Julius Kühn-Institut
Federal Research Centre for Cultivated Plants



Gender Equality Plan

(Status 2024-2028)

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1 Preamble

Since the revision of the Federal Gender Equality Act (BGleiG), all federal authorities have been required to prepare an evaluation showing the extent to which women and men have made use of measures to improve the reconciliation of family responsibilities, care and employment, and how their career progression compares with that of women and men who have not made use of such measures (Section 13 BGleiG). JKI welcomes this task and will, as part of its analysis, assess differences in career progression in accordance with these requirements. The findings are intended to show the extent to which the availability and implementation of measures to reconcile work and family life influence the success of targeted policies to promote women.

The objective of equality between women and men is grounded in the constitutional mandate of the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*), the provisions of the EC Treaty and obligations under international law. Nevertheless, this equality has not yet been fully achieved in all areas, particularly in working life. This makes it all the more important for everyone involved to continue strengthening gender equality policy and practice.

As a general principle, all positions at JKI are open to individuals of any gender. Based on the legal framework and the principles of gender equality, this gender equality plan sets out specific objectives and measures, drawing on a statistical analysis of personnel data, to achieve effective equality between women and men at JKI.

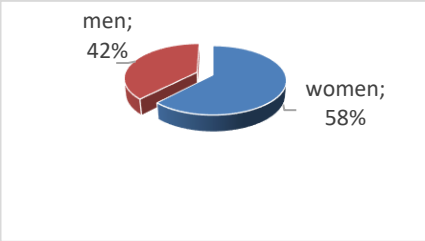
At JKI, the management, human resources department, gender equality officer, disability representatives and staff councils are committed to promoting equality between women and men. This gender equality plan was developed in close cooperation with the gender equality officer.

2 Current situation analysis

The figures presented in the current situation analysis consistently refer, as described, to data from the interim report on the 2023 gender equality plan as well as the 2020–2024 gender equality plan. These documents are available on the intranet.

Table 1 Total JKI employees (as of 01/07/2024)

Employees	Number	Per cent
Women	796	58
Men	581	42
Total	**1,377**	**100**



The number of employees has increased slightly compared with the previous year; in percentage terms, however, the figures remain largely unchanged.

2.1 Staff structure by status and career group

Table 2 Staff structure by status group (as of 01/07/2024)

Status	Total	Women (number)	Women (per cent)	Men (number)	Men (per cent)
Civil servants	167	78	47	89	53
Employees	1,180	702	59	478	41
Trainees	30	16	53	14	47
Total	**1,377**	**796**	**58**	**581**	**42**

When examining the staff structure, no changes were observed overall between women and men compared with the previous year. The proportion of female civil servants has increased, bringing the gender balance closer to parity. The number of male employees and male trainees has also increased.

2.2 Staff structure by career group (civil servants and employees covered by collective agreements)

Table 3 Staff structure by career group (civil servants, as of 01/07/2024)

Civil servant pay grade	Total	Women (number)	Women (per cent)	Men (number)	Men (per cent)	Career group
B 6	1	0	0	1	100	Higher service
B 3	4	2	50	2	50	
B 2	11	0	0	11	100	
B 1	7	1	14	6	86	
A 16	1	0	0	1	100	
A 15	24	10	42	14	58	
A 14	74	37	50	37	50	
A 13h	25	17	68	8	32	
A 13g	2	2	100	0	0	Higher intermediate service
A 12	3	2	67	1	33	
A 11	2	2	100	0	0	
A 10	5	2	40	3	60	
A 9g	2	1	50	1	50	
A 9m (with allowance)	1	0	0	1	100	Intermediate service
A 9m	2	0	0	2	100	
A 8	3	2	67	1	33	
A 7	0	0	0	0	0	
A 6	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	**167**	**78**	**47**	**89**	**53**	

The overall proportion of women in the higher service has remained unchanged. As a result, the objective of increasing the proportion of women in pay grades A 15 and above was not achieved this year either. Women remain significantly under-represented in the B pay grades in particular. Compared with the previous year, however, there are ten more women in A 14, meaning that parity has now been achieved in this pay grade.

