



INSTITUT FÜR ARBEITSMARKT- UND  
BERUFSFORSCHUNG  
Die Forschungseinrichtung der Bundesagentur für Arbeit

# 6<sup>TH</sup> IAB GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

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# Strategic framework conditions of gender equality policy and promotion of the compatibility of work/research and family/care at the IAB

The IAB presents its 6<sup>th</sup> Gender Equality Plan for the period 2026 to 2029. It is based on the revised Federal Act on Gender Equality (*Bundesgleichstellungsgesetz*, BGleG), which has been in force since August 2021. The focus of this legislation is on gender equality and the elimination of disadvantages while promoting family-friendly working conditions and compatibility of work and family/care.

These legally enshrined principles of equality and compatibility are key quality criteria for the IAB. As an attractive employer, particularly within the research sector, we rely on an HR policy that is actively family-friendly and tailored to different life stages. This is also reflected in the Institute's consistently successful certification since 2009 by the non-profit Hertie foundation through the *berufundfamilie* audit. Building on this, the action programmes further develop and adapt existing approaches and established practice with the aim of providing the best possible support for employees with care and family responsibilities in managing compatibility.

Reconciling professional and family responsibilities poses a particular challenge for employees in leading positions, as the demands in terms of presence, availability and workload are especially high in these roles. While some of these employees already make use of the existing flexible working arrangements, the IAB is currently developing a comprehensive concept for flexible leadership models. The aim is to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions, thereby further improving gender equality at the Institute.

As a research institute committed to scholarly excellence, we seek to attract and retain highly qualified women for research. To this end, we support them by providing successful programmes such as the IAB mentoring programme and by adopting measures tailored to individual needs and personal circumstances.

We have made significant progress on the path towards equality in recent years thanks to the support of the entire Institute. We intend to continue this positive trend consistently in order to achieve genuine gender equality at the IAB.



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# 1 Gender equality

Based on the Federal Act on Gender Equality (BGleiG), this Gender Equality Plan sets out the framework and priorities for the IAB's equality and compatibility policy for the coming years.

The goals of the Federal Act on Gender Equality (BGleiG) are as follows:

1. Achieve equality between women and men
2. Eliminate existing gender-based disadvantages, particularly those affecting women, and prevent them from occurring in future
3. Improve family-friendly working conditions and the compatibility of family, care and employment responsibilities for women and men

With the amendment of the Federal Act on Gender Equality (BGleiG) in August 2021, an additional cornerstone of gender equality was enshrined in law alongside the existing goals: the target of achieving equal representation of women and men in leadership positions across all areas by the end of 2025. According to Section 3(2) BGleiG, "areas" are defined as the individual pay brackets, pay grades/wage groups, career groups, career paths and specialisations, as well as positions involving supervisory and leadership responsibilities in a department.

The statutory objectives focus on eliminating gender-based disadvantages, with particular emphasis on addressing and preventing structural discrimination against women.

Section 4 BGleiG places a particular obligation on employees with supervisory and leadership responsibilities to promote equality between women and men. This obligation is to be taken into account as a guiding principle across all areas of activity at the IAB.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Gender Equality Plan draws on statistical data as at June 30<sup>th</sup> 2025 and presents an analysis of developments over the past four years.

## 1.1 The structure of the workforce at the IAB

A total of 56 percent of employees at the IAB are women. Among research staff, the figure is 50 percent – an increase of four percentage points compared to 2021. Among employees on permanent contracts, 58 percent are women, although the proportion is ten percentage points lower among research staff. Fortyfour percent of full-time employees are women, while the figure for part-time employees is 66 percent. The proportion of women among employees under the age of 50 is slightly higher than among older employees, and as of 2025 it is marginally higher than the proportion of men, as is the case with interns, research assistants and student assistants (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Workforce structure as of 30 June 2025**

Number of persons and shares in percent

Type of employment	Women (frequency)	Proportion of women (in %)	Men (frequency)	Total (frequency)
<b>Employees</b>	241	55.5	193	434
of which employees	229	55.4	184	413
of which civil servants	12	57.1	9	21
<b>Research staff</b>	162	50.0	162	342
of which with publication assignments	122	49.6	124	246
<b>Non-research staff</b>	79	71.8	31	110
<b>Employees with a permanent contract</b>	152	58.0	110	262
of which research staff	77	48.4	82	159
<b>Employees with a fixed-term contract</b>	89	51.7	83	172
of which research staff	85	51.5	80	165
<b>Full-time employees = 100% working hours</b>	91	44.2	115	206
Near full-time employees ≥ 80% – < 100% working hours	31	54.4	26	57
of which: Research staff	19	51.4	18	37
<b>Part-time employees &lt; 100% working hours</b>	150	65.8	78	228
Part-time employees < 80% working hours	119	69.6	52	171
of which: Research staff	79	61.7	49	128
<b>Employees under 50 years of age</b>	168	56.8	128	296
<b>Employees aged 50 or over</b>	73	52.9	65	138
<b>Interns</b>	5	55.6	4	9
<b>Research assistants/student assistants</b>	30	54.5	25	55

**Notes:**

Employees do not include research assistants/student assistants, interns, trainees, persons in the release phase of partial retirement, employees on leave or staff seconded outside the Federal Employment Agency.

