



Gender Equality Plan



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1. Introduction

Wood K plus is well aware of the importance of **gender mainstreaming and diversity management**. The Center has achieved a high level of gender competence over the past years.

The **Austrian forest-based sector** plays a significant role for Austria's economy. The wood industry provides roughly 28,000 direct jobs and approximately 300,000 persons are estimated to receive income with most of the jobs provided in rural areas of Austria. There are different demands and expectations towards forests and the use of wood. Major research gaps regarding the societal dimension of a forest-based bioeconomy and a need for societal inclusion have been identified. Forestry and wood industry can be regarded as a **rather conservative sector**. Its **share of female employees and workers in Austria is relatively low at 19.8 %**.

With a 54 % share of female employees, Wood K plus is an exception. With 39 % it is also well above average in terms of share of females in management positions, compared to the industry in general with 12.2 %. **This is well grounded in the fact that (gender) equality of opportunity at Wood K plus is quasi institutionalised across the whole company.** All relevant processes, from personnel recruitment over personnel development to installing a gender confidant, were defined in compliance with gender equality requirements and above all with a practical orientation. Measures including e.g. individual working hours models, teleworking, training opportunities and career possibilities after maternity/paternity leave create the necessary preconditions. The implementation is accompanied by training and information events for all of the Center's managers. **It is the managers' duty to live up the corporate culture, which includes equality of opportunity and a gender sensitive language.** Additionally the specific needs of women or men that could be affected by the various research activities are always verified and considered on demand. Regular reports published in the company's paper Wood News additionally raise awareness of this subject.

Besides these activities, we are facing two main challenges:

- Fluctuation of employees due to the high amount of PhD-, master- and baccalaureate-students
- Low number of female in technical studies or technical jobs

As basis for the setting of future short and long-term SMART aims, we did a comprehensive evaluation of the status, which is shown in the next chapter. These aims are corroborated with measureable actions that are frequently evaluated by the management team. The process is described in detail within our quality management system.

This present GEP (gender equality plan) will guide us to keep the high standard and find ways to further enhance the status.

2. Status Quo

The listed bullet points represent the current excellent situation at Wood K plus:

- Implementation of a gender confidant in 2009
- 54% of female employees
- 16 different nationalities within the whole Wood K plus team
- 4 gender experts nominated on the website of the ministry (<https://www.femtech.at/content/expertinnen-suche>)
- QM (handbook, process descriptions, and forms) is written gender-conform
- Many adjusted employment opportunities to arrange with family
- Continuous application of funding scheme FEMTech
- Receipt of the “Österreichischer Staatspreis für Chancengleichheit 2009“
- Receipt of the basic state certificate “work and family” 2023
- And much more ... Girls Day, advanced trainings

3. Objectives of the Wood K plus Gender Equality Plan

Wood K plus has been a pioneer in terms of equal opportunities and gender competence for many years and this successful way has proven itself for employees and partners in the past. With the goals set in the Gender Equality Plan, Wood K plus is **further expanding its role model effect** for other research institutions and companies with regard to diversity, equal opportunities and the advancement of women. **The jointly set goals based on the gender analysis were defined by the management on the basis of the needs of the employees and the organisation.**

Work-life balance and organisational culture	
Objective 1.1.	The family-friendly measures at Wood K plus improve the working conditions for all existing and future employees.
Objective 1.2.	Equal opportunities and the advancement of women are integrated into the management process.

Gender balance in leadership and decision-making	
Objective 2.1.	Wood K plus is an attractive employer for existing and future female researchers.
Objective 2.2.	The proportion of women in management positions of just under 40% will be further increased.
Objective 2.3.	A women's network for Wood K plus researchers has been set up and established.

Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	
Objective 3.1.	When recruiting staff, applicants are treated equally in the selection process regardless of their gender, skin colour, nationality or ethnicity.
Objective 3.2.	Wood K plus motivates girls and women for a career in research through targeted employer branding.

Integration of gender dimension into research and teaching content	
Objective 4.1.	Relevant gender aspects in terms of content and personnel are taken into account in project submissions.

Objective 4.2.	Wood K plus female researchers are made visible as role models for their scientific careers.
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Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment	
Objective 5.1.	Wood K plus employees are not exposed to gender-specific violence or sexual harassment.

