

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

2022-2024

March 2022

“To be truly transformative, gender equality policies and programmes need to eliminate gender stereotypes through education, change social norms, promote positive role models of women scientists and build awareness at the highest levels of decision-making. We need to ensure that women and girls are not only participating in STEM fields, but are empowered to lead and innovate, and that they are supported by workplace policies and organizational cultures that ensure their safety, consider their needs as parents, and incentivize them to advance and thrive in these careers.”¹

Audrey Azoulay & Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka (2021)

¹ <https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/womenandgirlinscienceday>

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Introduction

Achieving gender equality in the various areas of society is an inherent and common purpose of the various political, economic, and social institutions that make up civil society. Its pursuit is essential to the economic, human, and sustainable development of the country.

Research and technological development institutions have an added responsibility in creating measures that promote gender equality in the areas of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), ensuring the creation of technologies that understand diversity and promote equality. Directing strategies for integration and equality at work, ensuring the same duties, rights and opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, ideology or social positioning, will contribute to the creation of a fairer technological world. This is the main objective of this plan for gender equality, which will be implemented with the support of the Department of Human Resources, the Communication Office, the Administration Board and all areas of INOV, under the responsibility of the Head of Equality.

The first section of the document - "Gender equality in INOV" - summarizes the main findings of the previous data collection and analysis disaggregated by gender, and of the interviews with the INOV employees, which sought to explore possible unconscious gender biases that may or may not be revealed in the processes of hiring, opportunities, career progression and interpersonal relations.

This is followed by the "Plan for Gender Equality", where key actions to promote gender equality within the institution are identified. These activities have been structured to ensure discussion, targeting the following areas:

- work-life balance and organizational culture;
- gender balance in leadership and decision making;
- gender equality in recruitment and career progression;
- gender mainstreaming in research content;
- measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

The last section describes the methods of monitoring and evaluation of the activities carried out, ending the document with a brief conclusion.

Gender Equality at INOV

To address the issue of gender equality in INOV, gender disaggregated data on people and their activity and position in the organization was collected, according to the directives of the European Commission, from 2020 to 2022. Graph 1 depicts the number of employees by gender in office, as well as their level of education, in 2022.

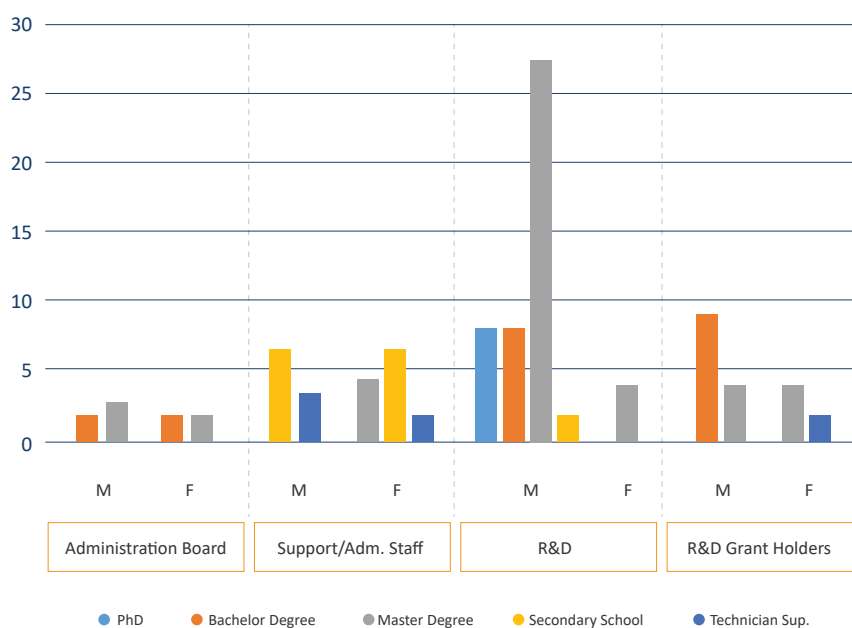


Figure 1. Number of employees by gender and their level of education, in 2022, at INOV.

Field research was conducted to ascertain the existence of conscious and unconscious gender biases, to study the day-to-day organisational culture and to collect evidence on inclusion, well-being and productivity, including gender-based violence or sexual harassment. The following conclusions can be drawn from the field research:

- A culture of gender discrimination is not detected in INOV;
- There are no records of gender-based violence or sexual harassment at INOV. The procedures and measures to be taken in the situation where there may be some kind of sexual harassment or gender violence are described in the INOV code of ethics and conduct;
- The INOV culture of flexibility and community is seen as an added value in the task of balancing professional and personal/family life, as well as in productivity and well-being at work;
- Great value is given to networking for inclusion, productivity and evolution in the various areas of INOV;
- Equal value is given to the incentive for career progression, namely through training and updating in the areas;
- INOV employees intend to progress in their career within INOV.