Research staff here include: all employees from pay grade TE II / A13 gD and above, including research support staff and excluding the service departments PQI and FPL.

Source: IAB business data (controlling); reference date: June 30<sup>th</sup> 2025

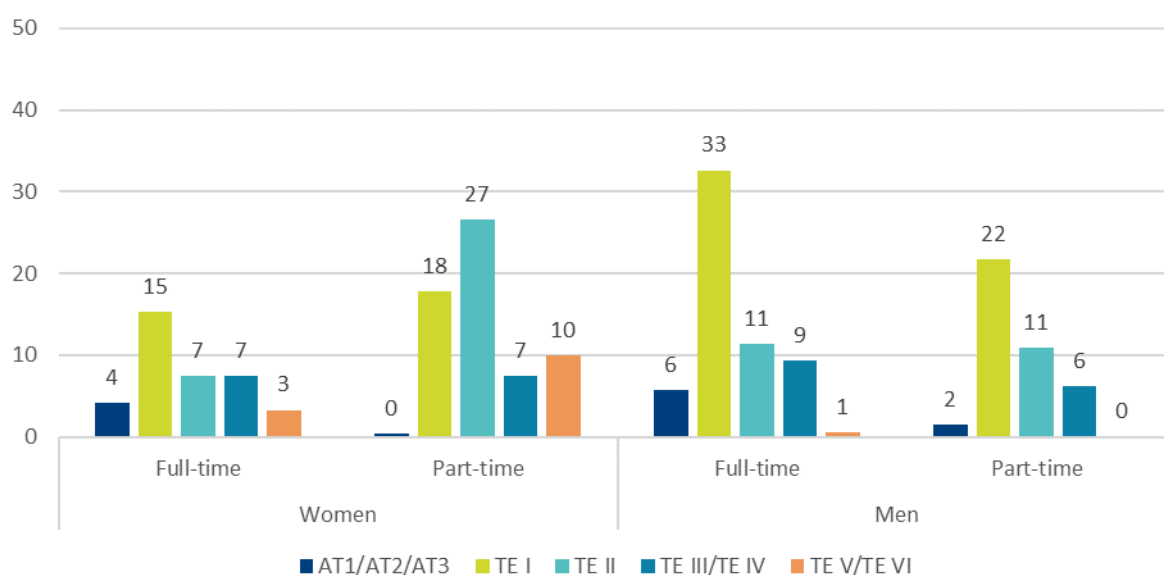
## 1.2 Salaries, classifications and stages of an (academic) career

### 1.2.1 Classifications

Figure 1 shows separately for women and men how female and male employees at the IAB in 2025 are distributed across full-time and part-time employment and across the five job levels (N=241 women and 193 men). The sum of the ten bars therefore equals 100 percent for each gender. Among female employees at the IAB, the highest shares are in part-time employment in TE II (27 %) and in part-time employment in TE I (18 %). A further 15 percent of women work full-time in TE I. Among men, the highest shares are in TE I, with 33 percent in full-time employment and 22 percent in part-time employment.

**Figure 1: Distribution of employees across job levels by working hours, shown separately for women and men, 2025**

Shares of all employees (women N=241 and men N=193) in percent



Source: IAB business data (controlling); reference date: June 30<sup>th</sup> 2025

Overall, the proportion of women at job level TE I is 43 percent (2021: 46 %) and 46 percent among staff not covered by collective agreements (2021: 39 %) (not shown in the figure).

At TE I level, women are almost evenly split between full-time and part-time work, whereas 60 percent of men work full-time.

### 1.2.2 Stages of an (academic) career

As in the German research sector in general, also at the IAB the gender gap widens with higher levels of qualification or leadership responsibility. For example, the proportion of women among research staff without an academic title is 64 percent – significantly higher than among those with doctorates (38 % in 2025). The opposite pattern can be observed among men: the proportion of men among employees with doctorates is almost twice as high as among researchers without an academic title.

The proportion of women among professors has increased from 33 percent in 2021 to 50 percent. However, only a slight increase has occurred among heads of research units, namely from 38 to 40 percent.

**Table 2: Proportion of women by stages of academic career**

Shares in percent

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Research staff without an academic title</b>	53.2	60.0	64.0	63.3	64.1
<b>Research staff with a doctorate</b>	40.2	38.6	39.2	41.3	37.9
<b>Professorships (all types)</b>	33.3	34.2	37.4	43.2	49.5
<b>Heads of research units</b>	37.5	43.8	42.5	41.2	40.2

Notes:

Individuals are classified according to the highest qualification they have attained. The figures include research staff both with and without publication assignments, as well as research support staff. Professors are not included among those with doctorates. Only professorships with an employment share of more than 10 percent at the IAB are included. Heads of research units include heads of research groups, research departments and junior research groups, but not heads of working groups.

