

# TEAGASC GENDER EQUALITY PLAN



GENDER EQUALITY  
IS NOT ONLY A  
FUNDAMENTAL  
HUMAN RIGHT  
BUT A NECESSARY  
FOUNDATION  
FOR A PEACEFUL,  
PROSPEROUS AND  
SUSTAINABLE WORLD.



# FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to present Teagasc's first **Gender Equality Plan (GEP)**. This three year plan showcases our ambitions for achieving gender equality across the organisation.

Currently 44% of Teagasc staff are women. However, women are significantly over-represented in lower grades and significantly under represented in senior positions. Our long and deep history in the agriculture and food industry has resulted in Teagasc having a male-oriented gender culture. This has to change. While we have made some progress in recent years, we know we have more to do.

This GEP is a major milestone in Teagasc's journey to achieving gender equality. If we are to be leaders in excellence in advisory, education and research, it is critical that we utilise the skills and capabilities of all our staff. As part of the development of this plan, we created a new set of gender values, established a clear set of strategic objectives and underpinned these objectives with the detailed actions required to support the organisation as we deliver on our objectives.

It is the responsibility of every staff member in Teagasc to ensure the GEP is embedded across the organisation. We can only achieve a gender balanced culture by focusing on recruiting, retaining, and helping female staff to advance. We must continue to challenge the beliefs and attitudes that are undermining progress. We must expand our focus on workplace flexibility and be more innovative and creative in how we overcome the barriers that women and gender diverse individuals face. We must challenge ourselves to call out unconscious bias and demand more dialogue and action on achieving gender equality across the entire organisation.

I am proud to lead an organisation that is committed to advancing a gender equality culture into the future. I hope you will join me in making this change happen.

**Professor Frank O'Mara**  
Director of Teagasc  
Chairperson GenderSMART Consortium



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## OUR VISION:

For Teagasc to be a globally recognised leader in developing innovative **science-based** solutions for the **sustainable transformation** of our land resources into products and services for the **benefit of society**.



To achieve our vision we must utilise the skills and capabilities of all our staff.



PROF. FRANK O'MARA



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## ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY

### Our Gender Values

#### Equal Opportunities

Teagasc will ensure that everyone in Teagasc will have equal opportunities to achieve their potential.

#### No Barriers

Teagasc will ensure there are no barriers to achieving gender equality within the organisation.

#### Active Inclusion

Teagasc will actively ensure that all voices in the organisation are heard and that staff are empowered to share their views and ideas.



Teagasc is committed to global agendas, particularly the SDGs. From our perspective, the delivery of this gender equality plan is an essential strategic component in delivering on the SDG number 5.

# CHAMPIONING AN INCLUSIVE AND GENDER DIVERSE CULTURE

## Our approach

Increasing gender diversity is integral to our long-term vision. We recognise that being able to attract, develop and retain top female talent is crucial, and that organisations with gender diverse management teams perform better. We believe that diversity in our workforce makes Teagasc a stronger organisation. To build and maintain that diversity, we need a culture that makes everyone feel included and supported, and provides equality of opportunity for talent at all levels to grow.

As part of Teagasc's People Strategy we are committed to ensuring that our staff are "empowered to make the greatest possible contribution to the organisation." While the onset of

the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed our efforts in making gender equality a priority for the organisation, the development of this GEP ensures we are now well positioned to build on the gains already made throughout the organisation with regard to creating a more inclusive and diverse working environment here at Teagasc. Evidence from numerous studies over the last thirty years now supports the argument that institutions that are more gender equal have increased profitability, higher returns, better quality research, as well as more innovation and growth. Teagasc is a world leader in its field, widely recognised as an institution of excellence and impact. It is therefore incumbent on us to be strategic and proactive in championing gender equality.

## Development of our gender values and objectives

To ensure that all voices were heard and reflected, we held internal workshops and used a participatory learning and action approach to brainstorm ideas on the meaning of gender equality for Teagasc. A gender equality audit was also carried out. The ideas were clustered and a number of categories emerged. The participants discussed the categories in the context of potential values for Teagasc and described potential behavioural statements for each of the values. Teagasc's gender equality values emerged as: Equal opportunities, No barriers and Active Inclusion.

