐ highlighting gender equality issues in organising events, in promoting research on gender and agroforestry, in collaborating with association/organisation working on gender equality, in recruiting personnel;
- ☐ reporting gender rates regarding projects referents;
- ☐ reporting gender rates concerning publications, according to typology, scientific article, technical report;
- ☐ publishing the reports on the EURAF website.

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