

# GENDER EQUALITY PLAN (GEP)

The European Commission (EC) is committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation. As a participating research organization, CLM Onderzoek en Advies B.V (CLM) supports this through commitment towards gender and social equality in the organization. This Gender Equality Plan summarizes the measures, activities and gender policy that CLM has implemented.

## Gender equality: numbers

CLM strives to be a gender balanced institution, where employees have equal access and balanced participation in leadership and decision-making roles.

In 2022 new employees were 2 women and 1 man, in 2023 1 woman and 1 man.

Situation at the moment (Q4 2023), displayed in number of female/number of male employees:

- Foundation (owner of the company shares) board members: 3/2
- Overall: 17/10
- Managing Board: 1/2
- Senior researcher: 5/3
- Medior researcher: 4/2
- Junior researcher: 3/3
- Support service: 4/0

As the current gender distribution (Q4 2023) demonstrates gender is quite in balance throughout the organization, including board members. Exception is the support service which includes four women and no man.

These data are monitored yearly and considered in the recruitment process. Another important point worth mentioning is that the pay gap male-female at CLM is 0%.

## Resource and measures

The following resources and measures are in place to ensure gender equality in recruitment and career progression:

- Gender equality is taken into account when applicants are interviewed for all positions (including managing board and Foundation Board members). This is also the case in the consideration of employees for internal promotion opportunities.

- Attention to gender when identifying training, mentoring and coaching needs of employees.
- Proactive facilitation of visibility of female advisers, researchers and project leaders in communication

A number of measures are in place:

- Both an internal and external confidant councilor is in place so that gender inequality related discomfort and incidents can be safely reported and dealt with. The two internal confidant councilors consist of a female and a male person.
- All employees meet the internal confidant councilor at the start of their employment and are periodically reminded of this measure.
- Internal mentoring and external coaching are offered to employees to deal with specific barriers in confidence, leadership qualities and related competences.
- The internal confidant councilor yearly reports (anonymously) to the Managing Board on the themes brought to his attention by employees.

## **Organizational culture and structure**

CLM is aware that the organizational culture plays a role in establishing a healthy working environment in which both men and women have equal opportunities to build a career and simultaneously have a fulfilling work-life balance. CLM facilitates a potential equal division of career possibilities and domestic chores if people choose so. Currently (Q4 2023) 22 of the 27 employees are working part-time and 100% of employees have arrangements to work at least one day a week from home. By making this flexibility the standard for all employees, it is an integral part of the culture.

Further attention is paid to:

- Flexibility in working hours, option for reduced workweeks and working partly remotely.
- Explicit promotion and discussion on healthy work-life balance in yearly personal evaluation
- Strengthening the connection between colleagues in informal social events, a social platform to exchange news and a daily lunch walk when working at the office. A good connection facilitates employees to express needing support and to find solutions by relying on colleagues.

## **Parental leave provisions**

The Netherlands has a legal right for parental leave for both the pregnant employee and the partner. The right to maternity leave applies both prior to and after childbirth. A pregnant employee is in any case entitled to 16 weeks of leave. Within certain limits, a pregnant employee may herself determine how many weeks of leave she will take before and after childbirth. Birth leave is also made available to partners. Birth leave is sometimes also referred to as paternity leave or partner leave. Following the birth of a child, the partner is entitled to paid birth leave equal to the number of hours worked in one week, starting from the first day after the birth of the child. Partners also have the right to take 5 weeks off after the birth of the child and the government pays 70% of the salary during these 5 weeks.

## **Communication and unconscious gender biases**

CLM has a periodic anonymous survey every five years to evaluate working conditions in which barriers are evaluated. Inequality has never been reported. This does not mean it does not exist at CLM.

In the next evaluation we plan to pose this question explicitly to ensure we can identify potential issues.

## **Safety: Gender-based violence including sexual harassment**

CLM is an institute that fundamentally operates on grounds of mutual respect between its employees. Gender-based violence is not tolerated within our institution and this is explicitly included in our work code (HHR.) The internal confidentiality councilor provides a yearly thematic summary of points brought forward and there are regular exchanges with the Director to identify potential need for action. Incidence of gender-based violence has not been yet reported to the confidentiality councilor.

## **Gender diversity in our research field**

CLM conducts research and advice to provide knowledge to further improve sustainable agriculture. Working in agriculture is a context which is unbalanced in term of gender equality. From an employee perspective, gender can influence how the employee is perceived in participatory research projects. We take this into account and support the employee when this affects working conditions. It does not have an influence on the choice of which employee will perform the research or give the advice.