Source: IAB business data (controlling); full-time equivalents; average figures for 2025.

The aim is in particular to increase the proportion of women among those with doctorates, not least with a view to enhancing their long-term career prospects at the IAB. For this reason, doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers pursuing a *Habilitation* (post-doctoral lecturing qualification) will continue to receive support where needed.

## 1.3 Leadership positions

### 1.3.1 Women in leadership positions

In order to provide a comprehensive picture of the extent to which women hold leadership positions, the following section considers not only leadership positions in research units or service departments, but also the proportion of women in substitute positions in case of absence, heads of working groups and of competence fields, and project leaders at the IAB.

**Table 3: Women and men in leadership positions – absolute numbers and proportions of women**  
Number of persons and share in percent

	Women (frequencies)	Proportions of women (in %)	Men (frequencies)	Total (frequencies)
<b>Leadership positions with personnel responsibility</b>	20	40.8	29	49
of which Directorate and Research Management	1	–	2	3
of which leader of a research unit	8	–	12	20
of which head of a service department/team	3	–	3	6
Substitute in case of absence	8	–	12	20
<b>Leadership positions without personnel responsibility</b>	21	45.0	26	47
Project leader	10	–	12	22
Head of competence field or working group	11	–	14	25

Note: Research units include research departments, research groups and junior research groups. "Head of team" refers to the library team. Only project leadership roles with an assigned functional level are included.

Source: IAB business data (controlling); reference date: June 30th 2025.

In the Directorate, the position of vice director of the IAB is held by a woman. With the exception of the service departments, men are underrepresented in all categories considered here. Half of leadership positions with personnel responsibility work part-time (not shown in the table).

### 1.3.2 Joint appointments of junior and special professorships

The research performance of departmental research institutions is to be strengthened through close cooperation with universities. To this end, the IAB developed a scheme for joint appointments to special professorships as early as 2007 and has implemented this scheme several times since. These special professorships are linked to the role of head of a research department. In terms of junior professorships, the IAB has cooperation agreements with the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg.

Six appointment procedures were conducted between July 2021 and June 2025, with half of the positions being filled by female researchers, namely one junior professorship and two special professorships.

## 1.4 Events and training

### 1.4.1 Conference presentations and internal IAB presentations

Among other factors, the increased use of virtual event formats has led to a rise in the number of presenters at peer-reviewed conferences, policy advisory events and internal IAB lecture series since 2021.

In 2025, the proportion of women among presenters remained lower than that of men for most types of events, but it has increased compared to 2021. The only exception here is the IAB Colloquium series.

Since 2022, the IAB has organised a new event series entitled Special Lectures, involving internationally renowned researchers. From 2022 up to and including 2025, a total of 14 individuals were invited, including eight women and six men.

**Table 4: Peer-reviewed presentations**

Number of presentations and share of women in percent

Type of event	2021 Total (frequencies)	2021 Proportion of women (in %)	2022 Total (frequencies)	2022 Proportion of women (in %)	2023 Total (frequencies)	2023 Proportion of women (in %)	2024 Total (frequencies)	2024 Proportion of women (in %)
Conferences	409	45	326	42	472	46	441	49
Policy advisory events	613	41	664	34	747	38	888	43
DiskAB	10	20	22	36	10	70	16	69
IAB Colloquium	22	41	30	40	30	37	45	33

Notes: For conferences, each person linked to a peer-reviewed presentation in IAB controlling system (“IABaktiv”) with the role “presenter” is counted once. Co-authorship therefore results in multiple counting of presentations. One of the aims of the internal discussion format DiskAB is to support early-career researchers and provide a platform for engaging in academic discourse. External researchers are invited to the IAB Colloquium. Due to adjustments in documentation and data collection methods, the figures are not fully comparable with those of the 5<sup>th</sup> IAB Gender Equality Plan.

Source: IAB business data (controlling); data status: December 2025

As shown in Table 4, the share of women among presenters at both peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed events in 2024 is much higher than in 2021, with the exception of the IAB Colloquium.

#### 1.4.2 Training programme “Addressing Sexism Effectively”

In signing the “Declaration against Sexism and Sexual Harassment”, the IAB has made it clear that it takes a firm stance against such behaviour at the workplace and that it has zero tolerance for sexism, sexual harassment or sexual violence.

A mandatory training programme for all IAB employees seeks to raise awareness of the issue and to provide options for action both in preventing sexism in advance and in dealing with conflict situations. The aim is also to identify and eliminate subtle forms of sexism, thereby creating a working environment in which all employees feel at ease.

Planned for the period 2024 to 2026, the training programme “Addressing Sexism Effectively” provides tailored measures for all IAB employees in formats appropriate to different target groups. Women and men are given the opportunity to address the issue either within the protected setting of their respective groups or by sharing experience across genders.

