

2021



University of Cyprus
Diversity, Equality and
Inclusivity Office

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2022-2025

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1. Introduction

Gender equality is both a value and core policy objective for all European Union activities, and the European Commission is committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation. It is part of the European Commission Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025¹, which sets out the Commission's broader commitment to equality across all EU policies, aiming at eliminating gender inequalities and intersecting socio-economic inequalities, including those based on disability, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity through research and innovation systems. In addition, the EU has a well-established regulatory framework on gender equality, including binding directives, which apply widely across the labour market including the research sector. Addressing issues related to gender inequalities is also a crucial factor towards achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and an inclusive economy that works for all.

There are 3 main levels at which gender equality is considered in Horizon Europe.²

1. Having a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place becomes an eligibility criterion for certain categories of legal entities from EU countries and associated countries.
2. The integration of the gender dimension into research and innovation content is a requirement by default, an award criterion evaluated under the excellence criterion, unless the topic description explicitly specifies otherwise.
3. Increasing gender balance throughout the programme is another objective, with a target of 50% women in Horizon Europe related boards, expert groups and evaluation committees, and gender balance among research teams set as a ranking criterion for proposals with the same score.

¹ Full document available in English: [A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#)

² Horizon Europe: European Union's key research and innovation funding programme until 2027 (for more information: https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en)

In the specific context of research organisations and higher education institutions, the European Commission considers **a Gender Equality Plan** as a set of actions aimed at: (1) conducting impact assessment/audits of procedures and practices to identify gender bias; (2) identifying and implementing innovative strategies to correct any bias; (3) setting targets and monitoring progress via indicators”.³

2. Situation and Structure at the University of Cyprus (UCY)

UCY established the Office for Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity (DEI Office) in 2020, showing its commitment to creating all necessary conditions that will encourage and respect diversity, while ensuring dignity both in the workplace and in society. The mission of this new Office is to promote the integration, diversity and equality and to eliminate all forms of discrimination at UCY. The vision is to create a fair, safe and pleasant environment, where all students and staff members, within and beyond their multiple identities, will feel supported, both in their professional and personal development. It is expected that the Office will act as the liaising entity of the University regarding all institutional matters that fall under the DEI scope and play a catalytic role in the creation and development of the necessary DEI processes and mechanisms that will address these principles.

The UCY community acknowledges that diversity can be one of the core strengths of the organization. Thus, the institution works systematically to create the necessary conditions for everyone to work and study on equal and fair terms. Every person in the community deserves to be respected and must be respectful towards others. It is expected that all members ensure that the values of equal and fair treatment that govern the organization are always implemented. It is recognized that diversity contributes to creativity and improves the quality of teaching, research and operations of the institution at all levels.

UCY also acknowledges that harassment or sexual harassment is based on the abuse of power and gender discrimination, therefore UCY takes a zero-tolerance approach towards the issue, acknowledging that sexual harassment impedes the implementation of equality in

³ European Institute for Gender Equality (2016). *Gender Equality in Academia and Research; GEAR Tool*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, Available: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear>

employment and education. Within this scope, creating and/or developing institutional mechanisms that will address violations of these principles is deemed of high importance. Recognizing that people differ in their gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, age, marital status, language, health condition, physical disability or socio-economic background, UCY has adopted policies that promote equal opportunities, respect and mutual understanding and cooperation, while it has developed various tools and practices to effectively manage diversity.⁴

Furthermore, UCY is fully committed to maintaining a working and learning environment in which the dignity of each individual is fully protected and the personality of each and every one - employee, student, colleague and candidate - is respected.⁵ Within this framework, the following principles apply:

- All employees and students have an obligation to comply with UCY diversity and anti-discrimination policies
- Those who apply for work or admission to UCY have the right to be treated with dignity and respect
- Harassment/sexual harassment/bullying will not be tolerated and will be severely punished⁶

⁴ UCY's Governing Bodies have recently approved the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Policy (Senate No. 16/2020, dated 17/06/2020, and University Council No. 9/2020, dated 7/9/2020).

