



**INRAE**



## **Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan**

**2025 - 2026**

The following document presents the 2025-2026 action plan for the prevention and fight against all forms of discrimination and for diversity<sup>1</sup> and inclusion. It was developed by the Institute's leadership in consultation with trade unions and those at INRAE who work closely on issues affecting individual employees and teams.

It accompanies the Gender Equality in the Workplace Action Plan for 2024-2026.

## Background and issues

INRAE's commitment to a diversity, inclusion and workplace equality policy is a tool in its HR strategy and has been a part of its human resources roadmap for over 15 years.

For INRAE, the objective is for the entire organisation to move from a mindset of non-discrimination to one of inclusion. Improving inclusivity means encouraging and promoting differences. INRAE thus affirms its inclusive vision of diversity as a factor of progress. This approach to diversity also improves employee relations within the Institute and, through the positive effect on its outside image, enhances its attractiveness. Diversity in all its forms gives INRAE an intellectual advantage that contributes to the strength of our teams and our ability to explore new scientific horizons. Through its commitment and measures, INRAE seeks to promote well-being in co-existence, so that every employee can flourish in their career regardless of their differences; encourage creativity and innovation, boost motivation and improve quality of life at work as a result.

Thanks to this proactive approach, the Institute obtained two Diversity and Equality at Work certifications for four centres in 2020. These certifications were extended to all INRAE centres in 2022.

INRAE is currently the only public scientific and technical research establishment to obtain this dual certification.

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<sup>1</sup>Diversity: Characteristic of a society or social group that includes people of diverse geographic, socio-cultural and religious backgrounds; age; gender; sexual orientation, as well as minorities.

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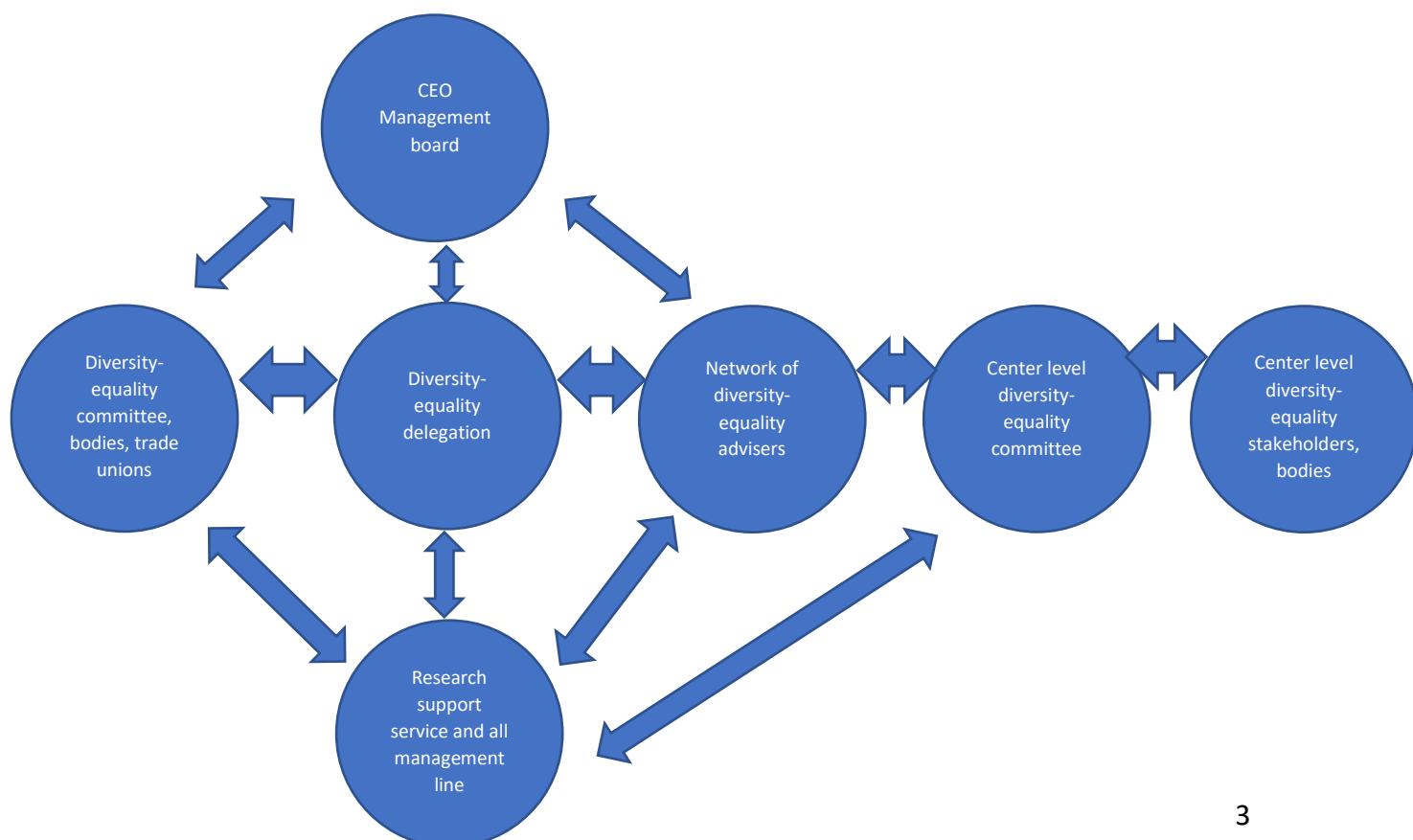
## I- Cross-cutting measures to cultivate a sustainable culture of diversity, inclusion and workplace gender equality

The Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and the Gender Equality in the Workplace Action Plan have several cross-cutting focus areas in common.

- Yearly internal and external communications plans -- an essential tool to raise awareness among staff, publicise implemented measures and support a sustainable culture of diversity and equality -- regularly promote major initiatives implemented as part of the national policy for diversity and equality.

Indicator: Number and types of communication measures

- As essential tools in building a workplace culture of diversity and gender equality, training courses and awareness-raising initiatives will continue and be adapted to our varied target audiences: (i) regular events for all staff to raise awareness about stereotypes and unconscious bias and how to prevent sexual and gender-based violence; (ii) additional tools in the "Recruiting without discrimination" kit for staff involved in recruitment; (iii) more comprehensive training and specific sessions about priority measures for HR staff, the network of diversity and workplace equality advisers, selection committees, and staff representatives of professional bodies; (iv) diversity and equality campaigns for managers.
- INRAE's participation in national inter-EPST-EPIC-EPA networks for diversity, inclusion and quality of life and working conditions for people with disabilities, as well as inter-EPST networks for workplace equality and local networks, will enhance and expand initiatives at the Institute and create opportunities to discuss practices and share feedback.
- Lastly, measures to prevent and fight discrimination and sexual and gender-based violence are led in synergy for both national action plans (see the Gender Equality in the Workplace Action Plan for 2024-2026).
- Likewise, both action plans are implemented on a participatory basis (see figure below).



- This figure illustrates how our different structures work together at the national level (the Institute's management board, national bodies and the diversity and equality committee) and at the centre level (steering committees and site-specific governing bodies. Dialogue with staff representatives is primarily organised within the framework of committees and governing bodies. This approach will continue, with training provided to those involved. Coordination of the network of diversity and workplace equality advisers – a dynamic local liaison for the national policy – will continue and cooperation with other networks, including CSR managers and human resources staff working in prevention, social services, training and disability, will be expanded.

## II- Measures specific to the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

### Focus area 1 – Supporting every career path at every stage

- *Protected characteristics: family status – place of residence – age – origin – health status – trade union membership*

#### 1.1 Continue to safeguard recruitment practices and welcome new profiles

##### 1.1.1. Continue to safeguard recruitment practices

The Institute strives to ensure equal treatment for every employee, before and during the recruitment process. A 'Recruiting without discrimination' kit is available for everyone involved in recruitment. It contains guidance and recommendations, best practices, decision-making tools and educational videos on unconscious bias in recruitment. Communication and awareness-raising initiatives ongoing since 2021 will also continue. Likewise, a survey conducted at five centres to gauge the kit's application and impact on implemented practices will contribute to a review of measures to be taken over time to enhance its use.

##### 1.1.2. Expand recruitment sources by experimenting with new partnerships

In line with its employer brand and attractiveness policy, INRAE will broaden its recruitment pools by testing new partnerships. Special attention will be paid to publicly funded back-to-work schemes for people who are unfamiliar with the world of research. The creation of career brochures illustrating the variety of roles at the Institute will enhance communication at trade fairs.