### 1.5 Recruitment procedures and early-career researchers

#### 1.5.1 Completed recruitment procedures between 2021 and 2025

A total of 240 job advertisements were published at the IAB between July 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 and June 30<sup>th</sup> 2025. A total of 233 positions were filled through recruitment procedures, of which 65 percent were filled by women. A total of 2,361 applications were received, 57 percent of which were submitted by women.

**Table 5: Recruitment procedures in the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2025**

Absolute numbers and shares in percent

	Advertised vacancies (frequencies)	of which not filled (in %)	Applications (frequencies)	of which proportion of women (in %)	Invited applicants (frequencies)	of which proportion of women (in %)	Appointments (frequencies)	of which proportion of women (in %)
<b>Research staff</b>	103	11	1,487	52	294	55	109	60
<b>Non-research staff</b>	137	17	874	65	273	71	124	69
<b>Total</b>	240	28	2,361	57	567	63	233	65

Note: All recruitment procedures and job advertisements were included, including leadership positions, but excluding research assistants/student assistants, graduate trainees and interns. In some cases, several positions were advertised within a single job advertisement, or one position was filled by two people working part-time.

Source: IAB business data (ERP), period: July 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 – June 30<sup>th</sup> 2025

Over the four-year period, 105 positions were filled for the job and competency profile “research staff” without leadership responsibility. Women were appointed in 63 procedures (60 %).

**Table 6: Completed recruitment procedures for “research staff” (not including leadership positions), full-time and part-time, 2021 to 2025**

Absolute numbers and shares in percent

	Full-time total (frequencies)	of which proportion of women (in %)	Part-time total (frequencies)	of which proportion of women (in %)	Total (frequencies)	of which proportion of women (in %)
<b>Applications</b>	985	49	436	60	1,421	52
<b>Invited applicants</b>	166	51	107	59	273	54
<b>Appointments</b>	60	50	45	73	105	60

Note: Positions without leadership responsibilities. Eight advertised positions were not filled.

Source: IAB business data (ERP); period: July 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 – June 30<sup>th</sup> 2025

The target set out in the 5<sup>th</sup> Gender Equality Plan to increase the proportion of women appointed to research staff positions was met: over the past four years, the share of women among newly appointed research staff rose by 21 percentage points compared with the period 2018–2021.

### 1.5.2 Tenure-track procedures for fixed-term research staff

Tenure track (TT) is a procedure for converting an employment contract at the IAB into a permanent one. At the IAB, there are essentially two routes into the tenure-track procedure: as a staff development measure (TT-PE) for research staff with a research remit, and as a recruitment measure (TT-RC) for research staff with a research remit in the departments Research Coordination (Foko), the Regional Research Network (RFN), the Research Data Centre (FDZ) and Statistical Methods (KEM).

An individual development path is agreed on with the selected applicants for a certain period, usually four years. After successful completion of the procedure, they are entitled to a permanent full-time position.

The tenure-track procedure can be completed on a part-time basis, making it easier to reconcile work and family/care responsibilities. The term of the tenure-track agreement is extended according to the reduction in working hours and additionally by any period of parental leave or maternity leave taken.

Over the four years under analysis, 34 persons applied for the tenure-track procedure as a staff development measure (TT-PE), including eight women (24 %). A total of 19 persons were admitted to the procedure, of which five were women (26 %).

A series of measures has been formulated in the field of action “More women in research” with the aim of increasing the proportion of women among potential applicants, applicants and successful applicants in the tenure-track procedure.

15 researchers entered permanent employment over the past four years after successfully completing a tenure-track procedure, seven of whom were women.

### 1.5.3 Participants in the graduate programme (GradAB)

Participants in the graduate programme (GradAB) are not IAB employees. However, many GradAB participants are also employed at the IAB with a small number of working hours. GradAB has since become an important recruitment channel for filling research staff positions at the IAB.

A total of 25 scholarships were awarded between 2022 and 2025, including 16 to women, with the proportion of women among applicants averaging 43 percent over the past four years. Among those admitted to the graduate programme, the proportion of women averaged 64 percent.

### 1.5.4 The IAB mentoring programme

The IAB has run a mentoring programme for young female researchers and female subject experts since 2016. For women in particular, reconciling academic qualification with family responsibilities often presents a major challenge. The IAB promotes the compatibility of an academic career and family life, and the topic of work-life balance features prominently in the mentoring programme, too. Through this programme, the IAB also provides structured support for the development of academic talent among all female researchers and subject experts, thereby helping to achieve the Institute’s equality goals.

The one-year mentoring programme is followed by a mentoring alumni network: here, former programme participants can continue to attend peer exchange and closing events, for example, and they can make ongoing use of the network.

The mentoring programme provides an excellent basis for providing female research staff at the IAB with targeted support and staff development opportunities. 43 women have taken part over the past four years.