## Funding

This GEP was developed as part of GenderSMART, a €2.9m EU Horizon 2020 funded project which started on 1st January 2019. The project aims to achieve gender equality in research performing and research funding organisations operating in the agriculture and life science research fields.

## Governance

A GenderSMART Project team and a GenderSMART Taskforce were established to oversee the development and implementation of the GEP. The project team will monitor and report on the progress of implementation to the GenderSMART Taskforce.

# OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

We have defined four strategic objectives which provide clarity and support on how we deliver the GEP.

## 1.

### CREATING A GENDER DIVERSE CULTURE

We believe that organisations can be powerful platforms for social change and that it is our responsibility to further gender equality. Creating a culture of equality isn't just the right thing to do; it's also the smart thing. It empowers us to innovate, build deeper connections with our stakeholders and ultimately become a better organisation.

## 2.

### RESHAPING DECISION-MAKING AND GOVERNANCE

Governance is key to delivering gender equality results. Meaningful changes on the ground require a coordinated, competent and powerful whole-of-organisation commitment, and clear and effective mechanisms in place within and across Teagasc to be able to translate policies, programmes, services and budgets into concrete benefits for men and women.

## 3.

### DEVELOPING EQUAL CAREER SUPPORT MEASURES

Achieving gender balance requires meaningful organisational change that addresses and acknowledges hidden biases. Teagasc is committed to overcoming the constraints that act as barriers to the promotion of women such as unconscious bias, biased recruitment and biased promotion processes. We will continue to create support mechanisms to ensure all women in the organisation reach their full potential.

## 4.

### INTEGRATING GENDER IN RESEARCH, TEACHING AND FUNDING

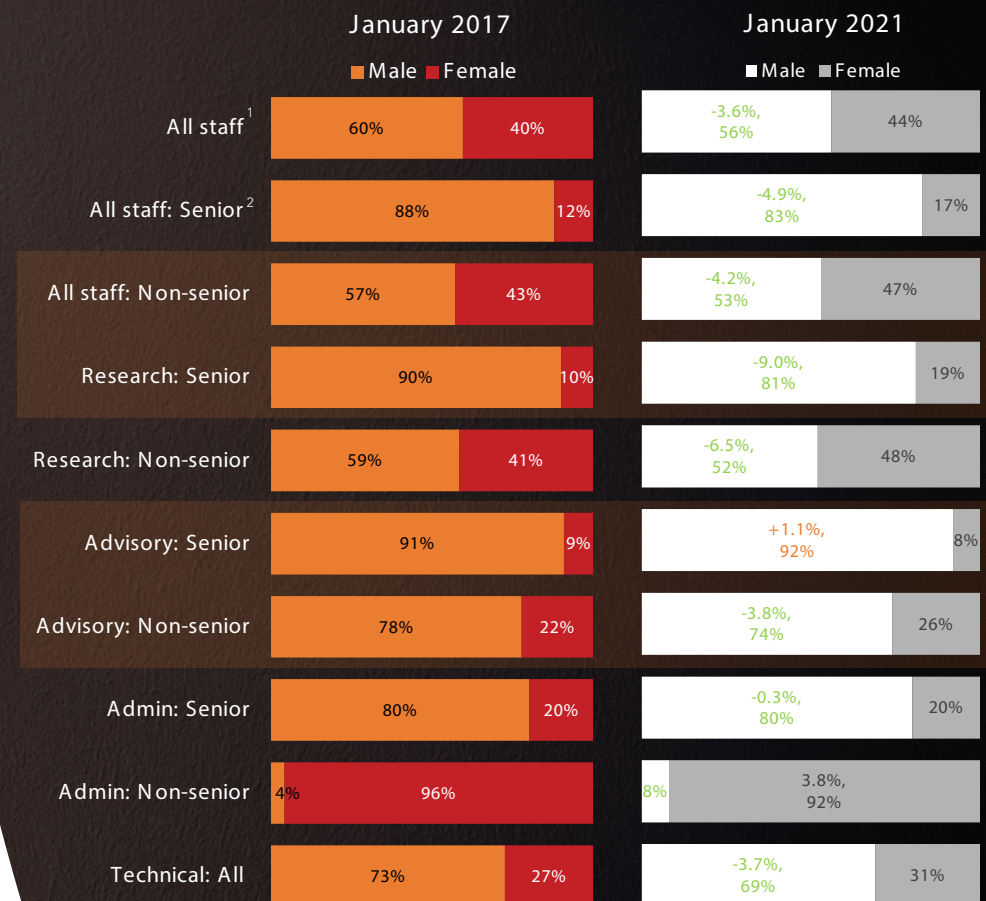
We are committed to the equitable and fair treatment of both genders in assessing applications for funding, and also in ensuring that the design and conduct of research considers gender influences and issues. Our renewed focus on integrating gender in research, teaching and funding will be reflected in equality of opportunities and will ultimately maximise the quantity and the quality of our research.