The launch of two new 'careers' and 'digital' ambassador networks will help enhance INRAE's visibility to potential candidates, via in-person discussions about professions as well as publications on LinkedIn and other social media.

## 1.2 Support diversity in career paths

### 1.2.1. Support employability for contractual staff and the hiring of apprentices

INRAE is fully committed to ensuring equal opportunity and supporting every employee throughout their career, especially for those who contribute to INRAE activities on a fixed-term basis. In 2024, an overhaul of human resources policy included updated pay grids and new merit bonuses that are awarded to tenured and contractual staff based on the same criteria to ensure equal treatment. Annual review processes were also revised to provide follow-up and support for contractual staff who are planning the next step in their career. In the next few years, efforts will be made to harmonise practices across all INRAE centres, by offering professional training to staff in HR management roles.

Several initiatives and schemes will also be launched to promote their employability:

- Digital services will be offered at the national and international level to enhance their knowledge about different professions (including hard-to-fill roles at INRAE) and about recruitment methods and career advancement options. These digital services will also ensure permanent access to available resources.
- Information about career guidance services via the 'PhD' (*Doctorats*) information system.

An overhaul in 2024 of the apprentice programme will be rolled out in 2025 with a greater visibility of available roles, in line with the Institute's needs, particularly for jobs that are the hardest to fill.

### 1.2.2. Support managers in their management role

In 2025-2026, the Human Resources department will offer support and follow-up to centre presidents and division heads at the beginning and end of their term.

End-of-term seminars for unit directors as part of their skills development plan will continue with two focus areas: one on the transfer of knowledge and another on post-term planning. This support takes the form of sharing practices and experiences as well as active listening.

Training for line managers will continue.

### 1.2.3. Provide long-term career support

The end of an employee's career – and particularly the last five years – is a pivotal time for both individuals and their employers. INRAE will implement several measures to provide the best support possible to employees during this phase:

- The INRAE Evaluation department will offer all engineers and researchers aged 60 or over the option of a career assessment. The possibility of conducting this assessment at other stages of a career (when a new role is taken on, during a career switch or at the end of an elected term), will also be reviewed.
- The Human Resources department, working with the Career guidance office, will offer support to develop a skills transfer project for employees who are within five years of their retirement or at the end of a long-term assignment. This scheme will be implemented on two levels:
  - o At the regional level with voluntary centres
  - o At the national level in the form of inter-centre workshops

A partnership with the INRAE Evaluation department has been created for this initiative.

Indicators:

- Number of people who received support when developing a skills transfer project
- Number of career assessments completed

#### 1.2.4. Provide personalised advice and support during the retirement process

Personalised advice that covers more than just paperwork is available to each employee who is preparing to retire. Active listening places the focus on the personal and emotional aspects of this life stage during interactions with employees. This support is provided to employees locally, at group meetings and individual appointments. The goal over the next few years will be to enhance communication on this scheme and continue our efforts.

#### 1.2.5. Foster intergenerational connections

Part of INRAE's commitment to supporting well-being in co-existence is to ensure mutual understanding between generations with different life and academic experiences and whose ambitions, approaches to work and expectations vary as a result. An initial series of measures will aim to develop awareness about intergenerational ties in the form of theatre workshops and conferences that foster self-expression, discussion, experience sharing and, ultimately, improve mutual understanding.

### 1.2 Support international mobility and cultivate intercultural awareness

In support of its European and international strategy and the importance it places on openness and diversity, INRAE is working to further improve the number of international scientists who come to INRAE and the quality of hosting programmes for them and for INRAE staff who go abroad. These efforts focus on achieving secure hosting conditions with appropriate insurance coverage, inclusivity, equality, attractiveness and skills development for all staff involved in international activities.

From 2025 to 2027, this commitment will focus on three major objectives:

#### 1.3.1. Uphold and reinforce the regulatory and social framework for international mobility

This framework, which underpins the quality of hosting programmes and the experience of international scientists, is continuously changing. As a result, these programmes need to include structural and supportive features such as secure hosting conditions; a fair and sufficient level of funding or revenue; customizable insurance coverage and compensation and assistance with immigration formalities. Following on from measures put in place in 2021, the focus in the next two years will be on optimising hosting conditions for international employees who come to INRAE. A review will be conducted of housing, accommodation, assistance and onboarding in the local and regional ecosystem of INRAE centres. At the same time, INRAE will increase its support of efforts to change the French legislative framework around international mobility by stepping up its involvement with partner networks like EURAXESS, government ministries, Campus France and embassy networks.