## 1.6 Fields of action and measures to reduce the underrepresentation of women

### 1.6.1 Field of action 1: More women in research

In the period under review from 2022 to 2025, women researchers with completed doctorates were underrepresented (38 % in 2025) (see 1.2.2 Stages of an academic career). The lower proportion of women among those with doctorates also impacts on the number of applications submitted by women researchers under the tenure-track procedure.

By contrast, positive developments can be seen in the recruitment process: 60 percent of advertised positions were filled by women researchers (in line with the job and competency profile for research staff, see 1.5.1).

Targets: By December 31<sup>st</sup> 2029, the target is to achieve a proportion of women of 50 percent among those with doctorates and, as far as possible, to maintain a proportion of women of 50 percent among “research staff with publication assignments”.

The following measures have been agreed in order to achieve these objectives:

- Women researchers, female GradAB participants, female research assistants and female interns will be targeted more actively when research staff positions are to be filled.
- Suitable measures will be developed based on a recruitment marketing strategy.
- The IAB mentoring programme will be continued (including support for women researchers who wish to prepare a tenure-track application).
- Role models at the IAB will be identified and communicated in order to illustrate development opportunities for women at the Institute.
- Possible measures for recruiting women researchers, supporting them and increasing their visibility in the respective research unit will be addressed in the target agreement discussions between the Directorate and managers. The proportion of women researchers (female research staff in research units with publication assignments, including outstanding female researchers and heads of junior research groups, but excluding heads of research departments) will be included in the performance agreement for staff not covered by collective agreements.
- For employees involved in third-party-funded projects, measures to mitigate uncertainties in the event of parental leave will be continued, especially targeted HR support. The Institute will endeavour to enable follow-on employment, providing the staffing budget allows for this.
- Support for doctoral studies/*Habilitation* (post-doctoral lecturing qualification):
  - Doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers pursuing a *Habilitation* (post-doctoral lecturing qualification) will receive support from student or research assistants where needed. Leaders of research departments conduct annual needs assessments through staff appraisal interviews. The aim is also to improve communication of this offering.
  - Furthermore, up to 20 percent of working time during the doctoral phase is to continue to be allocated for work on the doctorate. This is currently still handled differently across

the research units. Transparency and equal opportunities need to be established here and standardised rules are to be formulated to this effect.

- In addition, the data basis is to be expanded, possibly through a research project, so as to be able to analyse differences between genders and between mothers/fathers and people without children in terms of the duration of doctoral studies.
- The “leaky pipeline” in academia: The aim is to expand the data basis on further career trajectories and on the reasons why more women researchers leave the IAB than male researchers so as to be able to reduce gender inequalities in this area. As a first step, the plan is to provide empirical evidence on gender-specific barriers. It can be assumed that in the case of fixed-term employment periods lasting several years – where there is considerable uncertainty regarding the possibility of continuing to pursue an academic career – there is greater pressure on women due to family planning considerations and more extensive care responsibilities. It is also conceivable that in dealing with these pressures, women are judged and advised differently from men by their close surrounding in both the personal and professional context.
- Equality should be taken into account in HR planning changes (expansion and reduction), paying particular consideration to women with care responsibilities.

## 1.6.2 Field of action 2: More women in leadership positions

To date, the IAB has responded with the following measures to appoint more women to managerial positions:

### 1. Leadership with flexible working hours:

The IAB takes a positive view of part-time employment for leadership positions and promotes flexible working time models in leadership positions as well. Some managers at the IAB already make use of options that allow flexibility in the organisation of their working time in terms of location and/or volume, such as reduced working hours (“part-time”) and/or mobile work/working from home.

The revised scheme “Leadership with flexible working hours at the IAB” will enter into force in 2026, enabling full-time managers to receive leadership support as well. The aim in particular is to enable women with care responsibilities to work full-time by providing them with a support structure, thereby freeing up more time for them to conduct their own research, for example.

### 2. Open-rank procedures for joint appointments with universities:

An open-rank advertisement broadens the pool of potential applicants. Experienced candidates can be considered along with early-career researchers, whose potential is also subjected to an initial assessment. Since the proportion of women applying for W3 positions tends to be low, especially in economics, an open-rank advertisement may result in more female applicants taking part in appointment procedures.

In order to expand the pool of qualified female candidates for joint appointments to special professorships, the IAB proposes an open-rank procedure in discussions with the universities within the framework of a joint appointment committee. An advertised special professorship is not advertised from the outset as W3, but on an open-rank basis as W2 with or without

tenure track, or as W3. Experienced candidates may apply for the W3 professorship and early-career researchers may apply for the W2 professorship. The open-rank procedure has hitherto only been used in one appointment procedure, and the proportion of women among the relevant applications here was significantly higher.

Despite the measures already introduced, the proportion of women in leadership positions with personnel responsibility at the IAB stood at 41 percent on the reference date, while the proportion of women heading research units was at 40 percent (see 1.3).

The amended BGLiG of 2021 promotes equal representation of women and men in leadership positions in all areas of the organisation by the end of 2025.

