

## Implementation of Estonian Research Council's Gender Equality Plan

Estonian Research Council's (ETAG) Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is a public document first published in September 2020. The document is available in Estonian and English on the organisation's website (<https://etag.ee/en/estonian-research-council/documents>) as well as on the employees' inner web (<https://siseveeb.etag.ee/korrad>). The document has been approved by the top management. Digitally signed version of the document can be found on the council's public register of documents (<https://dok.hm.ee>). The document has been revised in 2021, 2022 and 2024.

The GEP has been composed to be implemented until 2027. At the Estonian Research Council, managing the implementation of our gender equality plan falls in the responsibility of Senior Advisor (Research Culture), Department of Strategic Analysis- work on gender equality is a regular part of their job and fixated in the position's job description. Additionally, other people, such as Head of Personnel, Head of Quality, Head of the unit of Research Integrity, R&D Analysts, and others, contribute to the successful implementation of the GEP. Each year, funding is available to support the implementation process (to fund the work on gender equality as well as to organise events, etc).

There are reports available on the implementation of GEP in 2020-2021 and in 2022 (in Estonian). Since 2023, extensive overviews are no longer created, rather, an overview is given of the most important developments.

This report is a public document updated yearly throughout the implementation period. It summarises the main activities and provides statistical information. The activities are brought out by objective (1-6).

1. Raising gender awareness among the employees and among the members of the panels and committees of the Council
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To raise awareness on gender equality, ETAG is:

- Collecting, analysing and publishing statistics on gender equality in research;
- organising events (e.g. trainings, seminars, conferences) to its employees and members of the committees as well as wider research community in Estonia;
- integrating the gender dimension in the other trainings organised by ETAG, where applicable;
- composing information materials and informative sections on our website.

Activities supporting raising gender awareness and relevant activities in the period of the implementation of ETAG-s GEP also include participating in different projects (Horizont 2020 project GEARING-Roles, until 2022 and Horizon Europe project GENDERACTIONPlus, 2022-2025).

Above, an overview is given of the events organised by ETAG in the implementation period of the GEP and the materials (statistical overviews and information materials, webpage sections) composed to support the successful implementation of objective 1.

Trainings and seminars on gender equality organised by ETAG during the GEP-s implementation period:

Date	Type	Trainer/speaker	Description and target group
17.11.2020	Training	Maxime Forest (YellowWindow)	Introductory training on <b>gender equality in academia</b> aimed for the management of ETAG and the people connected to composing the gender equality plan.
21.04.2021	Seminar	Siim Espenberg (RAKE), Helen Urmann (RAKE), Loone Vilumaa (ETAG)	Introduction of the study “ <b>Gender equality in Estonian research – current situation and ways of improving</b> ” commissioned by ETAG. Aimed for the employees of ETAG and the wider research community.
16.09.2021	Training	Helen Biin (Ministry of Social Affairs), Lee Maripuu (Ministry of Social Affairs), Heidi Reinson (EMOR)	Training on <b>unconscious bias and gender stereotypes</b> . Aimed for the employees of ETAG and the members of the Evaluation Committee.
29.09.2021	Seminar	Loone Vilumaa (ETAG)	Seminar on the current state of gender equality in Estonian academia, <b>gender statistics and current activities at ETAG</b> . Aimed for all employees of ETAG.
30.03.2022	Conference	Matthias Nielsen (University of Copenhagen), Raili Marling (University of Tartu), et al	Conference on <b>gender equality in academia</b> . Presentations on the <b>gender dimension in research, intersectionality in research</b> , etc. More information to be found <a href="#">here</a> . Aimed for wider research community.
21.11.2022	Training	Maxime Forest (YellowWindow)	Training on how to meaningfully integrate the <b>gender dimension in research management and content</b> under Horizon Europe: Bio- Medical research and Mental Health. Aimed for local researchers and the employees of ETAG.
22.11.2022	Training	Maxime Forest (YellowWindow)	Training on how to meaningfully integrate the <b>gender dimension in research management and content</b> under Horizon Europe: Engineering and Manufacturing Technology. Aimed for local researchers and the employees of ETAG.
31.08.2023	Seminar	Katrin Kello (ETAG), Marge Unt (TLÜ), Teet Teinemaa (TLÜ)	K. Kello gave an overview of the <b>gender dimension in research</b> and talked about the implementation of the project Gender-Net. Researchers M. Unt and T. Teinemaa gave a presentation on <b>gendered aging</b> .
05.04.2024	Training	Fredrik Bondestam (EGET)	Training on <b>GEP frameworks in Europe: concepts and best practices</b> . Aimed for ETAG-s strategic partners (representatives of ministries) and employees connected to gender equality in ETAG.

Table 1: Trainings and seminars organized by ETAG during the GEP implementation period

When organising trainings on other topics, ETAG-s aim is to integrate the gender dimension, where applicable.