Table 4 Staff structure by status group (employees covered by collective agreements, as of 01/07/2024)

Employee pay grade	Total	Women (number)	Women (per cent)	Men (number)	Men (per cent)	Career group
Outside collective agreement	1	1	100	0	0	Higher service
E 15*	2	1	50	1	50	
E 14	68	34	50	34	50	
E 13	346	183	53	163	47	
E 12	19	1	5	18	95	Higher intermediate service
E 11	25	7	28	18	72	
E 10	36	21	58	15	43	
E 9c	3	3	100	0	0	
E 9b	62	48	77	14	23	
E 9a	72	47	65	25	35	Intermediate service
E 8	47	29	62	18	38	
E 7	126	90	71	36	29	
E 6	191	122	64	69	36	
E 5	122	70	57	52	43	
E 4	11	5	45	6	55	Basic service
E 3	48	39	81	9	19	
E 2	1	1	100	0	0	
E 1	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	**1,180**	**702**	**59**	**478**	**41**	

*Civil servant on probation with pay grade B 2/B 3

Among the employees, women are under-represented in certain pay grades. The distribution reflects JKI's general staffing profile (Table 2). Women also continue to be under-represented in the top positions of the higher intermediate service at pay grades E 12 and E 11. The number of employees has increased slightly overall.

3 Age structure

Table 5 Analysis of age structure (as of 01/07/2024)

Age	Total	Women	Men	Per cent
Over 65 years of age	21	14	7	2
60–64 years of age	197	120	77	14
55–59 years of age	178	122	56	13
50–54 years of age	115	67	48	8
45–49 years of age	105	74	31	8
40–44 years of age	164	96	68	12
35–39 years of age	212	110	102	15
30–34 years of age	163	77	86	12
25–29 years of age	147	77	70	11
Under 25 years of age	75	39	36	5
Total	**1,377**	**796**	**581**	100

The proportion of employees under the age of 45 is 55%, which means that demographic change at JKI is currently less pronounced than in society as a whole. This represents an increase of 3 percentage points compared with 2023 and 8 percentage points compared with 2020.

4 Reconciling work and family life

4.1 Parental leave

Each parent is entitled to parental leave under the Federal Parental Allowance and Parental Leave Act (BEEG). Following the end of parental leave, employees are entitled to return to their previous working hours.

4.2 Leave of absence

Applications for leave of absence in connection with the care of children or dependent relatives are generally approved. Particular consideration is given to parents of school-age children and employees with relatives

requiring care.

4.3 Mobile working / teleworking

At JKI, mobile working and alternating teleworking are available subject to approval and operational requirements. Teleworking was expanded by the ‘Mobile working at the Julius Kühn-Institut’ service agreement dated 30 June 2022. New applications now relate to mobile working, and the remaining proportion of approved teleworking arrangements will therefore be phased out.

4.4 Part-time work

Part-time work at JKI takes many different forms, with arrangements involving half of the regular weekly working hours being the most common.

Where operationally feasible, weekly working hours are organised with due regard to family responsibilities and different life stages, meaning that working time is distributed across the working week in line with employees’ preferences. To date, all applications for a distribution of working hours deviating from the five-day working week have been approved.

4.5 Reconciling work and family life (as of 01/07/2024)

Table 6 Reconciling work and family life (as of 01/07/2024)

Number of employees: 1,377, of whom	Total	Family-related reasons		Non-family-related reasons	
		Women	Men	Women	Men
Parental leave	21	17	4	0	0
Special leave / family-related	3	3	0	0	0
Teleworking / mobile working	601	165	88	208	140
Part-time	518	313	78	70	57

Parental leave is used less frequently than in 2023. The proportion of teleworking / mobile working has increased. The number of employees making use of mobile working / teleworking for non-family-related reasons has increased again.

