



Gender Equality Plan

Updated 12 Feb 2024

Motivation

A strong and welcoming community promotes inclusiveness, equality, and cooperation. Diversity adds to our success and pleasure in R&D and manufacturing. It broadens our market strength and enhances the quality of our team. Stoli continues to support the development of structures and targeted measures that enhance gender equality within its community. This is a strategic priority for the company for the coming years.

As part of the European Commission [Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#), the European Commission is committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation. This is alongside the well-established regulatory framework within the EU on gender equality which applies widely across the labor market including the SME sector.

Because of the peculiarities of the SME sector, specific actions are needed to overcome possible gender gaps. Still many structural barriers to gender equality in research and innovation persist. These barriers within research have been typically addressed through:

- funding instruments such as Horizon 2020
- the European Research Area in collaboration with member countries and research organizations

The European Commission introduces gender equality plans as a precondition for securing funding from [Horizon Europe](#), the framework program for research and innovation. The precondition is part of the plans drawn up by the European Commission for promoting gender equality ([Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#); [Gender Equality in the European Research Area](#)). From 2022, every legal entity will have a gender equality plan in order to be eligible for funding from Horizon Europe.

As a participating SME, Stoli Chem and its Board of Directors have supported these strong actions towards gender equality within our community. Over the last 5 years, Stoli has developed many activities to address gender equality: from raising awareness on gender equality at the interview stage to providing special trainings to its staff to ensure inclusive recruitment and career progression.

The measures, activities and policies that have been developed and implemented to support Stoli goals, will be presented. It also includes planned initiatives for 2022 to 2025. We acknowledge that gender is always linked to other social categories, such as ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation. This makes an intersectional approach necessary when making plans for gender equality.

Gender Equality as strategic priority

Stoli strategy 2030

StoliChem is a community of engineers, manufacturing and marketing & sale staff. People are the heart of the company therefore it is of great importance to safeguard the encouraging working atmosphere, creating a personal, welcoming and vibrant environment that enables individuals to grow professionally and personally. Our people are showcasing their organizational and entrepreneurial skills and demonstrate a willingness to help to each other.

In the company, we strive for diversity. Diversity of nationality, gender, social background and cultural heritage adds to our success and pleasure in manufacturing and sales. It broadens our product scope and enhances the quality of our manufacturing process.

Stoli plan 2021-2030

We will have a diverse, international workforce, with a special focus on improving the genderbalance in StoliChem

Main objective: Establish an internationally attractive diverse and inclusive working culture

Stoli is an SME that embraces diversity of perspectives and staff. This means that we strive for an international, diverse and inclusive working environment, in which staff at all levels can develop their personal professional paths.

Our R&D activities are enriched by the presence of diversity in perspectives, and a diverse and inclusive working environment ensures that our talent can be optimally utilized. In an inclusive organization, everyone can participate on an equal footing in the organization process. In our company, openness and cooperation are central, and diversity, inclusiveness and equality are a prerequisite. We want to be among the leading SMEs in technology and make a valuable contribution to society. In the upcoming years we will expand our policies in this field, showcase examples and become a thought leader when it comes to restoring the gender balance, notably in technical SMEs.



An approach to gender equality

In drawing up this gender equality plan, we are using an interdisciplinary approach to gender equality. This first group of measures is aimed at increasing gender equality in terms of numbers: improving recruitment, advancement, and retention of women.

3.1 Career development and coaching

Stoli offers to their employees an opportunity to attend various professional courses to stimulate their professional and personal development. Stoli properly prepares and supports their employees for performing managerial and organizational responsibilities.

3.2 Recruitment

Stoli has set gender targets for women staff members until 2030, as these not only influence the hiring of women scientists, but they also address the retention. Stoli aims for at least 40% of female staff in 2030. Stoli aims for at least 30% proportion of women in leadership positions. When recruiting candidates for Board positions, a deliberate effort is made to achieve a balanced gender distribution. The proportion of women by job level is periodically measured. The top management actively promotes the importance of gender diversity and demonstrably steers towards achieving more gender diversity.

In recruitment, we move to the interview stage all eligible female candidates who were found eligible during the application. It is worth noting that the eligibility criteria in most applications relate, in effect, in reading the job advertisement and providing an answer to a defined relevant professional question. The fact the answer is provided serves as at the eligibility “pass” rather than content of the answer.

Gender neutral vacancy texts

The talent attraction team gives useful tips to the Board to make sure they keep the right candidates captivated and ensure gender neutrality in the job description.

These tips for gender neutral texts include:

- Start with describing the main challenge(s) of the position. R&D activities show that staff are drawn primarily by the topic of interest.
- Don't just describe the position, but also emphasize the embedding in the company
- Make the societal relevance of the position visible: what am I contributing to?
- Make sure that job description is inclusive and appealing to all genders.

3.3 Advancement and retention

Stoli advises to its staff to take different courses to improve their managerial and organizational skills. Stoli senior staff also offers support on various levels for (female) staff in performing their managerial tasks. Next to these trainings, Stoli offers a training to give R&D staff the opportunity to reflect on their work with a group of peers, to sharpen their vision and research practice, while developing professional skills at the same time.