4. Dedicated Resources and Expertise

Wood K plus is characterised by its innovative corporate culture and is constantly tackling the challenges of the times, both in terms of technological issues and further development as an organisation and for its employees. With the award of the **State Prize for Equal Opportunities** in 2009, the first taken measures were rewarded more than 10 years ago.

Since 2009, **Wood K plus** has had a **gender confidant**. The gender confidant is the first point of contact for gender issues and acts as an intermediary between employees and managers. If necessary, the gender confidant and her expertise are called in for recruitment interviews. Gender training courses for **all** managers and employees have been held regularly since 2009. The last training series took place at the end of 2022. These workshops were funded within the framework of a FEMTech project. In this FEMTech project **WOOD4ALL** (duration 4/22 to 12/23) resources are created to enable further numerous activities and trainings regarding equal opportunities and women's advancement at **Wood K plus** and to install them sustainably in the Center. Based on these activities and an external audit Wood K plus received the basic state certificate "work and family" in 2023.

In addition to the activities in the FEMTech project, resources are also planned to revise the internal management system with regard to gender-appropriate language and images, as well as to create a process description on the topic of the Gender Equality Plan. This process description provides for a continuous process in which the goals and measures in the Gender Equality Plan are measured and evaluated annually.

5. Process, Data Collection and Monitoring

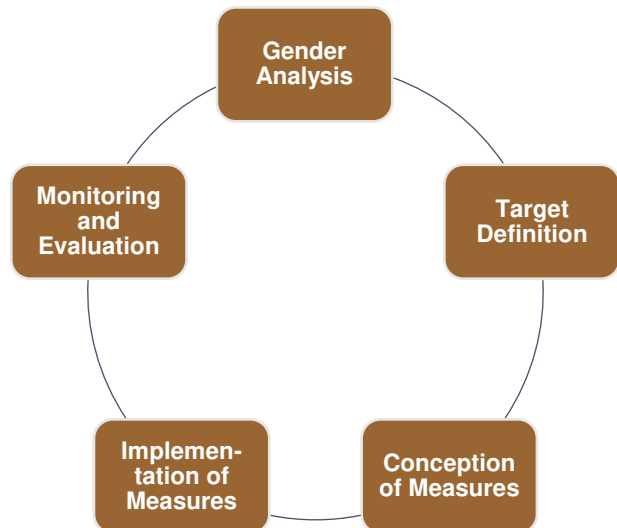
In order to establish a continuous process in **Wood K plus**, the associated process, the key figures and the monitoring procedure are explained in more detail below.

5.1. Process

The process of the Gender Equality Plan begins with a comprehensive **gender analysis**, in which the current status of the existing measures with regard to gender and equal opportunities is ascertained. In the next step, goals are defined and concrete **measures** to achieve them are derived.

Within the framework of the annual gender report, the **implementation** of the measures and the achievement of the objectives are evaluated and assessed on the basis of the defined monitoring indicators (see 5.2 and 5.3.).

The results of the evaluation flow into the new gender analysis and the cycle starts again. This process ensures the sustainable implementation and realisation of the Gender Equality Plan.



5.2. Data Collection

Wood K plus personnel indicators are collected annually for the ongoing monitoring of the measures in the gender equality plan.

Recruiting and Employment

- Number of new hires by nationality, gender and age
- Number of employees by gender in the different functions (researchers, administration, management, technicians)
- Number of trainees by gender
- Fluctuation rate by gender

Work-Life Balance:

- Number and duration of maternity and paternity leave taken
- Number of part-time parental leave for women and men
- Number of home office days per employee by gender
- Part-time rate by gender
- Average age of the employees in general and by gender
- Number of educational leaves/part-time leaves

Career Progression:

- Number of participants in the leadership training course by gender
- Proportion of female and male team and area leaders
- Number of female employees in scientific bodies

Remuneration

- Salary ratio by gender and function

Within the framework of the annual gender report, additional key personnel figures are collected as needed in order to best assess the impact of the measures taken.

5.3. Monitoring

A gender report with the key figures is prepared once a year. The procedure and contents are defined in a process description in the QM system.

The annual Gender Report will be communicated within the organisation. The managers and the gender confidant adjust the measures in the Gender Equality Plan based on the key figures and the subsequent evaluation.

6. Measures of the Wood K plus Gender Equality Plan

In order to achieve the set goals, targeted measures are subsequently derived. As explained in point 5, the goals and measures are evaluated within the framework of the annual gender report. Necessary adjustments are made based on the evaluation.