#### 1.3.2. Support incoming and outgoing international mobility

To create new opportunities abroad and hosting opportunities in France, the international mobility incentive scheme provides financial support to strategic international partnerships. This structural measure will be renewed annually from 2025 to 2027.

Indicator: number of scientists welcomed and number of scientists abroad

#### 1.3.3. Build skills that contribute to international activity

International mobility mobilises a vast range of employees, roles and professions at INRAE, including professionals from abroad who are hosted or hired; the scientific and administrative staff who assist them when they arrive and during their



stay, and scientists on assignment abroad. These activities require a range of legal, financial, administrative, linguistic and intercultural skills and knowledge.

A series of measures and events to raise awareness and provide information and training to enhance these skills will be implemented between 2025-2027, including:

- a continually updated and expanded guide for international scientists wishing to come work at INRAE and an intranet site where employees can find all the information they need for an excellent stay here or abroad;
- the introduction of specialised English lessons to ensure excellent interaction with newly arrived incoming scientists who do not speak French;
- the introduction of hybrid e-learning classes on immigration formalities;
- training on secure hosting conditions including insurance coverage as well as on international mobility formalities at INRAE centres and units.

Indicator: number of people who take part in learning sessions on international mobility

#### 1.3.4. Facilitate and promote intercultural exchange

Interculturality is an important part of the Institute's international activities and essential to supporting well-being in co-existence and a sense of community in our workforce. International activities bring new connections and mutual enrichment but can also be a source of misunderstanding. Measures to raise awareness and a range of resources such as articles, first-hand accounts, interviews with INRAE staff and intercultural experts will be made available to limit potential problems and misunderstandings.

## Focus area 2 – Ensure a safe working environment for all

- *Protected characteristics: health status - disability - family status - loss of autonomy*

### 2.1. Advance further on workplace health and safety policy

The following are priorities for 2025-2026:

#### 2.1.1 Reinforce workplace prevention practices to prevent risks and safeguard employee health

As part of its prevention policy, INRAE provides training to all its employees on health and safety precautions for themselves and their colleagues. Special attention will be paid to particularly vulnerable categories of employees, including new hires, people exposed to new risks as a result of changes in their role, in equipment or methods, or who suffer a workplace accident or illness. A culture of safety is fostered by a network of individuals who oversee this training for employees, provide support and advice, propose appropriate measures and share information. The priority in the coming years is to expand the support received during their time at INRAE, via a check list of measures for new hires, awareness-raising webinars and training on new types of risks.

Indicator: number of people who take part in learning sessions on prevention

#### 2.1.2 Prevent the risk of addiction

INRAE's psychosocial risk prevention plan includes measures to prevent addictive behaviour (with or without substances). This is an important prevention challenge for the Institute that involves helping those in the field respond more effectively to problematic situations and prevent them from potentially impacting health and workplace well-being. In 2025, communication about the prevention of addictive behaviour will be a focal point.

#### 2.1.3 Prevent psychosocial risks

INRAE policy on the prevention of psychosocial risks (RPS) is set out in a dedicated action plan for 2024-2026. The plan calls for proactive intervention that includes continuous and iterative monitoring of psychosocial risk in units; informing and educating employees in prevention-related roles (and otherwise) on psychosocial risks and their prevention; managing problems; anticipating future risks (e.g. eco-anxiety, problems related to the intergenerational gaps in the workplace, recognition of the need for meaning in one's work) and establishing longitudinal monitoring of trends.

To ensure the primary prevention of RPS and compliance with legislation, a new assessment methodology – part of the global occupational risk assessment process and included in PREVENTEO, the occupational risk assessment application implemented in 2024 – will be tested at several voluntary centres with the goal of gradually rolling it out throughout the Institute.