4.6 Career progression (as of 01/07/2024)

Table 7 Career progression (as of 01/07/2024)

1,377 people in total	Total	Parental leave		Special leave (family-related reasons)		Part-time		Full-time		Of which in mobile working / teleworking (part-time)		Of which in mobile working / teleworking (full-time)	
		Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Conversion to permanent contract	32	0	0	0	0	11	3	10	8	5	0	4	4
Appointment as civil servant	17	0	0	0	0	2	0	11	4	2	0	7	3
Deferral of appointment as civil servant	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Upgrading of employees to higher salary groups	34	0	0	0	0	7	1	11	15	1	1	6	4
Promotion of civil servants	40	2	1	0	0	7	3	7	20	7	3	7	14
Assumption of a leadership position	33	0	0	0	0	3	2	16	12	2	1	8	7

Overall, there were more conversions to permanent contracts and appointments as civil servants than in the previous year. More women than men were granted permanent contracts in total. This reflects the overall staff distribution at JKI, where women outnumber men (Table 1). As in the previous year, the number of upgradings to higher salary groups among women in full-time and part-time employment is almost balanced compared with men. Despite an overall increase in upgradings compared with the previous year, these were not proportionate when viewed in terms of the overall gender distribution, with men benefiting more frequently. Leadership positions were taken up by both women and men in full-time and part-time employment. Although significantly more women assumed leadership responsibilities, this is not reflected either in the upgradings of employees or in the promotions of female civil servants. Promotions of civil servants occurred predominantly among men in full-time employment.

5 Summary of the current situation analysis

Overall, JKI employs more women than men (Table 1).

As in previous years, women remain very strongly under-represented among civil servants in the higher service above pay grade A 14. (Table 3).

In leadership positions at pay grades B 6 to B 1 (President / Vice-President / Institute Director / Deputy Institute Director), only four women are represented compared with eighteen men. Furthermore, despite the stated objective, an increase in the proportion of women at pay grades A 15 and A 16 has likewise not been achieved. Under-representation therefore remains very pronounced.

Of the 11 positions in pay grades A 16 to B 6 that were expected to become vacant between 2020 and 2024, two were filled by women and two by men. As a result, the objective of filling these positions with more women than men was not achieved.

Of the approximately 20 positions at pay grades A 14 and A 15 that became vacant between 2020 and 2024,

32 positions were filled by women and 32 by men. The objective of achieving parity in appointments was therefore met; however, overall parity across both pay grades has only been achieved to a limited extent.

Among employees, a more differentiated picture emerges due to the high proportion of women. In the basic and intermediate service, the elevated proportion of women remains very pronounced. In the higher intermediate service, the proportions of women and men are converging, whereas men continue to be very strongly overrepresented in pay grades E 11 and E 12 (Table 4).

Overall, the age structure shows a further slight shift towards younger age groups. Regardless of gender and career group, 55% of employees are under the age of 45 (Table 5).

Women account for 74% of part-time employees (Table 6).

In the area of career progression, it is evident that all measures are implemented primarily in full-time employment. Compared with previous years, the number of upgradings and appointments as civil servants has increased. Leadership positions were taken up by nineteen women compared with fourteen men; however, this is not reflected in the upgrading figures. Given the higher overall proportion of women, more women than men were granted permanent contracts and appointed as civil servants in both part-time and full-time employment. Similarly, in line with the proportion of female employees, more female employees in part-time employment were upgraded to higher salary groups than men. Against the background of the overall gender distribution, the high proportion of promoted male civil servants is particularly noteworthy (Table 7).

