International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis
IIASA

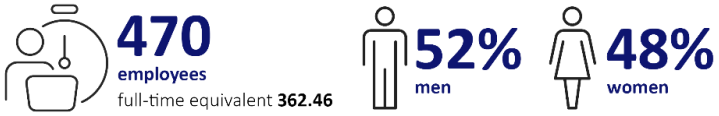
Gender Equality Report 2025

Executive summary

Executive summary — IIASA Gender Equality Report 2025

This third IIASA Gender Equality Report concludes the **Gender Equality Plan (2023–2025)** and aligns with the **IIASA Strategy 2021–2030**. It tracks progress on gender representation, workforce movement, addressing the gender pay gap, gender mainstreaming in science, work–life balance, and measures against gender-based violence.

Key findings for 2025



1. Workforce at a glance

- IIASA operates in accordance with Austrian labor law and employs 470 staff members from 61 nationalities, representing 362.35 full time equivalents (FTE) and near gender parity (243 men; 227 women).
- 69% of employees come from IIASA member countries, with the largest groups from Austria (24%), Germany (11%), India (5%), the UK (4%), the USA (4%), China (4%), and Russia (3%).
- Workforce composition: ~70% scientific/software, 25% operational, 5% emeritus/senior advisors.
- Age profile shows a strong mid-career core (30–49; 36%), underrepresentation of early-career staff (20–29; 11%), and an upcoming retirement wave (50-59 and 60-65; 21%).
- Operational employees: 116 employees (102.53 FTE), of which 68% are women, representing over 30 countries. Austria is the largest group (35%), followed by the UK (5%), the US and Germany (4 %), and smaller national cohorts including Russia, Slovakia, countries represented in IIASA's Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Member Organization (SSARMO), China, India, and Ukraine, among others.
- Scientific employees: 338 researchers (235.56 FTE), of which 60% are men and 40% women, with women underrepresented at senior levels. The highest number of employees are at the Research Scholar (R-2) level, totaling 39% of all scientists. Employees represent over 50 nationalities. The largest proportions are from Austria (20%), Germany (13%), India (6%), China (5%), the UK (4%), the US (4%), and Russia (4%), with the remaining researchers coming from a diverse range of other countries.
- Leadership (senior and middle management): 33 roles, with 67% men and 33% women. This distribution indicates a gender imbalance in leadership positions, although some improvement has been observed compared to previous years.
- Career advancement (2021–2025): 99 recognitions (73 men and 26 women). In 2025, there were 13 recognitions, including four women.
- Turnover 2025: 57 total exits (48 scientific; 9 operational). High turnover in R-3 may affect pay gap dynamics.
- Recruitment: 29 hires (23 researchers and software developers and 6 operational employees). This number includes 59% women, showing progress towards gender balance.

➢ To ensure a productive working environment amid a multicultural and multigenerational workforce, it is recommended to strengthen structured knowledge-transfer, inclusive communication practices, and team-capacity development initiatives, led by supervisors and the Human Resources Team.

➢ To achieve greater gender balance among senior scientists, it is suggested to strengthen women's advancement through structured mentoring and clearer familiarization with the requirements and expectations for senior scientist positions, led by supervisors and the Human Resources Team.

➢ To solve high employee turnover, it is recommended to conduct focused exit-pattern and engagement analyses to identify root causes and retention priorities.

2. Gender pay gap

- Institute-wide (statistically significant, after controlling for years of experience): 2.5% — women earn less on average; improved vs 3.6% in 2024.
- Persistent significant gaps at Senior Research Scholar level (R-3) and Operational level (O-2) signal inconsistencies in starting salaries, promotion practices, and operational pay governance.

➢ To address the gender pay gap at the R-3 level, consistent salary-setting and adjustment practices should be applied when observing high-turnover (led by Human Resources with Program Directors).

➢ For the O-2 level, pay-governance oversight needs to be strengthened through regular pay-equity checks and consistent salary-setting (led by Human Resources and Department Heads).

3. Gender mainstreaming in science

➢ A total of 81 research projects were awarded in 2025 with 57 scientists serving as Principal or Co-Principal Investigators, including 18 women and 39 men, highlighting the continued gender imbalance in project leadership. Only five projects (6.2%) incorporated a gender dimension, demonstrating limited integration of gender responsiveness in research design. Of the 356 proposals submitted during the year, 41.8% were led by women, with strong female engagement at the R-2 level, reflecting encouraging progress in supporting women to lead scientific projects.

➢ In 2025, IIASA produced 791 publications, including 543 peer-reviewed outputs, with 79% available open access. Women contributed as authors to 28% of publications, while only 7% had women as first authors, compared to 25% with men as first authors, highlighting a significant gender gap in authorship leadership. Gender-related peer-reviewed publications accounted for 4.8% of the total, indicating further opportunities to strengthen the integration of gender perspectives in research and publication outputs.