# GENDER IN TEAGASC

## WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Over the last few years, we have made some encouraging progress to increase the number of women working in Teagasc but the rate of change is still slower than we would like. Over the last three years the number of women entering Teagasc has increased with women now accounting for almost half (44%) of all Teagasc staff. However, we know we must remain vigilant to ensure there is no bias in our hiring decisions as well as to provide targeted opportunities for our female colleagues to develop their careers.

At the lower levels, there is almost gender balance but at the most senior level there are no females. There are currently no female level 1 or 2 senior managers, with women also encompassing only 15% of the heads of department. However, more optimistically, there is an increased consciousness of the many male symbols that exist at Teagasc and attempts are being made to address this.



<sup>1</sup> Domestic staff have not been reported in the numbers

<sup>2</sup> The Technical category includes some farm staff who are at Technician Grade 1

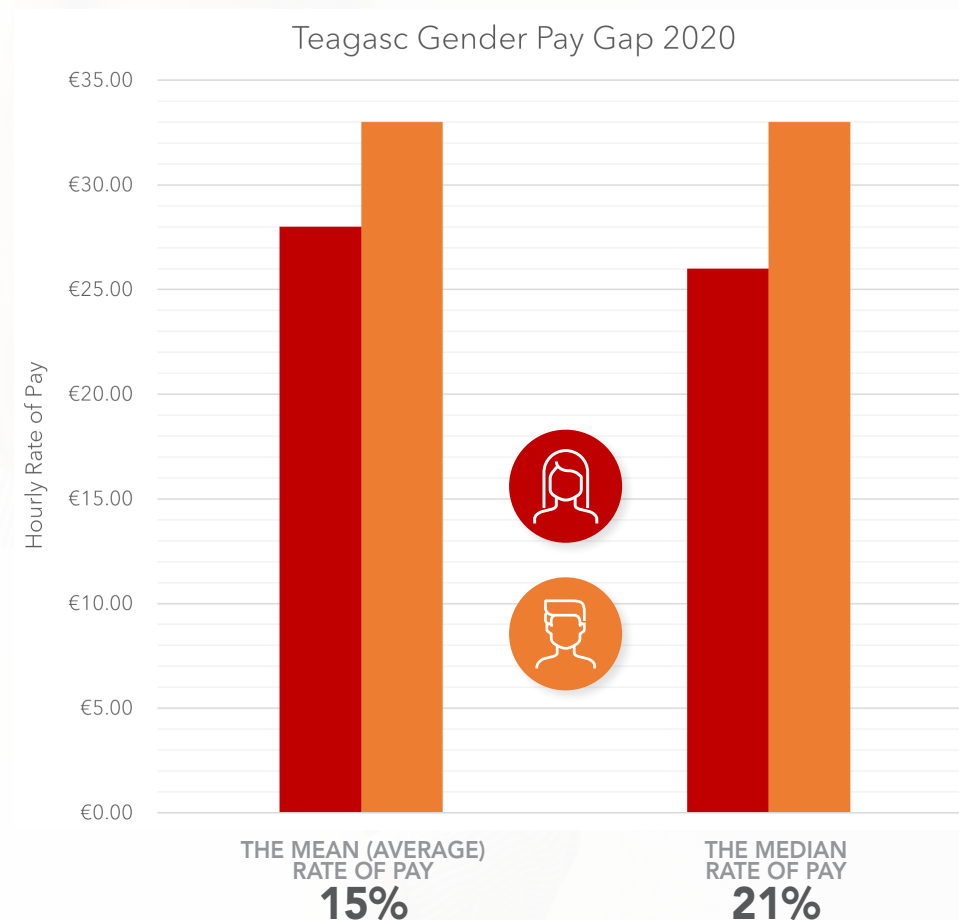
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# MEASURING THE GENDER PAY GAP