6 Objectives and measures

6.1 Objectives

The objectives of this gender equality plan are as follows:

- Promoting women effectively in order to eliminate existing disadvantages, in particular by increasing the proportion of women in under-represented areas (Section 1(1)(2) BGleiG) through appropriate staffing and organisational measures, with a notable focus on women in leadership positions.
- Maintaining at least the current proportion of women, including in the event of future staff reductions.
- Improving qualifications through targeted training and professional development measures.
- Maintaining the measures already implemented to promote the reconciliation of work and family life for women and men at the current high level, including pursuing a re-audit by the career and family service.
- Ensuring balanced representation on internal JKI bodies (including committees of the institute council and selection panels).
- Ensuring mandatory training on the Federal Gender Equality Act for all institute management, heads of working groups and their deputies (planned by the end of 2022). Some members of the management team have already completed this training. Newly appointed managers are expected to complete it within a year of assuming their leadership role.
- Ensuring protection against sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Continuing to pursue the mandatory objective set out in the Second Act on Equal Participation in Leadership Positions (FüPoG II), namely achieving the equal participation of women and men in leadership positions in accordance with the Act by 31 December 2025.

An increase in the proportion of women in under-represented areas is sought in the context of new appointments as well as upgradings and promotions. In all measures aimed at increasing the proportion of

women, suitability, aptitude and professional performance must be assessed in accordance with the principle of merit. Preferential consideration of women therefore presupposes that they are equally qualified in comparison with male candidates.

Achieving parity in appointments is one aspect of equality between women and men. Equally important are the framework conditions that support the reconciliation of work and family life. Through the service agreement on core working hours, supported by the audit certification in place since 2021 recognising JKI as an employer that is mindful of family life and different life stages, flexible working hours and practicable core working time arrangements have been introduced, resulting in further progress over the past year.

In pursuing these objectives, due consideration must be given to the specific needs of women with disabilities and women at risk of disability, and existing disadvantages must be eliminated. In this context, specific measures to promote the effective implementation of equality for women with disabilities and to eliminate existing disadvantages are permitted. Personnel planning must therefore include specific provisions to ensure the employment of an appropriate proportion of women with severe disabilities.

Preferential consideration of women in under-represented areas is excluded where overriding legally protected reasons relating to an individual male applicant take precedence.

6.2 Measures

The measures to achieve the above objectives cover all areas that are essential to staff development, including:

- Recruitment and appointment
- Assignment of higher-level functions
- Expansion and, where appropriate, mandatory training and professional development measures
- Reconciliation of work, family and life stages
- Returning to work
- Internal organisational framework conditions

The individual measures required to achieve the objectives and optimise the current situation will be implemented on the basis of a relationship of trust with the gender equality officer, the staff council and the disability representatives. In doing so, the relevant rights of participation and co-determination must be observed.

6.3 Increasing the proportion of women in under-represented areas through appropriate staffing and organisational measures

Women at JKI remain under-represented in the following areas in particular:

- Civil servants in the higher service, particularly in leadership positions from pay grade A 15 onwards
- Pay grades E 11 / E 12

There is therefore a need for action under the BGleiG to increase the proportion of women in this area. The proportion of women may be increased through the preferential consideration of women in appointments as civil servants, provided that suitability, aptitude and professional performance (qualifications) are equal. As appointments to the higher service are generally made initially under employment contracts, this area is of particular importance. Following several years of scientific work, employed female and male researchers form the pool of candidates for potential appointment as civil servants. It is therefore necessary to continue

implementing specific measures to increase the proportion of women in this area and to ensure early personnel planning.

6.4 Specific targets pursuant to Section 13 of the BGleiG

Vacancies are expected in the following areas between 2024 and 2028:

- 6 positions in pay grades A 16 to B 6. At least 4 of these positions are to be filled by women.
- Approximately 19 positions at pay grades A 14 and A 15. At least 10 of these positions are to be filled by women.

Within the scope of operational requirements, the JKI provides flexible working time models to support the reconciliation of work and family life. Positions involving managerial and leadership responsibilities are also to be advertised on a part-time basis, provided there are no compelling operational reasons to the contrary. Where women are under-represented in the area concerned, the vacancy announcement must include an explicit invitation for women to apply.

When filling positions in areas in which women are under-represented, at least the same number of women as men who meet the qualifications specified in the vacancy notice must be invited to interviews or special selection procedures. This applies in particular where the management of an institute or organisational unit is to be newly appointed during the term of this gender equality plan.