### 2.2. Promoting an inclusive working environment for staff with disabilities

INRAE policy continues to support employees with disabilities through the renewal of its partnership with FIPHIP and a three-year action plan for 2024-2026. This action plan, a continuation of the Institute's long-standing efforts, provides a new thrust in support of a resolutely inclusive policy. It focuses on the following:

### 2.2.1. Facilitate inclusion in the workplace and continued employment

Promoting an inclusive environment for staff with disabilities requires the enhanced monitoring of the workplace conditions of these employees. INRAE is committed to accommodating specific workstation needs. The process in place at the disability unit to grant workstation adaptation requests will be reviewed to simplify access and make inclusive measures more effective.

Building accessibility is another key feature of the plan: A dedicated action plan will support consultations underway by a multidisciplinary "disability and accessibility" team at research centres as part of renovation work to improve accessibility.

Digital accessibility will also be addressed. Over the next two years, we will identify priority measures in this area and develop implementation methods.

### 2.2.2. Improve awareness among individuals and teams

Every year, a dedicated communication plan is developed to continue raising individual and team awareness about visible and invisible disabilities. Information campaigns are run at regular intervals throughout the year for all staff both at the local and national level.

INRAE also intends to enhance the training it provides to directly concerned audiences: disability advisers at centres, HR staff, representatives of employees with disabilities and concerned teams. The possibility of including a specific disability component in skills building for managers will be examined, along with innovative measures on certain themes, such as mental health first aid.

Indicator: number of information campaigns

## Focus area 3 – Support professional growth for a better work-life balance

### ➤ *Protected characteristics: family situation – specific economic vulnerability*

### 3.1. Understand staff perceptions to create objectives and measures

In 2019 the Institute began conducting biennial 'quality of life at work' surveys with its entire workforce. The survey includes a section on how staff perceive the risk of sexual and gender-based discrimination and violence. The 2023 survey included more detailed analysis from individual centres. INRAE will continue to use this methodology in future surveys as a useful diagnostic tool to guide action at the local and national level.

Indicator: Quality of life at work survey results

### 3.2. Reassess working arrangements for greater flexibility

Based on a review of remote work practices at INRAE and an assessment of employee opinion as expressed in the Quality of life at work survey, remote working protocols will change as of 1 January 2025 to reinforce workplace cohesion while preserving work-life balance and individual needs. Similarly, remote working arrangements will be extended to interns and apprentices.

A study of new work cycles will move forward, including the possibility of testing a four-day work week. Likewise, information campaigns on disconnecting from work and work-life balance will continue and be reinforced for managers as well as employees in general.

### 3.3. Continue to strengthen our social policy for all staff

#### 3.3.1 Parenting and family caregiver guidance and support

Measures to facilitate work-life balance will continue to include guidance and support for parents and family caregivers. The action plan reflects societal changes and diverse individual situations by expanding benefits to cover a broader range of parenting realities such as co-parenting (including blended families), individuals who share their lives with a parent or grandparent, and single parent families in particular. More information will be given to family caregivers about the services available to them such as the time off donation scheme and family caregiver leave.

Indicator: number of days off donated and taken as part of the time off donation scheme

### 3.3.2. Social support to cope with life's difficulties

INRAE is committed to supporting all employees at key stages of their lives, providing them with the assistance they need to cope with personal, professional or financial difficulties.

INRAE provides employees with services through a network of professionals at its centres in close cooperation with external partners. A network of social services assistants are available to listen, advise and support staff who so wish, by accompanying them with various processes and in finding solutions, in complete confidentiality. More information will be provided in 2025 and 2026 about the existence of available measures with a special focus on getting that information to short-term staff and single parent families.

Indicator: amount of assistance and loans provided

## Focus Area 4 – Support the implementation of a socially responsible purchasing policy

In 2024, INRAE established a purchasing policy that met legal purchasing requirements and also included the Institute's public purchasing policies and social and environmental responsibility policy (CSR), which are fully in line with INRAE's diversity-gender equality policy. Priorities for the next two years will focus on three areas:

- A review of sustainable purchasing clauses and a framework for the analysis of these purchases that includes workplace equality and non-discrimination criteria. Based on this review, changes and communication measures may be developed to enhance implementation.
- The development of a socially and environmentally responsible public purchasing strategy for the Institute that includes a section on social inclusion.
- The launch of certified training in sustainable purchasing for centre purchasing managers and purchasing staff and, more broadly, training and information campaigns on social aspects of sustainable purchasing for all employees.



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