



Gender Equality Plan

IDMEC - Instituto de Engenharia Mecânica

2023/2024

IDMEC – Instituto de Engenharia Mecânica

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Gender Equality Plan

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Introduction

Gender Equality is one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations (UN). It is an important debate for the construction of society and with a significant impact on the community of IDMEC where there is still a significant gender polarization in the research community.

This polarization, though with different reasons, results largely from a traditional culture and vision, which does not reflect the current reality and the true scope of Engineering. In this sense, IDMEC aims to promote and enhance diversity through a set of actions to strengthen inclusion in general, taking especially into account gender balance.

It is within this framework that this gender equality plan is developed, to ensure a culture which enables women and men equal opportunities within IDMEC. A strategy is defined, based on 4 priority areas of intervention:

- i. equal access to employment: recruitment and selection;
- ii. performance evaluation and career progression;
- iii. internal and external information and communication;
- iv. work-life balance.

Continuous monitoring of gender equality indicators is crucial to implement such strategy.

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Strategic Objectives

IDMEC aims to implement a set of actions and initiatives in order to promote gender equality and actions at all levels, and to guarantee the conditions for full and equal participation of women and men in professional activity, free of gender stereotypes.

These actions have two main objectives:

1. Externally, on the development of activities that contribute to promote an improved gender balance among the candidates to the research centre on the fields of Engineering;
2. Internally, supporting policies that facilitate the career advancement of women, both on the research and administrative careers.

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Portuguese Research Environment

- Women represent nearly half of all researchers in Portugal, which makes it a leader within the EU28 (women account for 48% of researchers during the period 2014–2018, the closest to gender parity for all EU28 countries);
- Portugal exhibits the largest gain in the number of women researchers, increasing nine percentage points from 39% to 48% since the earlier period 1999–2003 to 2014-2018;
- Portugal's gender representation varies across fields, but still consistently leads all European comparators. The percentage of women represented among researchers in Portugal is highest across all health sciences and life sciences fields, and lowest for physical sciences;
- Subject areas with some of the highest percentages of women researchers in Portugal include nursing, dentistry, medicine, immunology and pharmacology. Portugal has also reached gender parity in chemistry, chemical engineering and environmental science within the physical sciences, ahead of the EU28 overall and individual EU countries;
- However, as is the case across the EU28, women in Portugal are underrepresented within the physical sciences overall. The gender gap is largest among more senior researcher cohorts and shrinks among earlier career cohorts across all subject areas;

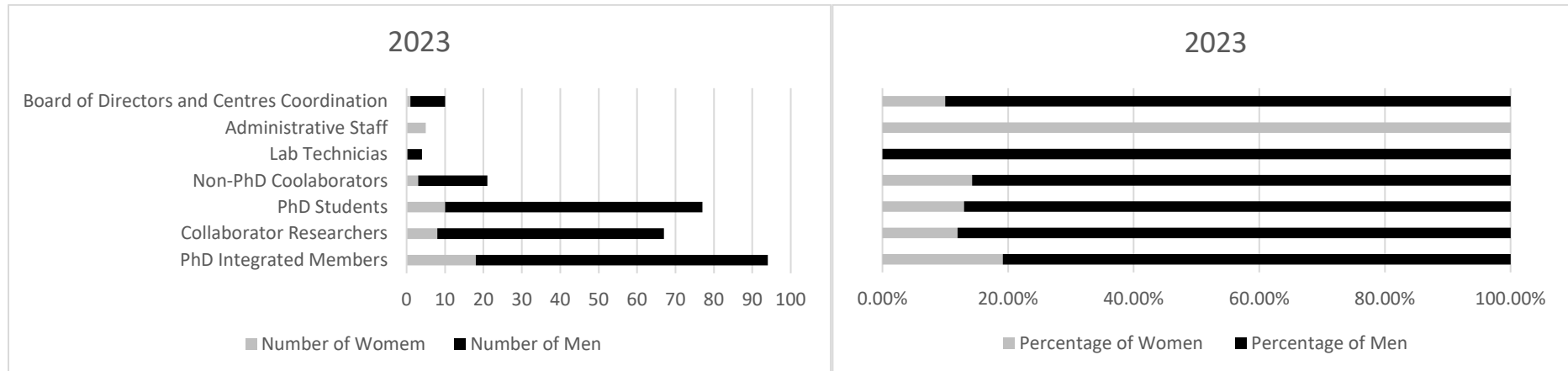
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Monitoring Gender Equality in IDMEC

- Almost 70% of (PhD) integrated members are affected by the IST Gender Equality Plan.
- Numbers of women and men across categories are presented on the left (with percentages on the right).
- The overall female representation across all technical and administrative staff of IDMEC is 16.6% (41 out of 247), which is still a little higher compared to the 1st year students in Mechanical Engineering at IST (13%, 20 out of 160) or in related areas like Aerospace or Computer Science;
- The female representation is higher in the categories administrative staff (only women). The lab technicians, the board of directors and centres coordination, the non-PhD collaborators and collaborator researchers are the categories with less women (less than 20%).