Target: By 31 December 2029, the aim is to achieve a proportion of women of 50 percent among “managers with personnel responsibility” and among “managers of research units”.

The following measures are planned to meet these targets:

- In joint appointment procedures with universities and higher education institutions, the IAB will work to ensure that special professorships are advertised based on an open-rank procedure (e.g. W2 tenure track, W2 or W3).
- The scheme “Leadership with flexible working hours at the IAB” is to be communicated and implemented in order to ensure better support for managers and the systematic application of flexible management models at the IAB.
- Labour market screening for the filling of leadership positions will be optimised. In particular, consideration will be given to whether and how women researchers in particular can be addressed. The job advertisement will make explicit reference to the flexible leadership models at the IAB.
- Support for own research: Female and/or single-parent managers, junior professors and heads of junior research groups with care responsibilities will receive individual support in fulfilling their leadership and research responsibilities (e.g. coaching, student assistants or research assistants). This offering is to be communicated through various channels: in connection with the research departments’ needs assessment for funding for student assistants, at staff appraisal interviews, and as part of the onboarding procedure for new employees.
- Measures will be developed to identify, address and support the development of high-potential women within the organisation.

### 1.6.3 Field of action 3: Promoting diversity and awareness at the IAB

Diversity at the IAB is to be promoted through the following measures:

- In order to avoid unconscious bias and sexism/unequal treatment, awareness will be raised through training for managers and employees. The training programme “Addressing Sexism Effectively” is to be continued, and targeted events will be offered regularly as before on topics relevant to the academic working context, such as power and dependency relationships. There will be a process of evaluation and internal reflection on the feedback from the training programme and the analysis of the survey “Sexual harassment at the workplace”, which was conducted in 2025. Along with the existing additional measures, this

feedback will then be integrated in a uniform concept for preventing discriminatory conduct at the IAB.

- The concept “Awareness at the IAB” is to be further developed by adding active prevention measures in the context of IAB events.
- Gender-equitable language is practised at the Institute in line with the IAB mission statement.

General correspondence, IAB publications and legal and administrative rules (such as regulations, service agreements and policies) are to be worded in such a way that designations are gender-neutral or else use both the female and male forms.

At the end of 2024, the IAB language guide was updated and adapted to reflect the new Federal Employment Agency language guide and the revised version of the Official Rules of German Orthography by incorporating the section on special characters dated December 15<sup>th</sup> 2023. The updated guide is available on the intranet.

- Gender equality issues at the IAB will be communicated more actively through various channels: on the social intranet and in the exchange formats organised by the Equal Opportunities Officer.

## 2 Promoting the compatibility of work/research and family/care responsibilities

The Federal Act on Gender Equality (BGleIG) seeks to enable the compatibility of family, care and work responsibilities. In this context, Section 15 BGleIG stipulates that family-friendly working hours and family-friendly framework conditions must be created for women and men unless there are compelling operational reasons why this is not possible.

Striking a balance between work and family life poses a major challenge for many families, which is why flexible and individual solutions are needed. The IAB implements these through numerous family-friendly measures, such as flexible working and break times, various part-time working models (also during parental leave) and mobile work.

### 2.1 Job management

In order to optimise fixed-term employment policy at the IAB, the Code of Conduct on the Employment of Fixed-Term Research Staff at the IAB was developed in 2016. This is a voluntary employer commitment to conclude longer employment contracts wherever possible for research staff in the context of their academic qualification goals – for a period of at least two years – under the German Academic Fixed-Term Contract Act (*Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz*, *WissZeitVG*).

Implementation of the Code of Conduct is evaluated internally each year. A detailed evaluation by gender has also been carried out since 2023.

According to this evaluation, around one fifth of new appointments and extensions in the years 2021 to 2025 had a duration of more than 24 months. However, the average duration of new appointments and extensions in the period under review is less than two years. Further concepts are currently being developed at the IAB to increase the duration.

The figures available do not indicate any unequal distribution between genders.

## 2.2 Women researchers between academia and family

Women researchers in particular still face the challenge of having to achieve a great deal in their professional lives within a relatively short phase in their career (doctorate/postdoctoral qualification), while at the same time managing competing demands associated with family responsibilities. In view of this, insecure employment relationships may also encourage people to forgo having children or postpone family planning.