3.4 Equal Pay analysis

It is important for Stoli that men and women are equally rewarded for equal work. The analysis shows there is no difference in pay between men and women. This analysis will be repeated every 3 years.

3.5 Media

We acknowledge the importance that women staff are represented and given a voice in the dissemination of their showcases to the wider public. For this reason, we monitor the media appearances (print, radio, television) of our staff of different genders.

3.6 Social safety

Social safety in the workplace is feeling protected against undesirable behavior and the threat of danger as a result of human actions. For a workplace to be socially safe, the culture needs to allow for making mistakes on an individual level and the organization needs to learn from its mistakes at an organizational level. An organization that welcomes the opportunity to learn from its mistakes will become a socially safe workplace, supporting employees to optimize their contribution to the organization as a whole.

Social safety requires continuous attention and is also under development. Company management and supervisors play a significant role and are accountable for creating a safe work environment at our production site. We encourage our staff to speak up and express concerns about undesirable behavior, irregularities, and research integrity. We strive for a corporate culture without fear of punishment or unfair treatment for raising such concerns yet understand it is sometimes difficult to speak up. Therefore, there is the necessity for a solid care landscape and clear rules and procedures.

3.7 Conditions of employment

An employee is entitled to a total leave of 16 weeks for pregnancy and childbirth. Leave can be adjusted according to personal needs (flexible pregnancy leave). The employment contract can be extended with the amount of maternity leave taken at the request of the employee.

We also aim to be “reasonable” and grant holidays (whether paid or unpaid). Over the years of 2021-2024 there was not a single instance of any holiday or leave denied allowing for any outside-of-work commitments even at a short notice.

3.8 Fixing the knowledge

We expect to create a community that respects, appreciates, and fosters diversity, and an inclusive working environment that helps all staff to take ownership of their development and helps them to shape their own personalized development path. This means that it will be easier for staff with various backgrounds, circumstances and learner needs to find their way at Stoli Chem.

3.9 Diversity and Inclusion

In addition to codes of conduct, regulations and (complaint) committees, Stoli Chem also has some other initiatives and networks that are intensively involved in and committed to equal treatment of employees. Supported by the Executive Board, Stoli Chem facilitates collaborative projects among women employees, organizes activities, for example, for professional and personal development; increases the awareness of opportunities for women in different projects and markets, fostering contacts with partner organizations promoting women in workplace.

3.10 Transparency and equal opportunities in career policy procedures

Stoli Chem aims to conduct ethically responsible and professional appointment and evaluation practices for staff members. The Principles of Conduct set out principles for appointment in order to assist the members of selection panel to apply “best practices” in the proactive assessment and selection of candidates. The Principles define minimum standards that are to serve as the benchmark for conscientious actions.



Monitoring

In the monitoring phase, the process and progress are regularly evaluated. The findings from the monitoring phase make it possible to fine tune and improve any interventions that are made to achieve optimum results.

Stoli Chem collects the information about numbers and percentages of women in R&D staff, in M&S staff and women in support staff. Stoli Chem performed employee satisfaction review in 2021 among the employees, as part of a structural improvement cycle. The Board will monitor Social Safety issues by registration of reports and complaints.

Discussion on gender equality in the Executive Board

The topic of gender equality and women talent in staff is discussed twice a year in the Executive Board. This topic entails:

- Action plans for reaching the gender targets
- Recruitment of women talent
- Retention of women talent
- Analyses of possible gender gaps in starting position, promotions and career progression

Communication

The Gender Equality Plan will be published internally and externally on the TU/e website. Furthermore, it will be shared with all staff in internal newsletters.

Mandatory GEP requirements of European Commission

Mandatory GEP process requirements	Gender Equality Plan - Actions
Public document	
Signed by top management	Formal document signed by the Executive Board
Published on the company's website	Diversity and Inclusion
Disseminated through company	As a first step the GEP will be disseminated across various stakeholder groups, and it will be published in the company newsletter.
Dedicated resources	
Funding for gender equality positions or teams	COO performs duties of Chief Diversity Officer
Reserved time for others to work on gender equality	COO coordinates diversity committee
Data collection and monitoring	
Data on gender of staff across different roles and leadership	The gender data are collected and published on the company website and in the annual reports to the EU
Annual reports and evaluation of progress and outcomes	The next annual report and evaluation towards the company targets will be published in Oct 2024
Training and capacity building	
Whole organization engagement	D&I initiatives
Tackle gender biases of people and decisions	Transparency and equal opportunities in career policy procedures
Joint action on specific topics	Diversity&Inclusion initiatives & networks (section 3.9)
Work-life balance and organizational culture	Conditions of employment (section 3.7)
Gender balance in leadership and decision- making	Transparency and equal opportunities in career policy procedures (Section 3.10)
Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	Recruitment (section 3.2)
Integrating the gender dimension into daily activities	Fixing the knowledge (section 3.8)
Measures against gender- based violence, including sexual harassment	Social Safety (section 3.6)