Action Axes for the Gender Equality Plan

The data collected and analysed allow pointing out directions to be followed to promote gender equality in INOV. Based on the analysis carried out, two axes of action (Recruitment and Retention) were outlined, with defined objectives and respective measures to be implemented over the next three years (2022-2025). The axes defined support the path of each person from recruitment (a priori), through the mechanisms of inclusion and career progression, culminating in retention (a posteriori). It should be noted that these axes are interdependent and must be consolidated in a holistic approach.

Gender Equality Commission

The Gender Equality Commission (GEC) is a consultative, multidisciplinary and independent body, whose activity is governed within the scope of this document - Plan for Gender Equality - and whose mission is to ensure the full implementation of the proposed measures, their monitoring and evaluation. The activities of GEC are:

- Ensure the full realization of the proposed measures;
- Monitor the implementation of the measures through data collection, interviews and informal conversations with people working in INOV, ensuring their participation in the evaluation of the plan
- Evaluate the impact of the implementation;
- Attend to new INOV gender equality issues that may arise.

The GEC shall meet annually in order to define its form of action and activities under the plan for Gender Equality and propose them to the Administration Board. The Commission is made up of a diverse body of agents, with representatives from the most important areas for the development and implementation of the plan:

- Ana Abel: Head of the Human Resources Department
- Catarina Valente: Responsible for the Plan for Gender Equality and Researcher of Gender Issues
- António Gomes Leal: Executive Board Member

The Commission has as basic values transparency and commitment, being governed within the framework of conduct and ethics of INOV.

Recruitment

One of the main challenges identified in the analysis of gender equality in INOV is associated with the recruitment process. INOV presents a low female application rate in the areas of technology, development and research, a situation that mirrors the low rate of female ICT graduates in Portugal and in Europe. This dimension attends to the need to design measures to achieve a higher rate of female applications in the areas of research and technological development.

Objective:

Ensure gender parity in selection procedures for candidates with equivalent competence and experience.

Measures:

- Ensure that job advertisements are published on platforms that reach a high number of people and that they are published, with special attention, on platforms targeting women in technology;
- Ensure, through trainings, that job advertisements present inclusive and non-discriminatory language and ensure that hiring is done by the skills the person presents and not by their gender, ethnicity or class;
- Recording indicators on the gender, skills and experience of all candidates in recruitment processes;
- Ensure that, during the recruitment interview, inclusive and non-discriminatory language is used, ensuring that selection - and consequent hiring - is done on the basis of competence and not by their gender, ethnicity or social stratum.

Retention

a) Inclusion and productivity

Inclusion is among the main factors for productivity, so this dimension is integrated here to ensure the continuity of the work that has been developed in that direction. Regarding productivity, a study conducted in 2020 on gender equality in scientific research reveals that the level of productivity among male and female researchers is the same, with women presenting higher levels of disengagement throughout their career, regardless of the professional level they are at. In order to avoid this trend, attention should be paid not only to the processes of initiation of careers with younger female researchers, but also to the follow-up carried out throughout the career of each researcher, taking into account their updating and training needs, and conciliation between personal/family and professional life. The interviews conducted for this plan reveal the importance of networking for both inclusion and increased productivity because they promote sociability, the exchange of knowledge and experience, the creation of partnerships or joint projects and, ultimately, contribute to professional development.

Objective:

- Ensure that INOV employees feel that there is space and time for their capacities to be analysed, enhanced and realised to the fullest, taking into account their professional and personal ambitions;
- Continue to ensure an inclusive non-discriminatory environment in all areas of INOV.

Measures:

- Use inclusive language - IEGE provides a toolkit² on how to use gender sensitive language.
- Implement a sensitisation and awareness raising campaign on conscious and unconscious types of gender discrimination, aiming at deconstructing possible associated gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes (conscious or unconscious) can lead to gender preferences, discrimination, discredit and consequent lack of female participation in decision-making processes or even technological implementation;
- Promote trainings/ participation in talks/ workshops on gender equality and gender issues;
- Continue to promote, on a regular basis, events whose main objective is the creation of contact networks and spaces where researchers and technicians can share experiences, exchange knowledge and foster multidisciplinary work.

b) Work-life balance

Through semi-structured interviews with INOV employees it was possible to understand that one of the main barriers to the productivity of women in scientific research and technological areas is directly related to concerns associated with family. Ensuring flexibility in the various areas to fully reconcile professional life with family and personal life is imperative for the productivity of all people working in INOV. The building of human labour relations is also a factor pointed out for inclusion at work, a dimension already existing in INOV. Because INOV already has a culture that favours interpersonal relationships and flexible working hours in order to facilitate the conciliation between personal/family life and professional life, this dimension is addressed here more as a reinforcement exercise in positioning, than as a call for change. An effort will, however, be made to ascertain how INOV can work on this dimension in greater detail.

² https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/20193925_mh0119609enn_pdf.pdf

Objective:

- Ensure that the policies to support reconciliation between family/personal life and professional life respond to the needs pointed out by the people working at INOV.