To date, the IAB has offered the following options to provide support in this situation:

- As a general rule, every vacant position must be advertised.
- As a result of the employer's voluntary commitment under the Code of Conduct, the aim is to offer longer-term employment contracts of at least two years.
- The Federal Employment Agency's family service offers employees numerous support options relating to childcare and care for relatives in the form of information, advice, placement services and financial assistance. These particularly include emergency childcare and emergency care for relatives in the event of the unforeseeable unavailability of regular care arrangements, reimbursement of the costs of self-organised holiday childcare, and ensuring childcare during training, conference attendance or other work-related events. Care costs during training and conferences may be covered (see 2.4.2) in justified emergency situations.
- A mentoring programme has been in place since 2016 to support the career development of female researchers and subject experts, with some nine to twelve mentees being admitted each year. Reconciling career and private life is one of the programme's core topics, particularly career counselling and enhanced support for women researchers (mentees) with children.
- Since mid-2014, the IAB has been a member of Dual Career Netzwerk Nordbayern (DCNN), an association of academic institutions in the region of North Bavaria. Network members pursue two objectives: attracting and retaining highly qualified researchers and promoting better ways of reconciling two careers. Specifically, the DCNN offers support through individual counselling to identify support needs, guidance on the local labour market, placement and the provision of contacts with potential employers or the forwarding of application documents to suitable institutions, as well as the provision of advice during the application process.
- Employees in special phases of development or in the tenure-track procedure may receive counselling where needed and where appropriate, support is available from external

coaches in connection with training. This coaching offer can also be helpful in dealing with specific questions relating to issues of compatibility.

## 2.3 Working time management and work organisation

The Federal Employment Agency has long offered its employees flexible working hours and the option to choose where they work. Employees readily use this option as a means of reconciling work and family life more effectively.

The underlying concept of family was defined more precisely during the first certification phase for the *berufundfamilie* audit as follows: “For us, family means at least two people who assume long-term responsibility for one another.”

### 2.3.1 Mobile work

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, employees at the IAB were able to apply for “alternating home-based work” for reasons such as childcare or caring for dependent relatives. As the number of home-based working arrangements was limited, remote working was also possible under certain conditions.

At the beginning of 2022, a new service agreement on mobile working at the Federal Employment Agency entered into force (Instruction 202202012 dated 18 February 2022), setting a framework for the future world of mobile work. The two alternative forms of work – contractual home-based working and occasional remote working – were merged and further developed into the location-flexible form of work known as “mobile work”. In the amending agreement of 8 October 2024, the possible scope of mobile work was increased to 60 percent. One of the main aims of the service agreement is to go further in promoting the compatibility of work and private life by allowing more mobile work than prior to the pandemic.

The new options for mobile work present teams with organisational challenges, however. For this reason, all teams are required to define rules for their communication in team agreements (team charters) and reconcile employees’ needs – especially those of parents and carers – with the Institute’s requirements. In 2025 and 2026, more team-based measures will also be carried out to improve and strengthen communication and cooperation within teams.

### 2.3.2 Part-time employment

As at the reference date of 30 June 2025, a total of 228 IAB employees were working under various part-time models (< 100 percent of working time), i.e. 53 percent of Institute employees. The proportion of women among part-time employees is just under 66 percent (62 percent of women and 40 percent of men work part-time). Among employees working part-time at less than 80 percent of regular working time (171 people), the proportion of women is just under 70 percent (49 percent of all women and 27 percent of all men work part-time at less than 80 percent).

The reasons for part-time employment at the IAB are not solely family-related or health-related: in the academic field, they also include the arrangements involved in collaborative projects, third-party-funded projects and temporary substitute positions, and working for two employers.

### 2.3.3 The IAB's scheme "Leadership with flexible working hours"

The possibility of part-time management enhances equal opportunities between women and men since it creates family-friendly framework conditions. In this way, it is possible to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions, and employees can return from family-related leave more quickly. The IAB has developed a "Leadership with flexible working hours" scheme which enables managers to receive management support and delegate technical oversight tasks to the subject expert level. Various constellations are possible depending on whether the manager wishes to reduce their working hours or work full-time. The "Leadership with flexible working hours" scheme creates greater scope for flexibility, thereby enabling better compatibility of work and private life.

### 2.3.4 Parents in prominent (leadership) positions at the IAB and own research

In certain situations, it is important for parents in senior academic positions to receive support for their own research.

Female and/or single-parent managers, junior professors and heads of junior research groups with care responsibilities may receive individual support at the IAB in fulfilling their management and research responsibilities. In particular, the use of student assistants or research assistants can enable greater flexibility and reduce time pressure. Coaching may also be considered where needed. This was formulated as a measure under the objective "More women in leadership positions" (see 1.6.2).

### 2.3.5 Family-related leave of absence – parental leave

Between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2024, a total of 52 people were on parental leave, including 29 women and 23 men. Of these 52 individuals, eight employees (three women and five men) worked part-time during parental leave without affecting their parental allowance entitlement.

At an average of 9.47 months, the duration of parental leave taken by women is still considerably longer than that taken by men, which averages 5.33 months. Most family-related leave is therefore taken by female employees.

Compared with the period 2018 to 2021, however, it is noticeable that the average duration of parental leave has become slightly shorter for women (9.47 instead of 10.7 months) and slightly longer for men (5.33 instead of 3.5 months).

## 2.4 Information, counselling and support

All information on gender equality and work-life balance is published and continuously updated on the Federal Employment Agency intranet, on the IAB intranet under "Work and family" and on the IAB careers page.