In addition to participating in trainings and seminars organised by ETAG, many of ETAG-s employees have also taken part in trainings and courses organised by other institutions. For example: courses on gender mainstreaming, discrimination at workplace, etc. Training opportunities are actively shared by the Head of Personnel and employees of the Department of Statistical Analysis responsible for the implementation of the gender equality plan. Until 2022, training opportunities were shared on the organisation's inner web forum for all employees; since the removal of the forum, relevant upcoming trainings have been shared personally for employees connected to the training topics.

Since 2024, ETAG is part of organising the annual event Diversity Week, initiated by Tallinn University and organised in collaboration with all Estonian public universities. The first event to take place with ETAG-s participation is planned for May 5-11, 2025. The event's focus topic in 2025 is bystander intervention; gender-based violence and sexual harassment will be addressed to raise awareness of the issues in academia among the academic community and employees and partners of ETAG.

A key action to increase gender awareness is publishing statistics. ETAG has published several statistical overviews: gender balance and pay gap in research (2020) and statistics on gender equality (2021, 2022) (all available in Estonian on ETAG-s website, <https://etag.ee/tegevused/uuringud-ja-statistika/statistika>). In the compilation Estonian Research, an extensive overview compiled every three years, an overview of the research community from a gender perspective is given, alongside with extensive statistical infographics (see the latest publication here: [https://www.etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Estonian\\_Research\\_2022.pdf](https://www.etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Estonian_Research_2022.pdf)).

ETAG regularly updates statistics on its website (available in Estonian and in English): <https://etag.ee/en/activities/analysis/gender-balance-and-pay-gap> (updated 2-4 times per year; last updated in 2024). On ETAG-s website, statistics of the share of men and women among researchers and engineers (FTE) in the public and private sector in Estonia and the share of men and women among researchers and engineers (FTE) by field of research in the public sector in Estonia are updated yearly. Additionally, statistics on the share of women in Grade A positions in higher education in the European Union and the unadjusted gender pay gap in professional, scientific and technical activities are updated regularly, as well as statistics on the share of men and women in the main decision-making bodies at scientific boards in Estonia.

Statistics are supported by a more general overview of gender mainstreaming in research (<https://etag.ee/en/activities/gender-mainstreaming-in-research>), updated regularly. Additionally, three new sections have been created on our website: gender dimension in research, AcademiaNet (also supporting objective 5; 2020-2024) and gender equality plan. All sections are aimed for local researchers and are thus available in Estonian: <https://etag.ee/tegevused/sooloime/sooline-dimensioon-teadustoo>, <https://etag.ee/tegevused/sooloime/osalemise-projektides/academianet> and <https://etag.ee/tegevused/sooloime/soolise-vordoiguslikkuse-kava>.

2. Adhering to the principles of equal treatment
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In 2021, ETAG-s R&D analyst and legal adviser revised all ETAG-s rules and regulations, analysing any possible (hidden) discrimination. For the new regulations, issues of gender inequality are kept in mind since the drafting of new documents.

In 2024, the organisation guidelines were renewed. Principles of equal treatment were added, along with references to ETAG-s gender equality plan and the local laws for gender equality and equal treatment.

In all work processes, ETAG-s employees are adhering to the principles of equal treatment. This includes also refraining from any type of indirect discrimination, for example, grant applicants' justified leave of absence from research (such as parental leave or military service) is taken into account when processing applications to ensure the equal treatment of applicants.

3. Improving gender balance among the members of the panels, committees, and among other experts

In 2020, a sex-disaggregated statistical overview of the peer reviewers was composed and introduced. During the implementation of gender equality plan, gender balance among experts is tried to be improved by preferring candidates of underrepresented gender.

Gender balance at scientific boards in Estonia is monitored regularly and updated every year on ETAG-s website (<https://etag.ee/en/activities/analysis/gender-balance-and-pay-gap>). ETAG-s main decision-making body, the Evaluation Committee, has seen stable improvement of gender balance: when ETAG was created in 2012, the share of women in the body was 17%, in 2020, before the adoption of ETAG-s gender equality plan, the share of women was 35% and in 2024, the share of women is 50%. Since 2021, the Evaluation Committee is led by a woman scientist, ETAG-s Director General Anu Noorma.