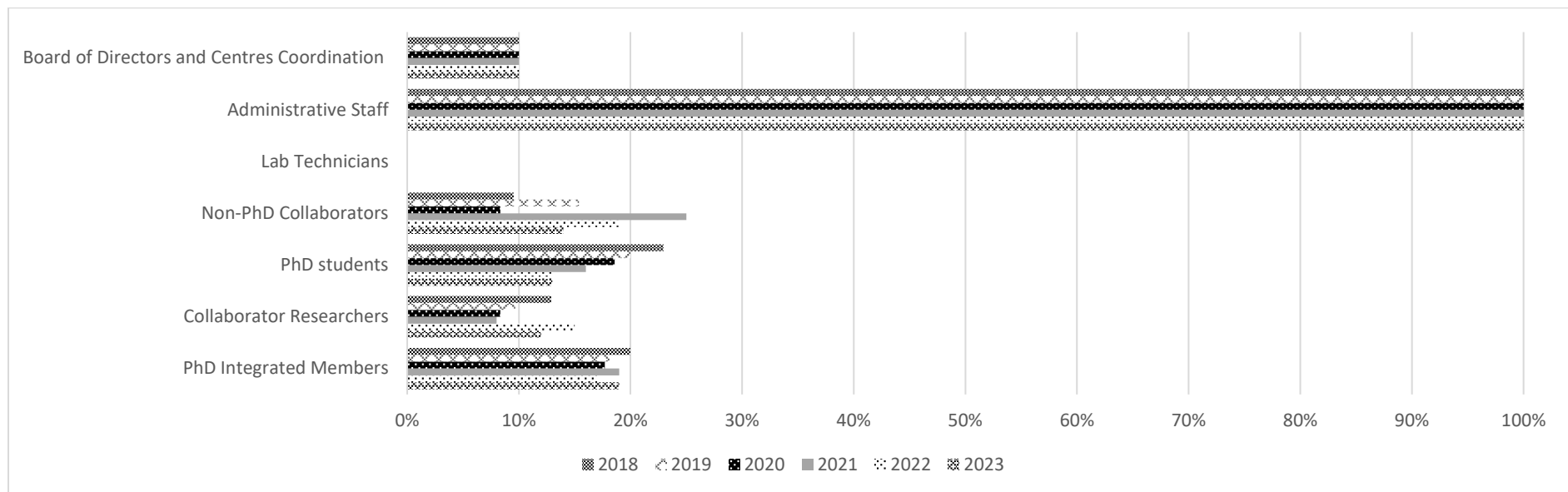
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Monitoring Gender Equality in IDMEC

- Across the categories “Board of directors and Centres Coordination”, “Administrative Staff” and “Lab Technicians”, the Gender Equality figures (% of women) in IDMEC have remained unchanged in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023;
- Across the remaining categories, with an exception for PhD Integrated Members, the Gender Equality figures have slightly worsened, namely in PhD students, and Collaborator Researchers.



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Action Plan

A – Equal access to employment: recruitment and selection

Promoting balanced representation of men and women in working teams within researchers and administrative and technical staff:

- i. ensuring that criteria and procedures for recruiting and selecting human resources bear in mind the principle of equality and non-discrimination based on sex;
- ii. encouraging the application and selection of men or women in areas where they are underrepresented, when the merit of the candidates is similar;
- iii. maintaining information disaggregated by sex.

B – Performance evaluation and career progression

Promoting gender balance in the decision-making field and professional development in the research and technical-administrative careers:

- i. ensuring transparent and objective promotion and career development processes for men and women;
- ii. implementing procedures that guarantee equal opportunities for promotion and career development;
- iii. adopting measures, mentoring, counselling and/or coaching practices to achieve a balanced participation of women and men in the top decision-making and management/leadership positions.

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C – Internal and external information and communication

Raise awareness within IDMEC community regarding gender balance issues:

- i. disseminating good practices and role models with the aim of promoting the example of research with relevant careers in STEM and/or top decision-making and management/leadership positions;
- ii. using inclusive language in internal communication;
- iii. adopting a responsible marketing and advertising policy, which prevents the use of gender stereotypes and promotes diversity;
- iv. promoting activities in primary and secondary schools to increase the percentage of women among 1st year students in Mechanical Engineering and Engineering in general.

D – Work-life balance

Measures to help reconcile work, private and family life. Foresee and disseminate different ways of support to achieve a proper work-life balance of IDMEC community that ensures equal opportunities:

- i. implementing measures that specifically encourage the balanced participation of men and women in family life;
- ii. offering flexible working options (hours, locations, etc.) and professional development opportunities considering specific responsibilities, of workers at family level;
- iii. disclosing the legal rights that assist protection in parenting, paternity, maternity and family assistance, as well as existing resources that facilitate the articulation of professional, family and personal life, including services and protocols with support services for dependent children of male and female workers.

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