The following general measures are intended to increase the proportion of women in under-represented areas:

- Increasing the proportion of women when filling permanent positions, particularly in areas in which women are under-represented.
- Increasing the proportion of women in appointments as civil servants in the higher service, as this is essential to strengthening the pool from which leadership positions are developed.
- Raising awareness of the Federal Gender Equality Act through targeted and mandatory training measures, particularly at management and leadership levels.
- Encouraging potentially suitable women to apply for higher-level positions and motivating them to assume leadership responsibilities, wherever possible, by managers and supervisors.
- Ensuring that the reconciliation of family life, caring responsibilities and work, such as part-time work, is not assessed to the detriment of employees in performance appraisals or in the allocation of performance-related bonuses.
- Actively promoting the participation of women in internal committees and bodies (including committees of the institute council and selection panels).
- Giving preferential consideration to women in areas in which they are under-represented, where they are equally qualified compared with other applicants.
- Ensuring gender-balanced composition of selection panels, with any justified deviations from parity being formally documented.
- Actively encouraging women to apply for positions in areas in which they are under-represented.

6.5 Improving qualifications through targeted training and professional development measures

Fee-based training for JKI employees is currently organised on the basis of identified training needs and subject to approval by the training committee, in which the gender equality officer plays an active role. The aim is to maintain, continuously expand and further improve the high level of qualification of JKI employees. Particular importance is attached to the targeted promotion of women in training, for example to prepare them for future leadership roles. Employee appraisal meetings with the respective manager provide staff with the opportunity to express their training needs and to discuss possible implementation options with their supervisors, taking account of operational, budgetary and personal circumstances.

- The management supports the invitation of women to workshops and lectures by women for women organised by the gender equality officer. Working groups also provide interested women with opportunities to exchange and network, such as:
  - events organised by women for women, such as those offered by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)
  - courses on the topic of women in leadership positions
- JKI aims to ensure that women aspiring to leadership positions are given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the responsibilities of institute management through a mentoring programme. To date, no such mentoring programme is in place.
- When allocating training opportunities, particularly those leading to qualification for leadership roles, care is taken to ensure that at least the same number of women as men receive the training. Where training places are limited, preferential consideration may be given to women.
- Employees with family responsibilities are offered training courses adapted to their spatial and temporal needs, where appropriate with the option of childcare. Employees who have taken extended leave for family reasons are to be offered appropriate training to support their return to work to an adequate extent.

6.6 Promoting the reconciliation of work and family life

The following measures in particular are intended to improve the reconciliation of work and family life:

Since September 2021, JKI has been audited by berufundfamilie Service GmbH and has successfully completed its second reporting year. Re-certification is planned for early 2025.

Requests for part-time work are generally accommodated, provided there are no conflicting operational requirements. Where operational requirements do prevent approval, the potential for organisational or staffing solutions should be explored. Any refusal must be justified on a case-by-case basis.

The scope and distribution of working hours are determined in line with the applicable working time regulations and, as a rule, take account of employees' preferences. Exceptions are only made where compelling operational requirements apply. All vacant positions and posts are, in principle, advertised as suitable for part-time work.

Requests for mobile working continue to be approved, provided there are no conflicting operational requirements.

Where full-time positions are converted into part-time positions, the resulting vacant position capacity must be filled on a case-by-case basis, insofar as this is possible in terms of staffing, employment law and organisational requirements, in order to increase acceptance of part-time employment among managers and staff.

Any remaining position capacity arising from workforce management is used in particular to enable part-time

employees, at their request and on a case-by-case basis, to increase their working hours in line with specific organisational needs (Section 17 BGleiG).

Employees granted leave for family reasons may, if they wish, remain informed about matters of general relevance and available training opportunities (for example via access to the intranet). This option is communicated when the leave is approved.

Employees on leave are informed in good time about their planned assignment ahead of their return. If requested, a staff meeting is held to discuss work-related and career development opportunities.