Full document available in Greek: <http://ucy.ac.cy/legislation/volumea/7.11.html>

Full document available in English:

https://ucy.ac.cy/diversity/documents/Documents/Legislation/English/Equality_and_Anti-Discrimination_Policy_Final.pdf

⁵ UCY's Governing Bodies have recently approved the Policy and Code of Practice for Combating Harassment and Sexual Harassment at UCY (Senate No. 16/2020, dated 17/06/2020, and University Council No. 9/2020, dated 7/9/2020).

Full document available in Greek: <http://ucy.ac.cy/legislation/volumea/7.12.html>

Full document available in English:

https://ucy.ac.cy/diversity/documents/Documents/Legislation/English/Policy_and_Code_of_Practice_for_Harassment_at_UCY_Revised_Final.pdf

⁶ UCY's Governing Bodies have recently approved the Procedure for Managing Complaints and Grievances (Senate No. 18/2021, dated 07/07/2021).

Full document available in English:

https://ucy.ac.cy/diversity/documents/Procedure_for_Managing_Complaints_Grievances.pdf

3. The UCY Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

The UCY GEP, described below, is a formal document approved by the University's Governing Bodies (the Senate and the University Council) and disseminated within the institution. It demonstrates UCY's commitment to gender equality, sets clear goals, outlines specific measures and adopts specific policies to achieve them. It should be noted that the European Union sets the following as minimum process-related requirements:

- Public GEP: formal document published on the institution's website and signed by the top management
- Dedicated resources: commitment of human resources and gender expertise to implement it
- Data collection and monitoring: sex/gender disaggregated data on personnel and students and annual reporting based on indicators
- Training: awareness raising/trainings on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers

Taking into consideration the above minimum process-related requirements and based on a preliminary review of gender equality data (including UCY hiring and promotion policies, gender statistics etc.) collected by UCY postgraduate students, the UCY Gender Plan consists of the following five action axes:

1. Promoting and maintaining a University culture with equal opportunities for all
2. Incorporating principles and practices of equal opportunities in recruitment, career development, promotions and advancements
3. Promoting and ensuring equal participation and representation in the University community and decision-making bodies
4. Embedding the gender perspective in teaching, learning and research
5. Promoting an organisation free of sexism, harassment and gender violence

Based on the above action axes, specific strategic objectives are established in alignment with the mission, vision, and values of UCY, as well as with the provisions of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the EU and Cypriot Legislation. Accordingly, specific measures

are proposed to be adopted and implemented by the responsible University Bodies, as identified in the GEP.

The overall focus of the present GEP is to respond to the guidelines of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), as it aims to “identify and implement innovative strategies to promote cultural change and equal opportunities in Universities and Research Centres”.⁷ It is noted that all gender-related terms used in the present GEP are based on EIGE’s “Gender Equality Glossary and Thesaurus”.⁸

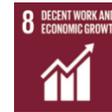
The GEP was approved by the University Senate (Meeting 29/2021) on 1st December 2021.

⁷ European Institute for Gender Equality (2016). *Gender Equality in Academia and Research; GEAR Tool*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, Available: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear>

⁸ European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) website: “Gender Equality Glossary and Thesaurus” webpage, Available: <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/browse>

Axis 1. Promoting and maintaining a University culture with equal opportunities for all