### 2.4.1 Counselling on returning to work

The integrated three-phase scheme for returning to work (Instruction 201912010) has for many years implemented the objectives of the Federal Act on Gender Equality (Section 1(1) (3) in

conjunction with Section 17 BGlG) with the aim of improving the compatibility of family, care and work responsibilities for all genders and facilitating the return to work.

Under the three-phase scheme in its current form, the HR department and the respective manager mainly support employees before, during and after a family-related period without employment, in particular parental leave and leave for childcare or caring for relatives. Between July 2021 and June 2025, a total of 27 consultations were held, all of them with women.

#### 2.4.2 Support with training measures

The Federal Employment Agency's family service provides free childcare during official training courses.

In the case of training measures at the Federal Employment Agency's own education and conference centres and at the Federal Employment Agency Management Academy (FBA), employees may use the accommodation and catering provided free of charge for children requiring care and for their caregiver.

In justified emergency situations, additional travel costs (travel and accommodation costs) for a child and a caregiver may also be covered during training courses and conferences. These care costs are reimbursed upon application to the HR department up to EUR 600 per person/year.

The Federal Employment Agency's electronic learning platform and learning opportunities such as DataCamp and AAPOR are accessible from home via mobile work arrangements and can be used at flexible times.

The individual needs of parents and carers in particular are supported through the use of technical platforms. Events such as the IAB Colloquium, DiskAB and internal training measures are offered in hybrid format wherever possible.

### 2.5 Certification through the *berufundfamilie* audit

Since 2009, the IAB has held continuous certification under the *berufundfamilie* audit for its strategically designed family- and life-phase-conscious HR policy.



Sabine Hofmöckel (right) accepted the certificate on behalf of the IAB at the award ceremony held by berufundfamilie Service GmbH in 2023. Also pictured: Marta Mistela, project manager responsible for the *berufundfamilie* audit at the IAB.  
Image source: berufundfamilie Service GmbH / Fotobox.

As part of the dialogue procedure in 2021–2022, care was taken to ensure that the current high standards would be maintained and expanded in line with needs. As a result, the certificate was confirmed on 15 March 2022.

A dialogue procedure was also carried out in 2025: this involved reviewing the implementation of the 2022 action plan and identifying new objectives and fields of action for the coming three years. Colleagues who took part in the 2025 Dialogue Day included researchers, committee members, Equal Opportunities Officers, the HR department and the Directorate. The certificate was confirmed and remains valid until 14 March 2028.

A further dialogue procedure is scheduled for the end of 2027.

## 2.6 Field of action and measures to improve the compatibility of work/research and family

Numerous measures already mentioned under the dimension “Equality of women and men” can also be assigned to the dimension “Compatibility of work/research and family”.

Alongside flexible, location-independent working time, effective, family-friendly framework conditions for better compatibility of family, care and work at the IAB include, in particular, implementation of the “Leadership with flexible working hours” scheme and individual support for female and/or single-parent in leadership positions, junior professors and heads of junior research groups with care responsibilities.

In addition, the following measures are being developed and implemented with the aim of improving the compatibility of work/research and family:

- Stop the tenure clock! Staggered personal research time after returning from parental leave will be implemented for researchers with publication assignments.

A study from the US and examples from the IAB show that men benefit disproportionately from gender-neutral, family-friendly work-life balance measures in academia (e.g. the family component under Germany's Academic Fixed-Term Contract Act (WissZeitVG) and "stop the tenure clock" measures in the US). In other words, a woman returning from parental leave usually resumes her academic work from the same situation as prior to parental leave, but when a man returns from parental leave, he may have already completed his doctorate or have prepared an article for publication in a high-ranking journal.

Gender-neutral work-life balance measures of this kind assume a level of equality that generally does not exist. Women do more care work than men, and this applies equally to highly qualified women.

For this reason, IAB researchers returning from at least seven months of parental leave or maternity/parental leave are to be offered at least one month of personal research time so as to enable them to reconnect with current research in their subject area. The period of personal research time is increased on a staggered basis if more than seven months of parental leave or maternity/parental leave have been taken. The scheme will be further developed and implemented at the IAB in line with the budgetary situation.

This counteracts perceived or actual productivity disadvantages resulting from parental leave and gives expectant mothers and fathers the planning certainty that they will be better able to reconcile academic work and care responsibilities after parental leave.

- For employees involved in third-party-funded projects, measures are planned to mitigate uncertainties in the event of parental leave: where an individual is employed on a third-party-funded project, no extension of the contract term is provided for under the German Academic Fixed-Term Contract Act (WissZeitVG) in the event of pregnancy or parental leave. The IAB would like to create planning certainty for the researchers concerned and provide support where needed. This measure is also set out under the objective "More women in research" (see 1.6.1).
- Dialogue procedure under the *berufundfamilie* audit in 2027: A Dialogue Day will be held to re-assess the current support needs of various affected groups, such as women researchers with publication assignments.