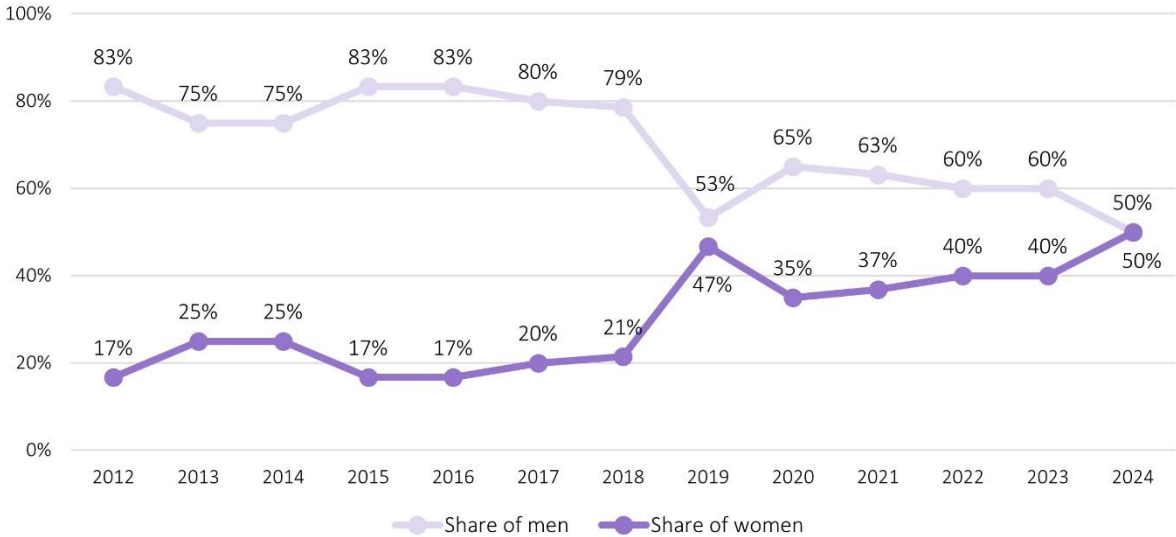


Figure 1: Share of men and women at ETAG-s Evaluation Committee, 2012-2024

#### 4. Improving gender balance among the applicants and recipients of funding

ETAG-s aim is to increase gender balance among the applicants and recipients of different funding instruments. To monitor the change, sex-disaggregated data is collected and analysed.

Information and statistics on competition based grants can be found on ETAG-s website: <https://etag.ee/en/activities/analysis/competition-based-grants>. In the period 2020-2022, sex-disaggregated grant statistics, including the success rates of men and women applicants, were presented in the annual statistical overviews (available in Estonian, <https://etag.ee/tegevused/uuringud-ja-statistika/statistika>). Since 2024, it was decided to include the success rates in the more general overviews of grant statistics, available on our website.

	Postdoctoral grants		Starting grants		Team grants		All grant types	
	Number of applications	Number of grants	Number of applications	Number of grants	Number of applications	Number of grants	Number of applications	Number of grants
Men	17	9	29	7	165	33	211	49
Women	10	4	29	11	79	9	118	24

Table 2: Number of men and women among applicants and grantees, 2023

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

ETAG and its Department of Science Communication are following the principles pointed out in the gender equality plan and in the communication guidelines, a document adopted in 2023 that, too, refers to the gender equality plan.

This means attention is paid to the use of gender neutral language and that reproducing gender stereotypes is consciously refrained from, linguistically as well as in the use of visual materials. When organising public events, ETAG aims to have gender balance among the presenters, where possible. At the latest annual science communication conference (2024), the largest conference organised by ETAG-s science communication team, the share of women among presenters was 43%.

When presenting statistics, sex-disaggregated data is brought out, where applicable. Additionally, as marked above, ETAG regularly publishes statistics on gender equality as a communication and awareness raising activity.

As an additional activity, ETAG is sending out occasional newsletters to our partners at different ministries, academic institutions and other partner organisations to share our communication activities and other practices related to gender mainstreaming at ETAG and in Estonian academia.

## 6. Ensuring equal opportunities and a supportive work environment for the employees of the Council

ETAG is regularly monitoring the share of men and women among its employees. As of 01.01.2024, ETAG has 75 employees, out of whom 57 are women and 18 are men.

Currently, women are dominating both among the heads of the organisation (100%), heads of departments (75%) as well as among employees (69%). When hiring new employees, candidates of underrepresented gender are preferred (in case of otherwise equal candidates).

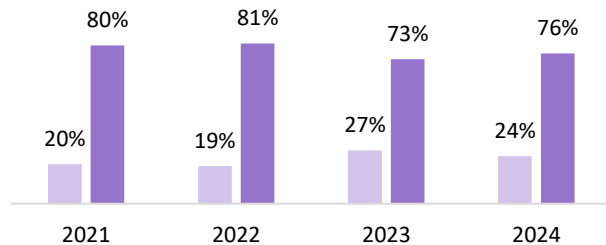


Figure 2: Share of men and women among the employees of ETAG, 2021-2024

In addition to monitoring the share of men and women among the employees of ETAG, gender pay gap is analysed yearly.

To ensure a supportive working environment and good work-life balance, employees are offered flexible working conditions. For example, it's possible to work from home. The psychological as well as physical health of the employees is regularly checked by healthcare professionals.

In 2024, organisation guidelines were complemented with a chapter on equal treatment of all employees. In the chapter, the Head of Personnel was assigned to be dealing with potential sexual misconduct/ gender based violence. In the chapter, it is also explained not all cases of different treatment mean unequal treatment and that the institution may positively discriminate employees raising a young child, pregnant employees, disabled employees, etc.

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Document published in November 2024. The document is updated yearly, next update in 2025.

Contacts and more information available at:

<https://etag.ee/en/activities/gender-mainstreaming-in-research>