6.1. Work-life balance and organisational culture

Objectives	Measures	Status	Responsible Persons
Objective 1.1. The family-friendly measures at Wood K plus improve the working conditions for all existing and future employees.	Revision of individual flexible working time models with regard to the needs of employees	ongoing	Management, AM, HR
	Guide for employees and managers on the subject of maternity leave, part-time work and returning to work	in force	Management, AM, HR
	Evaluation of existing home office options with regard to the needs of employees	done	Management, AM, HR
	Evaluation of the existing offers for a better work-life balance by an external expert within the scope of the audit	done	Management, HR
	Receipt of the basic state certificate "work and family"	Received 2023	Management, HR
Objective 1.2. Equal opportunities and the advancement of women are integrated into the management process.	Revision of management system with regard to discrimination and equal opportunities	done	Management, QM
	Gender awareness training for all employees	ongoing	Management, HR
	Preparation of process description Gender Equality Plan	in force	Management, HR, GVP
	Internal and external communication about the measures taken to increase equal opportunities and the advancement of women.	ongoing	Management, HR, PR

6.2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

Objectives	Measures	Status	Responsible Persons
Objective 2.1. Wood K plus is an attractive employer for existing and future female researchers.	Enabling school and student internships on STEM and gender topics	in force	Management, AM, HR
	Annual career talks with content on gender and equal opportunities	in force	Management, AM
Objective 2.2.	Integration of gender and diversity issues in management training programme	ongoing	Management, HR

Objectives	Measures	Status	Responsible Persons
The proportion of women in management positions of just under 40% will be maintained and further increased.	Participation of at least 10 female staff members in management training	done	Management, AM
	Increase the number of female team leaders to 50%	planned until 2026	Management, AM
Objective 2.3. A women's network for Wood K plus researchers has been set up and established.	Organise mentoring workshops with role models from business and science for all female employees.	done	Management, AM, HR
	Motivation of female employees to register in expert databases	planned until 06/2024	Management, AM

6.3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Objectives	Measures	Status	Responsible Persons
Objective 3.1. When recruiting staff, applicants are treated equally in the selection process regardless of their gender, skin colour, nationality or ethnicity.	Ensuring gender-neutral job advertisements	in force	HR
	Involvement of the gender confidant in recruitment interviews	in force	HR, GVP
	Onboarding support through mentor system	in force	Management, AM
	Enhance assistance for international staff with authorities	Planned until 07/25	HR
	Revision of the recruitment process description with regard to discrimination and equal opportunities	in force	Management, AM, HR, QM
	Creation of compliance rules for Wood K plus employees	in force	Management, CB, HR
	Personnel requirement planning taking into account a balanced distribution of gender	in force	Management, AM
Objective 3.2. Wood K plus motivates girls and women for a career in research through targeted employer branding.	Participation in special funding programmes for STEM and gender (FFG Career)	ongoing	Management, HR
	Participation in Girls Day and career fairs	ongoing	Management, HR
	Opportunities for Bachelor's and Master's Thesis	ongoing	Management

6.4. Integration of gender dimension into research and teaching content

Objectives	Measures	Status	Responsible Persons
Objective 4.1. Relevant gender aspects in terms of content and personnel are taken into account in project submissions.	Consideration of gender aspects in project applications, implementation in process description Project management	ongoing	Management, AM
	Project teams with a balanced gender ratio	ongoing	Management, AM
	Publication of gender-related projects on homepage and social media	ongoing	PR, HR
Objective 4.2. Wood K plus female researchers are made visible as role models for their scientific careers.	Making successful female researchers at the Center visible through videos	done	PR, HR
	Participation of female researcher role models as contact persons at career fairs	ongoing	Management, AM, HR


6.5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Objectives	Measures	Status	Responsible Persons
Objective 5.1. Wood K plus employees are not exposed to gender-specific violence or sexual harassment.	Regularly introduce the gender confidant internally as a central point of contact in the Center.	ongoing	HR, PR
	Management training with content on gender and diversity	done /ongoing	Management, HR
	Gender awareness training for all employees	Done 2022 / ongoing	Management, HR

AM: Area Management, CB: Compliance Officer, GVP: Gender Confident, HR: Human Resources, PR: Public Relations, QM: Quality Management

The management hereby confirms the validity of this Wood K plus Gender Equality Plan. In addition to publication on the website, active internal communication about the goals set and measures defined in the Gender Equality Plan will be ensured.

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