To encourage companies across all industries to do more to progress women in the workplace, the Irish government introduced gender pay gap reporting as a legal requirement in Ireland in July 2021. It's important to note that the Gender pay gap is the difference between male and female employees average annualised base pay. Gender pay gap is not the same as unequal pay. Paying an individual less than a colleague for the same job (unequal pay), purely on account of their gender, is prohibited under equality legislation. The Teagasc gender pay gap provides information on the mean and median rate of pay for its employees. The figures are based on permanent, full-time employees and

include the mean (average) hourly rate of pay for employees, as well as the median hourly rate. The median pay gap is a more representative measure of the pay gap because it is not affected by outliers (a small group of individuals in extremely high or extremely low salaries). The Gender Pay Profile as at 1 January 2020 is 15% in favour of male employees. The median hourly rate is 21% in favour of male employees. We recognise that we do have a gap and we must continue to work on closing it. To help us close this gap we are committed to delivering on existing and new initiatives to ensure more women are represented in senior positions throughout the organisation.



## OBJECTIVE

# 1.

### Our commitment to building an inclusive gender equality culture

Teagasc aims to create a gender equality culture with a shared set of values, beliefs and norms that allow for everyone, regardless of gender, to flourish and achieve their full potential. Equality drives innovation and growth. Evidence shows an innovation mind-set (a willingness and ability to create) is six times higher in the most-equal cultures than in the least-equal ones. While hiring the best people is important, people also need the right culture if they are to flourish. Creating a gender equality culture is the first step in creating a fair and inclusive workplace. When an organisation's culture feels fair and inclusive, women and other minority groups are happier and more likely to thrive.

## DELIVERING ON OUR GENDER EQUALITY COMMITMENTS



### Key measureable actions

The proposed actions to contribute to creating a gender equality culture within Teagasc are:

- The establishment of a Gender Equality taskforce to oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of the GEP.
- Develop and communicate the gender values across the organisation and integrate our core gender values into our organisation communications.
- Identify champions of change and provide them with the supports and resources to promote and encourage gender and diversity across the organisation.
- Communicate progress with GEP implementation annually to contribute towards removing perceived barriers to gender equality.
- Encourage feedback and engagement with gender equality activities.
- Include gender statistics in the Teagasc Level 1 Business Plan.
- Prepare an annual report for Teagasc senior management and the Authority on Teagasc's gender pay gap and other pertaining statistics and trends.
- Develop a management information system to collate, analyse and report on relevant gender related data.
- Develop gender-sensitive communication guidelines for Teagasc, then develop and roll-out training on gender-sensitive communication.
- Develop a code of conduct to address sexism and inappropriate behaviour in the work environment.
- Conduct an annual audit of new publications to monitor adherence to gender-sensitive communication guidelines.
- Develop a webpage to highlight and promote GEP activities and other relevant gender equality resources.
- Develop a quarterly newsletter for staff to raise awareness of gender equality actions and issues and to profile female staff.
- Encourage the establishment of gender equality networks/communities of practice in the main centres/locations in Teagasc and provide appropriate supports.
- Develop an online training module and associated materials on unconscious bias and roll-out across the organisation.

## OBJECTIVE 2.

### Re-shaping Decision-making and Governance

Although female representation in decision-making has increased dramatically, women are still underrepresented, especially within the fields of agriculture and life sciences. Having gender balance in decision-making can increase creativity and innovation, reduce conflict, improve the process of decision-making, and may better represent the organisation's various stakeholders.