Employee requests for part-time work during parental leave are given priority, subject to organisational feasibility.

A new service agreement on working hours has been concluded at the JKI. The ‘Functional hours’ service agreement is intended to expand both the decision-making scope of the organisation and the opportunities available to JKI civil servants and employees to shape their own working hours, thereby improving their work-life balance and supporting compatibility between professional and family life. It is also intended to boost employee motivation at the JKI. Within the framework of the applicable collective agreements, working hours can be organised flexibly in a number of ways. The following aspects may be agreed on an individual basis, for example:

- average weekly working hours
- which days of the week are treated as working days
- different numbers of working hours per working day or per week

This flexibility can be used to accommodate both the requirements of efficient service delivery and the personal needs of employees as effectively as possible. The JKI has operated a system of flexible working hours for many years. The corresponding service agreement allows working hours and working time models to be agreed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the interests of both parties.

6.7 Ensuring balanced representation on internal JKI bodies

All JKI internal bodies (e.g. committees of the institute council and selection panels) are, as a matter of principle, to be composed of equal numbers of women and men. Increasing the proportion of women in the higher civil service would therefore also make it easier to achieve parity in the composition of these bodies.

6.8 Raising awareness of gender equality among managers

All managers are required to familiarise themselves with measures to promote gender equality and support the reconciliation of family life and employment.

Targeted support measures for managers (training on the BGleiG) are made mandatory, and existing qualifications are aligned with current requirements.

Within the scope of their participatory rights, the equal opportunities officer may communicate equality-related content in personal discussions with the management of institutes and administrative units, as well as with their employees.

6.9 Gender mainstreaming

In accordance with gender mainstreaming principles, the differing interests and life situations of women and men are taken into account from the outset when drafting service agreements and planning projects or other measures (e.g. changes to organisational structures and processes).

6.10 Ensuring protection against sexual harassment in the workplace

The General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) prohibits all forms of sexual harassment in the workplace. The Act refers to the constitutionally guaranteed right to the inviolability of human dignity (Article 1 of the Basic Law).

“Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination within the meaning of Sections 1 and 3(4) of the AGG where unwanted conduct of a sexual nature – including unwanted sexual acts or requests for such acts, sexually motivated physical contact, remarks of a sexual nature, as well as the unwanted display or visible posting of pornographic material – has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of the person concerned, in particular where it creates an environment characterised by intimidation, hostility, degradation, humiliation or offence.”

The management of the institution, as well as the heads of all institutes and administrative units, consider it their duty to do everything possible to protect employees from sexual harassment in the workplace. The use of pornographic internet services via JKI IT facilities is prohibited under the IT usage policy.

A complaints office has been established at the JKI in accordance with Section 13 of the AGG and communicated to all employees via the intranet.

6.11 Additional measures

The gender equality plan is made available to all employees via the intranet for information purposes. The heads of institutes and administrative units receive a separate electronic copy.

Within the framework of the annual update, an interim review is prepared to document the extent to which the defined targets have been achieved. Where appropriate, reasons must also be provided for any targets that were not achieved, or not achieved as intended. On this occasion, the original objectives and the catalogue of measures may be adjusted to reflect current developments.

7 Legal framework and principles of gender equality

7.1 International (legal) framework

The provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam (Articles 2, 3(2) and 141(4) of the EC Treaty), together with Article 11 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, commit the Federal Government to an active gender equality policy.

7.2 Constitutional framework

Men and women have equal rights. The state promotes the actual implementation of equality between women and men and works to eliminate existing disadvantages” (Article 3(2) of the Basic Law).

The amendment to Article 3(2) of the Basic Law in 1994 establishes a constitutional mandate for the state to promote the equalisation of living conditions, particularly with regard to employment opportunities, and to improve the reconciliation of family life and work for women and men alike.

7.3 Second Act on Equal Participation of Women and Men in Leadership Positions (FüPoG II)

The aim of the Second Act on Equal Participation of Women and Men in Leadership Positions is to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions and introduce binding requirements for the private sector and the public service.