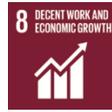
Key Areas	Strategic Objectives	Measures	Responsible Body	Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (ILO & UN)
1.1. Institutional Culture	Measure, acknowledge and raise awareness of any existing gender inequalities and sexism within the University culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further mapping of any existing issues and collecting gender-disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data from all UCY students and staff (gender mainstreaming) 	<p>Human Resource Services</p> <p>Academic Affairs and Student Welfare</p> <p>DEI Office</p>	 <p>10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status</p> <p>10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysing these data in an established Gender Report and suggesting measures for improvement 	<p>DEI Office</p> <p>Gender Equality Plan Review Committee</p> <p>Gender Equality Team</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminating of data analysis results among internal stakeholders and UCY decision-makers 	<p>DEI Office</p>	
	Improve commitment to equality within the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligning policies in the GEP with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the EU Legislation Based on the outputs derived from mapping, designing any necessary adaptations to University rules and regulations and UCY Strategic Plan in order to implement the GEP 	<p>Rectorate</p> <p>DEI Office</p> <p>Gender Equality Plan Review Committee</p>	 <p>5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic monitoring of the implementation of the GEP measures and actions 	<p>DEI Office</p> <p>Gender Equality Plan Review Committee</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting the dissemination of UCY best practices regarding gender equality within and outside the University 	<p>DEI Office</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocating funds from the University budget for the implementation and sustainability of the GEP actions and measures and for the reinforcement of the DEI Office, which is responsible for monitoring the implementation 	<p>Vice Rector for International Affairs, Finance and Administration</p> <p>Finance Committee</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing of a gender-sensitive language policy with non-sexist and inclusive language in all official documents and means of communication of the University (e.g., emails, social media, letters, press, documents etc.) 	<p>DEI Office</p> <p>Gender Equality Team</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting excellence by aligning core UCY activities with gender equality 	<p>Rectorate</p> <p>DEI Office</p>	
	Facilitate and maintain work-life balance for staff and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examining staff perceptions on their work-life balance and wellbeing in relation to their workplace through surveys in order to address the current issues and promote actions to tackle them 	<p>Human Resources Services</p> <p>DEI Office</p>	 <p>8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and providing support for services that improve the quality of life and work, such as child care (afternoon activities, summer school and extension of the nursery and kindergarten's working hours to accommodate parents), family members with disabilities, elderly family members, etc. 	<p>Human Resources Services</p>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing regulations and policies to facilitate work, personal and family life balance (flexible working arrangements, remote learning, work from home) 	Human Resources Services	 <p>10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that companies which provide outsourcing services to UCY (such as cleaning and security services) comply with the UCY GEP standards and policies 	Human Resources Services Tenders Office	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorising students' arrangements regarding attendance at lectures, exams, and seminars based on special circumstances of parenthood and pregnancy 	Academic Affairs and Student Welfare	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting and submitting of anonymous, statistical data categorised by gender to the DEI Office and the Gender Equality Plan Review Committee 	Human Resources Services Academic Affairs and Student Welfare All University Entities	

Axis 2. Incorporating principles and practices of equal opportunities in recruitment, career development, promotions

Key Areas	Strategic Objectives	Measures	Responsible Body	Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (ILO & UN)
2.1. Recruitment	Implement procedures that address gender representation in appointment and recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting transparency and gender sensitivity throughout all phases of the recruitment and appointment procedures 	Human Resources Services	 <p>5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p> <p>5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels and decision-making in political, economic and public life</p> <p>5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels</p>  <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that non-sexist and inclusive language is used in all job advertisements (according to the University language policy) to attract a diverse group of applicants 	DEI Office	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposing a legislation ensuring gender balance in all selection committees (for all University staff). 	Human Resource Services Regulations Committee Personnel Committee	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that the University’s regulations and processes relating to applicant evaluation and recruitment do not involve any element of direct and/or indirect discrimination 	Human Resources Services DEI Office	

				16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
2.2. Promotions, advancement and career development	Promote advancement and promotion policies that foster gender equality Overcome obstacles and difficulties for equal opportunities at all levels of the career ladder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping, analysing and mitigating the obstacles that prevent the access, permanence and promotion of women and men in the contexts of work 	Human Resources Services	 8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work or equal value
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting transparency and gender sensitivity throughout all phases of promotion, advancement and career development 	Human Resources Services All University Departments/ Faculties	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposing a legislation ensuring gender balance in all promotion committees (for both academic and administrative staff) 	DEI Office Gender Equality Plan Review Committee Gender Equality Team	

2.3. Study	Overcome obstacles and difficulties for equal opportunities in study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing actions to tackle segregation in studies and its effects, taking into account specific needs of students at different levels of study 	Academic Departments Academic Affairs and Student Welfare DEI Office Undergraduate Studies Committee Graduate School	 <p>4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing gender-related obstacles for advancement in graduate studies through mentoring 	Career Office	 <p>5. 1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating mentoring structures for the under-represented gender in specific fields of studies 	Gender Equality Team	<p>5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing support for under-represented gender in specific fields (for example, women in STEM) through promoting role models 	DEI Office	

