

Gender Equality Plan

Asociația Mireșu Mare-Agricol Smart Cluster · Mireșu Mare, Maramureș, Romania

Version 1.0 · Approved: 02.10.2026 · Review cycle: every two years

1. Introduction

Mireșu Mare Agricol Smart Cluster is committed to equal opportunities for women and men in everything it does. The cluster brings together public administration, universities and research, catalyst organisations, civil society and companies to develop smart agriculture in Maramureș.

As a cluster that works with farmers and rural communities, we recognise that diversity and gender equality lead to better ideas, better decisions and stronger communities. This Gender Equality Plan sets out our commitment and the concrete steps we take to put it into practice.

The plan applies to the association, its governing bodies, staff, experts and trainers. It also covers the projects, training and events we lead or take part in.

2. Objectives

We commit to six objectives, which match the focus areas published on our website.

- **Promote gender balance:** work towards balanced representation of women and men on the Board of Directors, in working groups and on evaluation panels.
- **Ensure equal opportunities:** give everyone the same access to roles, training, expert assignments and representing the cluster.
- **Foster an inclusive culture:** value diversity, encourage open dialogue and act against discrimination and bias.
- **Support work-life balance:** organise our work, meetings and training so that they suit people with family and farm responsibilities.
- **Embed the gender dimension in our projects:** consider how our training, digital services and rural development projects affect women and men.
- **Zero tolerance of harassment:** prevent and respond to any form of harassment.

3. Strategies and actions

We turn the objectives into concrete actions in six areas.

a. Recruitment and selection

- **Inclusive announcements:** use gender-neutral language for job offers, expert calls and trainer selection, and share them through channels that reach women and men alike.
- **Diverse panels:** include both women and men on selection and evaluation panels wherever possible.
- **Balanced shortlists:** aim for gender-balanced shortlists for staff, experts and trainers.

b. Leadership and career development

- **Balanced nominations:** when the General Assembly elects the Board and members name their representatives, we encourage balanced nominations.
- **Balanced events:** seek balanced lists of speakers and panellists at cluster events.
- **Transparent criteria:** set clear, published criteria for the roles, pay and promotion of the association's staff.

- **Training and mentoring:** open development opportunities to everyone, with attention to the less represented gender.

c. Workplace culture

- **Awareness-raising:** hold at least one session a year on equality, inclusion and unconscious bias for the Board and staff, and include it in onboarding.
- **Inclusive rules:** review the association's internal rules so that they promote equality and prohibit discrimination.
- **Inclusive communication:** use inclusive language and images on our website, in our materials and at our events.

d. Work-life balance

- **Accessible meetings:** schedule meetings and events at accessible times, and offer online participation where possible.
- **Flexible work:** offer flexible hours and remote work to staff where the role allows.
- **Parental leave:** treat parental leave equally for all genders and support colleagues returning from extended leave.

e. Gender dimension in innovation and project work

Beyond our own organisation, we consider the gender dimension in the projects we lead or contribute to. These include the professional reconversion centre with its drone school, the regional IoT and artificial intelligence data centre and our rural development work.

Where relevant, we ask how solutions and services affect women and men in rural areas. We seek balanced participation in training, workshops and pilots, and we encourage members, partners and the farmers we work with to do the same.

f. Zero tolerance of harassment

- **Clear rule:** any form of harassment is prohibited in the cluster's activities, events and online spaces.
- **Confidential reporting:** concerns can be raised confidentially with the Gender Equality Officer or by email at ro.gpss@gmail.com.
- **Fair handling:** every report is examined promptly and confidentially, without retaliation against the person who raised it.

4. Monitoring and evaluation

We measure progress every year with gender-disaggregated data and act on any imbalance it shows.

- **Data collection:** each year, collect data by gender on the Board, member representatives, staff, experts, and participants in training and events, as well as on staff pay.
- **Annual review:** the Board reviews the data and the progress of this plan each year and reports to the General Assembly.
- **Feedback:** provide a channel for members, staff and participants to raise concerns, including anonymously.

5. Accountability and resources

The President and the Board of Directors are responsible for this plan and for the resources it needs.

- **Leadership commitment:** the President and the Board support the plan and take part in its initiatives.
- **Dedicated responsibility:** a Gender Equality Officer, designated by the Board, oversees the implementation of the plan.
- **Resources:** the Board allocates the time and budget needed for training, data collection and reporting.
- **Plan review:** the plan is reviewed at least every two years to assess its effect and make adjustments.

6. Communication

The plan is public and shared with everyone who works with the cluster.

- **Internal awareness:** the plan is shared with all members, the Board and staff, and included in the welcome of new members and staff.
- **External reporting:** the plan and a summary of progress are published on the cluster's website, agrismartcluster.ro, and shared with partners.

7. Conclusion

With this plan, Mireșu Mare Agricol Smart Cluster commits to good European practice on gender equality. The plan is designed to meet the requirements for gender equality plans in EU research and innovation programmes. It also follows Romanian Law no. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and treatment between women and men.

Promoting gender equality is both a responsibility and a strategic advantage. It helps the cluster, its members and the rural communities of Maramureș to succeed together.

Approved on behalf of Asociația Mireșu Mare-Agricol Smart Cluster

Signature: 

Romeo Oița

President of the Board of Directors, Mireșu Mare Agricol Smart Cluster

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