The act amending and supplementing the provisions on the equal participation of women and men in leadership positions in the private sector and in public service (Second Act on Equal Participation of Women and Men in Leadership Positions – FüPoG II) further develops the Leadership Positions Act (FüPoG), which entered into force in 2015, improves its effectiveness and closes existing gaps.

In the federal public service, the objective is to achieve equal participation of women in leadership positions within the scope of the Federal Gender Equality Act by the end of 2025.

7.4 General Equal Treatment Act (AGG), Section 5: Positive measures

Notwithstanding the grounds set out in Sections 8 to 10 and Section 20, different treatment is also permissible where appropriate and proportionate measures are intended to prevent or offset existing disadvantages arising from a ground referred to in Section 1.

7.5 Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (BGG), Section 2: Women with disabilities; discrimination on multiple grounds

(1) To ensure equality between women and men and to prevent discrimination against women with disabilities on multiple grounds, the specific needs of women with disabilities must be taken into account and existing disadvantages eliminated. In this context, specific measures to promote the effective implementation of equality for women with disabilities and to eliminate existing disadvantages are permitted.

(2) Irrespective of subsection (1), the specific needs of persons with disabilities who may be affected by discrimination on the grounds of disability and at least one further ground referred to in Section 1 of the General Equal Treatment Act are to be taken into account.

7.6 Social Code Book IX – Rehabilitation and participation of persons with disabilities

Section 1 – Self-determination and participation in society

In this context, due account is taken of the specific needs of women with disabilities and women at risk of disability, as well as of persons with psychosocial disabilities or persons at risk of such disabilities.

Section 49 – Benefits for participation in working life

(2) Women with disabilities are guaranteed equal opportunities in working life, in particular through

provisions that are appropriate to their vocational objectives, available close to home, and can also be taken up on a part-time basis.

Section 154 – Employers' obligation to employ severely disabled persons

(1) In this context, severely disabled women are to be given particular consideration.

Section 166 – Inclusion agreement

(2) Workforce planning is to include specific provisions to ensure the employment of an appropriate proportion

of severely disabled women.

Inclusion Agreement of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the authorities within its remit

pursuant to Section 166 of the Social Code, Book IX (SGB IX).

See 5.5 – Women with disabilities

7.7 Federal Staff Representation Act (BPersVG)

Section 61 – Powers

(1) The staff assembly may address matters that directly affect the organisation or its employees, in particular collective agreement, pay and social matters, as well as issues relating to the effective equality of women and men, the prevention of discrimination against persons who do not identify with either of these genders, the participation of persons with disabilities, and the reconciliation of family life, care responsibilities and work.

Section 62 – General duties

The staff council has the following general duties:

2. to monitor compliance with laws, ordinances, collective agreements, service agreements and administrative instructions applicable for the benefit of employees.

5. to promote the effective equality of women and men and to counteract discrimination against persons who do not identify with either of these genders, in particular in recruitment, employment, initial and continuing training, and career advancement.

6. to promote the reconciliation of family life, care responsibilities and work.

Section 78 – Co-determination in personnel matters

(5) In the cases referred to in subsection (1), the staff council may refuse its consent where

1. the measure violates a law, a regulation, a provision of a collective agreement, a court decision, the gender equality plan, an administrative instruction, or a directive within the meaning of Section 80(1), no. 12.

Section 80 – Co-determination in organisational matters

(1) Unless a statutory or collective agreement provision applies, the staff council participates in decisions concerning:

13. measures serving to promote family-friendly practices, the reconciliation of family life, care responsibilities and work, the effective equality of women and men, the prevention of discrimination against persons who do not identify with either of these genders, and the prevention of discrimination against persons with disabilities, in particular in recruitment, employment, initial and continuing training, and career advancement.