## DELIVERING ON OUR GENDER EQUALITY COMMITMENTS



### Key measureable actions

**As part of our plan to become a more gender-inclusive organisation and become more aligned with our core Gender Equality values, Teagasc will implement the following actions:**

- Organise a 'women in leadership' seminar for Teagasc senior management and other key stakeholders to consider positive actions to progress gender equality.
- In consultation with senior management, identify positive actions to implement in Teagasc to progress gender equality.
- Develop a proposal to introduce positive actions to increase the representation of women in senior management and decision-making positions.
- Identify the barriers and constraints that affect women applying for senior positions.
- Profile and create awareness of the key aspects of senior roles in Teagasc to encourage applications from females in the future.
- Identify and promote female role models within the organisation at key internal events.
- Develop and rollout guidelines for ensuring gender balance, inclusion and participation on committees, working groups and project teams.
- Develop and rollout guidelines to ensure gender inclusion and participation in conferences, events and meetings e.g. equal balance of male and female speakers etc.

## OBJECTIVE 3.

### Developing equal career support measures

Developing equal support measures means acknowledging and addressing issues such as unconscious bias, biased recruitment and biased promotion processes. To harness the full potential of the workforce and continue to advance research and innovation, Teagasc must build structures that support everyone at all stages of their career.

## DELIVERING ON OUR GENDER EQUALITY COMMITMENTS



### Key measureable actions

To address the issues identified and continue the positive culture of change at Teagasc, the actions to develop equal career support measures are:

- Review the processes and procedures for flexible working and prepare a proposal for the senior management group to implement flexible working arrangements.
- Promote a family friendly culture across the organisation.
- Review the internal and external recruitment processes to ensure all barriers and biases are removed.
- Develop a policy to create opportunities to move or change roles within the organisation.
- Create awareness of the senior roles within the organisation to encourage upward movement
- Provide supports to encourage female staff to apply for roles within Teagasc.
- Review the criteria, processes and procedures for promotion in Teagasc to ensure there are no biases.
- Critically review metrics for deciding promotions (data on promotion decisions and outcomes needs to be reviewed to remove biases).
- Develop guidelines and supports for managers and staff availing of and returning from an absence from work.
- Develop guidelines for managers and staff for females going on and returning from maternity leave.
- Develop a proposal to identify and create career development opportunities for staff.
- Develop a checklist or guidelines for managers to encourage meaningful career development discussions with staff.
- Encourage managers to sponsor female staff and support them in developing a career development plan.
- Develop and introduce mentoring and sponsorship programmes for female staff.
- Ensure training and educational supports are available to all staff.

## OBJECTIVE 4.

### Integrating gender in research, teaching and funding

Gender in research has two elements: the equal participation of women and men in research, and the integration of gender into research content. Teagasc encourages equal participation of men and women in research while creating the working conditions to enable them to develop fulfilling careers.

Our research must address women's needs as well as men's. Integrating a gender dimension in research will ensure gender differences are considered and addressed while improving research quality and the relevance to society of the knowledge, technologies and innovations produced.

## DELIVERING ON OUR GENDER EQUALITY COMMITMENTS



### Key measureable actions

The proposed actions aim to integrate gender within Teagasc's research, teaching and funding activities:

- Monitor and review all aspects of the internal and external funding calls.
- Ensure gender balance on research project review panels.
- Develop a checklist for integrating gender in research proposals.
- Research and develop a proposal to integrate gender in research, teaching and funding in Teagasc.
- Organise training on integrating gender in research for researchers, post-docs and Walsh Scholars.
- Review all education and training courses provided by Teagasc to ensure gender is integrated in teaching.

“Teagasc will integrate a gender dimension into all stages of the research process, from the initial research idea to the dissemination of results.”

The process of delivering our Gender Equality Plan has commenced and we will continue to build on the strong and strategic framework laid out in this document. The delivery of our objectives and key actions is being monitored by the GenderSMART Taskforce.



**SHOW YOUR COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY  
BY HELPING US TO IMPLEMENT OUR ACTIONS**



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