



The Union "Farmers' Parliament"

Gender Equality Plan

The Union "Farmers' Parliament" has an obligation to ensure the rights of its employees, which are enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia and which are protected by international legal norms.

The association strives to provide such working conditions in which every employee is respected and evaluated according to their work performance. The personality, political, philosophical and religious beliefs of every employee are respected within the framework of the current legislation, applying the principle of equal treatment.

The Union is committed to implementing a gender equality plan to promote equal attitude towards employees and industry representatives, regardless of gender. The plan includes actions to promote equality and to prevent discrimination.

The main goals of this Gender Equality Plan are to ensure:

- that people of any gender have equal opportunities when it comes to recruitment and terms of employment and wages;
- that all employees have the same opportunities, rights, and obligations regardless of gender;
- a healthy work environment, free from gender-based violence, where everyone is treated professionally;
- work organization in which employees can combine work with family life;
- the genders have equal opportunities in the field of agriculture.

Equal opportunities in terms of recruitment and employment

At the moment Union Farmers' Parliament employs ten women and six men – this represents a pretty equal employee distribution in terms of gender.

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To ensure equal opportunities for people of any gender in recruitment process and employment, the Union Farmers' Parliament carries out recruitment policy that ensures that potential employees are evaluated solely based on their performance during the recruitment process. The recruit rights are protected by labour law¹ that stipulates that “when establishing employment legal relations, as well as during the existence of employment legal relations, especially when promoting an employee, determining working conditions, wages or professional training, or raising qualifications, as well as when awarding an employment contract, different treatment depending on the gender of the employee is prohibited”. The Union has recruited all employees keeping this principle in mind and plans to do so in the future.

The same principle is applied to wages – people are paid solely according to their responsibilities.

The Board of the Union works voluntarily and currently consists of two women and seven men. The Union's Articles of Association stipulate that once every two years, the association's congress elects the board in open or secret (if at least 1/6 members request it) elections. Board candidates are recommended by union members or the chairman of the board. Thus, every member regardless of gender has an opportunity to be elected as a board member. The Union strives to keep women represented in the Board in the future.

Equality in employee opportunities, rights, and obligations regardless of gender

The Union Farmers' Parliament believes in gender equality and strives to provide equal opportunities. To ensure equal opportunities, rights, obligations at work, all employees are treated equally – regardless of gender or hierarchy in the organisation, all employees have to fulfil their duties according to job descriptions. The duties include attending meetings and work events, which in turn provide opportunities to be heard. During meetings all employees are asked to speak their mind. All ideas are considered and all concerns – addressed. The Union plans to keep up this practice in the future.

A healthy work environment

The current work environment in the Union is very professional, yet informal. Therefore, the current culture doesn't accept any violence, including gender-based violence. In

¹ <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/26019-labour-law>

addition, the overall structure of the Union is open – employees are free to approach their superiors to address any concerns in this regard. The healthy work environment is boosted by regular team building events. The Union strives to keep up this practice.

Work organization in which employees can combine work with family life

The current work organisation in the Union is very unrestrained. The Union believes in their employees' abilities to plan and execute their own work. Therefore, all employees, regardless of gender or family status, are welcome to work according to their own plan, provided that the management is, within reason, informed of the approximate working days/hours. All employees are welcome to chose to work from home. To make working from home more accessible, if needed, employees are provided with tools, such as computers, chairs etc. for their home offices.

The maternity and paternity leaves in Latvia are paid and executed according to the law.

In addition, the Union has held a seminar on work-life balance for the employees.

The Union strives to keep up the good work in this are in the future, and to keep assessing the situation (any employee is welcome to voice their needs regarding work-life balance).

Equal opportunities in the field of agriculture

Currently women are not underrepresented in the field of agriculture in Latvia – almost equal number of women and men work in the field of agriculture. Nevertheless, there could be more equal gender representation within decision makers. The country in general follows the agricultural strategy that, among other principles, seeks to promote gender equality. The Union follows the common plan and supports and encourages female leadership in Agriculture. The Union strives to keep up this practice and come up with new opportunities for women who wish to succeed in this field.

Riga, 18.09.2023.

Deputy Chairman of the Board:

Maira Dzelzkalēja - Burmistre