Measures:

- Analyse the perception of the employees regarding their ability to reconcile professional life and family/personal life, seeking to point out ways for INOV to improve its performance where necessary.
- Development of awareness campaigns/ participation in conferences or conversations to deconstruct stereotypes associated to gender roles or/and support mechanisms to conciliate professional and family life.

c) Career progression and gender balance in leadership and decision making

The gender equality dimension in career progression is leveraged by the implementation of the previous dimensions and by the opportunities to implement the person's cognitive and intellectual abilities, combined with a space that promotes participation, the development of ideas and career monitoring.

Through the interviews carried out it was possible to conclude that special importance is given both to contact networks and to updating and training people in their areas of knowledge. Investing in people's training is an asset for the institution because, in addition to bringing value and internal knowledge, it accelerates productivity and the desire for progression within the institution. Another factor that contributes to these situations is the existence of a space (not necessarily physical) where people feel they can share their ideas and ambitions, with a view to progress and the creation of synergies for the implementation of those ideas. Whenever training needs are identified, they are taken into account within each area and an internal evaluation and approval procedure is carried out.

Objective:

- Ensure people's skills development and ensure their visibility within the organisation.
- Achieve greater gender parity in decision-making and research and development positions.

Measures:

- Raise awareness among the directors of the various technological areas of the importance of creating space (not necessarily physical) for the sharing of ideas, ensuring that they are heard and considered.
- Promote trainings/ participation in talks/ workshops on gender equality and gender issues for decision makers and team leaders;

d) Gender dimension in research

This axis is targets at a more equitable future, where the achievement of gender equality in the various domains of society is possible through the integration of the gender dimension in the contents and objectives of scientific research. The gender dimension will be present, whenever pertinent, in research and technological development.

Objective:

- Integrate the gender dimension, where relevant, in research contents by 2024.

Measures:

- In a joint action with the INOV Scientific Council, create and publicly promote directives that point to the integration of the gender dimension in research and development contents.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the measures proposed in the plan, Table 1 considers a set of progress indicators, which allow to follow the progress of the measures and act according to the difficulties encountered. The final evaluation will be done through the collection and analysis of gender disaggregated data used for the design of this plan, by comparison and through informal interviews with the people working in INOV, in order to find out if the objectives were achieved or not. This evaluation will allow the construction of a second edition of the plan for gender equality, with new goals to be achieved and changes in strategy where necessary.

Objectives	Progress Indicators
<p>Ensure gender parity in selection procedures for candidates with equivalent competence and experience.</p>	<p>To have, by the end of 2023, advertisements published in strategic media, with inclusive and non-discriminatory language.</p>
	<p>Are there, by 2023, more women hired in the development and support areas?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>Ensure that INOV employees feel that there is space and time for their capacities to be analysed, enhanced and realised to the fullest, taking into account their professional and personal ambitions;</p> <p>Continue to ensure an inclusive non-discriminatory environment in all areas of INOV.</p>	<p>Is inclusive and non-discriminatory language used in INOV documents and common spaces?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>
	<p>Was the awareness campaign implemented in 2023?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>
	<p>Have trainings/ participation in talks/ etc. taken place?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>
	<p>How many events were organised to promote networking?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>Ensure that the policies to support reconciliation between family/personal life and professional life respond to the needs pointed out by the people working at INOV.</p>	<p>Have awareness-raising campaigns/ participation in conferences or talks been held to deconstruct stereotypes associated with gender roles or/and support mechanisms for reconciling work and family life?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>Ensure people's skills development and ensure their visibility within the organisation. Achieve greater gender parity in decision-making and research and development positions.</p>	<p>Were there events on gender equality and gender issues for decision-makers and team leaders?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>Integrate the gender dimension, where relevant, in research contents by 2024.</p>	<p>Number of scientific publications with the gender dimension.</p>

Conclusion

The present document contains the proposed GEP to be implemented at INOV, built through empirical research based on the collection and analysis of quantitative data (statistical data disaggregated by gender) and qualitative data (through semi-structured and informal interviews with INOV employees). The analysis of these data allowed establishing a set of measures appropriate to the challenges faced by INOV regarding gender equality issues.

The plan understands and values the intersectionality inherent to gender issues, seen as a complex set of social dynamics where historically specific contexts intersect axes of economic, political, cultural and psychological differentiation. The present plan understands that in addition to gender issues, ethnic, religious, age and social status dimensions are also associated, which are more accentuated among women in access to training and employment opportunities (UNDP, 2019).

The plan sought to establish measures that address the interdependence of the various dimensions of work, from recruitment - seeking to promote inclusive communication practices - to talent retention - promoting work-life balance; gender balance in leadership and decision-making; mechanisms that promote gender equality in career progression.

INOV values the integration of the gender dimension in the contents of technological research for a more equitable future. This plan also provides for gender mainstreaming in the contents and objectives of scientific research.