8 Act on Gender Equality in the Federal Administration and in Federal Enterprises and Courts (BGleiG)

The Federal Gender Equality Act was adopted by the German Bundestag as Article 2 of the Act on the Equal Participation of Women and Men in Leadership Positions in the Private Sector and the Public Service of 24 April 2015 (Federal Law Gazette I, p. 642) and entered into force on 1 May 2015. It was most recently amended by Article 2 of the Act of 7 August 2021 (Federal Law Gazette I, p. 3311).

The applicable law strengthens the rights of gender equality officers and does not limit itself to formal legal equality between women and men, but rather pursues the objective of ensuring its effective implementation within the federal administration. On this basis, the federal government, as an employer, is obliged to make full use of the organisational and operational options available when designing workplaces in order to improve the reconciliation of family life and work for women and men and to reduce existing disadvantages. The proportion

of women in positions in which they are under-represented is to be increased, including in leadership roles. The principle of precedence of aptitude, qualifications and professional performance (Article 33(2) of the Basic Law) continues to apply without restriction. In each case, the best-qualified candidate is to be selected.

The effective implementation of gender equality is contingent upon the readiness of all parties to identify with the objectives of the BGleiG and to actively uphold gender equality. Only on this basis can the demanding targets defined in this gender equality plan be achieved.

Under Section 12 of the BGleiG, the JKI is legally obliged to draw up a gender equality plan for a four-year period, with the involvement of the gender equality officer. This plan may be updated after two years to reflect current circumstances. In accordance with Section 11 of the BGleiG, the gender equality plan constitutes a central instrument of workforce planning, particularly with regard to staff development. The gender equality plan must provide a baseline assessment by outlining the situation of women and men within the organisation as at 30 June of the year in which it is prepared and by reviewing the promotion of employees in the respective areas over the previous four years. In a further step, concrete targets and measures must be defined to implement the necessary personnel and organisational improvements.

An initial review of progress takes place after half of the four-year implementation period. If the targets have not been implemented to a sufficient extent by that point, additional measures are to be incorporated into the gender equality plan to ensure that the targets can be achieved within the implementation period. Where the targets cannot be achieved despite all efforts, the reasons are to be set out in the next gender equality plan.

8.1 The gender equality officer and deputy officer (Sections 19–36 BGleiG)

The gender equality officer and their deputy officer are elected for a period of four years.

In smaller organisational units and in organisational units that are geographically remote, a contact person is appointed at the proposal of the responsible gender equality officer.

The gender equality officer forms part of the human resources administration and is assigned directly to the head of the organisation. The role may not be combined with membership of the staff representation body or employment in the human resources department.

The key responsibilities of the gender equality officer include:

- supporting the organisation with achieving the objectives of the BGleiG and promoting the general duties set out in Section 4
- participating, from the earliest possible stage, in all relevant personnel, organisational and social matters and measures of the organisation that concern gender equality, the elimination of under-representation, the reconciliation of family life, care responsibilities and work, and protection against sexual harassment in the workplace

To perform these duties, the gender equality officer is granted extensive rights, the most important of which include:

- independence from instructions
- entitlement to the earliest possible and comprehensive oral and written information from the organisation
- access to all relevant meetings (e.g. participation as an advisory member in meetings of the institute council and of selection panels in appointment procedures)
- provision of all relevant documents
- the right to inspect the decision-relevant parts of personnel files without the explicit consent of the person concerned
- organisation of women’s assemblies held at least once a year
- the right to speak at staff assemblies

The gender equality officer has the right to raise objections and initiate legal proceedings. They are entitled to

apply for a judicial decision before the competent administrative court where no agreement can be reached with the organisation, provided that an internal objection or conciliation procedure has first been carried out.

Quedlinburg, 19 October 2026

President
of the Julius Kühn-Institut
Federal Research Centre for Cultivated Plants

Signed: Prof. Dr. Frank Ordon

Braunschweig, 21 October 2026

Gender Equality Officer
of the Julius Kühn-Institut
Federal Research Centre for Cultivated Plants

Signed: Kerstin Rogge