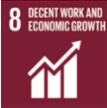
Axis 3. Promoting and ensuring equal participation and representation in the University community and decision-making bodies

Key Areas	Strategic Objectives	Measures	Responsible Body	Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (ILO & UN)
3.1. Leadership	Promote the participation and balanced representation of women in decision-making bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting excellence through balanced gender representation in decision-making bodies 	University Council	 <p>5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p> <p>5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels and decision-making in political, economic and public life</p> <p>5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforcing the balanced presence of women and men in leadership positions 	Senate	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing understanding and awareness of critical gender barriers in access to leadership positions 	Rectorate Academic Departments/Faculties	
3.2. Student Community	Promote the participation of women in community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporating the gender perspective and encouraging the balanced presence of women and men in students’ activities, leadership and clubs 	Academic Affairs and Student Welfare Student Union	

Axis 4. Embedding the gender perspective in teaching, learning and research

Key Areas	Strategic Objectives	Measures	Responsible Body	Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (ILO & UN)
4.1. Teaching and learning	Promote a gender diversity perspective in teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing guidelines, workshops and training on how to integrate the gender perspective in curriculum design, lectures, learning activities, course structure and teaching methods 	<p>KEDIMA</p> <p>DEI Office</p> <p>Gender Equality Team</p>	 <p>4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting academic activities and educational programmes for students on topics that address gender equality and diversity 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging and acknowledging the incorporation of the gender perspective in students' work 	Academic Departments	
4.2. Research	Promote a gender diversity perspective in research processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting gender diversity within research teams in line with the European Charter for researchers and the codes of ethics and conduct 	<p>Research Development Sector</p> <p>Research Committee</p> <p>Gender Equality Team</p>	 <p>10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status</p> <p>10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging the successful integration of the gender perspective in research according to EU Funding Agencies and the practice of "More for More" 	<p>Research Committee</p> <p>Research Development Sector</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting non-conventional funding for scientific projects that integrate the gender perspective 	<p>Research Committee</p> <p>Research Development Sector</p>	

Axis 5. Promoting an organisation free of sexism, harassment and gender violence

Key Areas	Strategic Objectives	Measures	Responsible Body	Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (ILO & UN)
5.1. Harassment	Promote measures and policies against sexual harassment and gender violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping the situation by analysing existing incidents and conducting confidential research to identify them 	<p>DEI Office</p> <p>Gender Equality Plan Review Committee</p> <p>Gender Equality Team</p>	 <p>16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere</p> <p>16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all</p> <p>16.B Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness to prevent and tackle sexist and gender-based violence situations in all University activities 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminating existing codes of conduct, policies, procedures and materials on the prevention of gender-based violence (UCY Code of Conduct, Equality and Anti-discrimination Policy, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy, Procedure for Managing Complaints and Grievances, etc.) 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating the necessary conditions that will encourage members of the University Community to report any gender-based violence cases 		
5.2. Gender-based violence	Provide support to survivors of gender-based violence who work or study at the University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing mental/emotional support to gender-based violence survivors 	Mental Health Centre of the University of Cyprus (KEΨΥ)	 <p>8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating mechanisms for alleviating and addressing the phenomenon of gender-based violence through a holistic approach 		

4. Further Steps

The DEI Office, along with the Gender Equality Plan Review Committee (to be appointed), will be co-ordinating the implementation of the GEP. For this purpose, annual audits on the progress of the implementation of the GEP's measures will be performed by the Office, and an Annual Gender Equality Report will be published. The monitoring process of the GEP's implementation will be based on quantitative and qualitative data. There will be an annual meeting to monitor whether the measures have been applied successfully and effectively, and make recommendations regarding any improvements and adaptations that need to take place. Therefore, additional measures may be suggested accordingly.

The next step includes the design of an action plan along with a timeframe for implementation, taking into consideration the proposed strategic objectives and measures.

The implementation process of the Gender Equality plan, including the shortcomings and successes, shall be recorded and taken into consideration when updating the Gender Equality Plan.