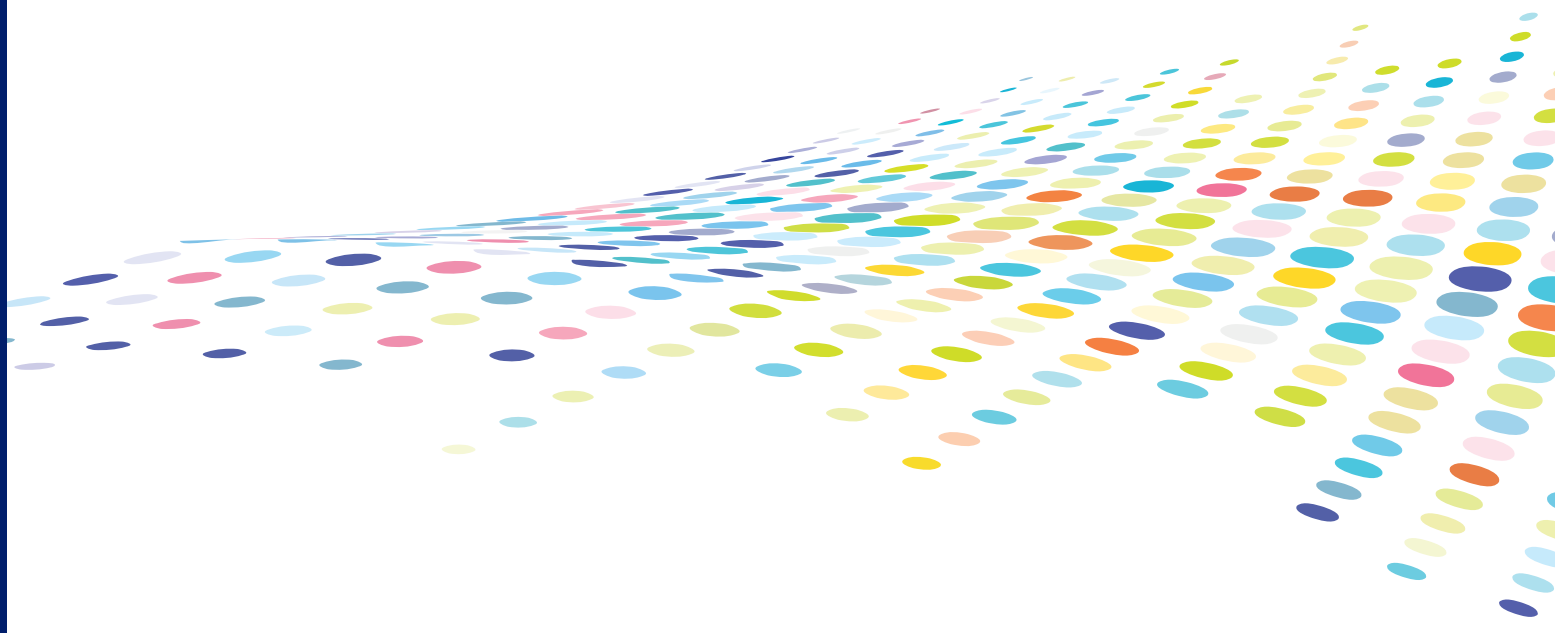
➢ Women represent 40% of employees but account for only 36% of external engagements (562 of 1,528), highlighting the need for targeted efforts to support and enhance women's visibility and participation in scientific networks.

➢ It is suggested to increase women's representation in high-profile scientific roles, such as keynote speakers, panelists, or trainers, to strengthen visibility, recognition, and career progression opportunities.

4. Work–life balance and environment

- Onboarding: The Human Resources Department organized quarterly orientation sessions for newcomers, implemented a buddy system and post-quarter cross-department meet and greets, and also introduced an HR podcast series, thereby strengthening early engagement.
- Health and inclusion: IIASA expanded occupational medicine and psychology support, designated an Human Resources officer for wellbeing and accessibility, and initiated partnerships with fit2work and the Network for Professional Assistance (NEBA).
- Policy updates: A new Outside Activity Policy reinforced transparency, expanded benefits and flexibility (100 home office days, institutional holiday, consultancy leave, dual-career support, relocation, training funds, school subsidies, and more).
- Leave usage: Unused annual leave decreased substantially from 2023 to 2025 for both scientific and operational staff, which represents a positive wellbeing signal.
- Safety: Zero reported cases of sexual harassment or sexism in 2025.

➢ IIASA has improved its overall gender balance, achieved better gender balance in recruitment, and reduced the adjusted pay gap. Remaining disparities are concentrated in specific areas, particularly at the R-3 and O-2 levels, in leadership positions, and in the integration of gender mainstreaming in scientific activities. With sustained governance attention, transparent monitoring, and targeted career development support for women, IIASA can achieve measurable gains in the coming years.



International Institute for
Applied Systems Analysis
IIASA

twitter.com/**iiasavienna**

facebook.com/**iiasa**

blog.iiasa.ac.at

linkedin.com/company/**iiasa-vienna**

youtube.com/**iiasalive**

flickr.com/**iiasa**