



Università  
di Catania

# Gender Equality Plan 2022-2026 University of Catania



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# GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

## General Overview

The University of Catania is fully committed to developing and promoting a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in line with the Sustainable Development Goals set out by the UN Agenda 2030.

The GEP, as part of our university's overall ambition, is an integrated document to the strategic planning process aiming to "identify and implement innovative strategies to promote cultural change and equal opportunities in universities and research centres" according to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE <http://eige.europa.eu>).

The key actions envisaged by our plan are consistent with the general guidelines used for the GEP drafting across Italian universities. Under the supervision of the GEP Working Group Commission as far as CRUI gender issues are concerned, our strategy is perfectly aligned to the guidelines set out for promoting gender equality according to the new Horizon Europe framework programme for research and innovation (2021-2027). The adoption of a GEP by universities is a stepping stone, establishing an access requirement to EU's key *funding programmes* according to the guidelines provided by the European Commission (EU Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025) for promoting structural changes in policies and addressing gender equality issues towards equal opportunities as far as research and innovation are both concerned.

The Gender Equality Plan is a flexible tool that is totally consistent with gender-sensitive policies already promoted by our university, and with the Positive Action Plan (PAP), as an integral part of a multi-year strategic planning. The actions outlined in this public document are indeed a step forward towards the implementation and the development of a set of measures that are already in place to address real needs and specificities that any related institution and the academic community may have as a whole. The programmatic topics covered in the equality plan drafting process come as a result of a synergistic contribution of the university governance aiming to encourage participatory action by any contact person in charge, top management bodies that play an institutional role in implementing the GEP, and by any relevant institutional actors and stakeholders. The plan's general structure is divided into five thematic macro-areas; actions and sub-actions to be implemented according to short and medium-term objectives:

1. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression;
2. Gender balance, leadership and decision making;
3. Work-life balance and organisational culture;
4. Integration of gender dimension into research and teaching;
5. Inclusion of gender dimension in university's third mission policies against discrimination and gender-based violence.



A summary sheet displays that the key actions identified within each thematic area come through initial impact assessment of institutional practices and procedures that can be put in place and as result of a preliminary context analysis carried out by CUG (the Italian Guarantee Committee) with the involvement of teaching, technical and admin members of staff who surveyed the actual needs. For each action, the targets involved, either directly or indirectly, along with any implementation responsibility are both identified, as well as any possible end results in terms of output and outcome. Consistency with the UN 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is also ensured as far as sub-target goals go too when particularly relevant for the action plan.

The GEP planning, implementing and annual monitoring entails a genuine commitment of human and financial resources all over the period of the action plan. The general goals laid out in the GEP document approved by the University of Catania in December 2021 include the definition of innovative strategies to fight inequalities within research, training, teaching and universities' third-mission policies. Promoting gender equality throughout the academic community including students as well as teaching and admin staff requires the adoption of organizational models and procedures to be able to work on the emergence of prejudices and gender discrimination. To that end, systematic collection of data and progress monitoring will help provide effective indicators.

# GENDER EQUALITY IN RECRUITMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION

## Goals and actions

### ACTION 1

Gender equality in recruitment and career progression can be achieved through:

- equal opportunities in the workplace and gender-sensitive measures set in the UN agenda 2030 as goals to ensure that access criteria and career progression of staff and students are both met;
- measures to be put in place to sustain and guarantee career path progression, support and a teaching-free period after maternity leave, parental leave and sick leave of teaching, technical and admin staff;
- support and mentoring when returning to study after a break due to maternity or parental leave, illness or some other situations of special vulnerability.

### ACTION 2

Effective practices in recruitment, selection, retention and career advancement based on equal opportunities and on:

- key actions ensuring an appropriate gender balance on committees;
- internal policies and procedures against gender-biased recruitment/selection/evaluation, and granting of scholarships, university's funds and economic incentives.

### ACTION 3

Encourage research and teaching mobility by preventing gender bias in recruitment and promoting career advancement, equal opportunities and gender-sensitive policy including:

- teaching support and involvement of academic staff in scientifically significant international groups, conferences, panels and expert committees;
- economic incentives to incoming and outgoing mobility of scholars, admin and technical staff.



#### ACTION 4

Reduce gender asymmetries in academic recruitment through women's careers support and by boosting their knowledge and skills in the area of equal opportunities and gender equality, along with:

- transformative mentoring for underrepresented gender minorities (through training cycles and workshops on recruitment and career advancement process under OPs) of university's research and admin staff.



## GENDER BALANCE, LEADERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING

### Goals and actions

#### ACTION 5

Build a gender equality structure to support equal opportunities policy and gender equality, and promote OPs within culture, processes and institutional practices:

- UNICT Mixed Coordination Group for OPs and gender policy for the annual programming, implementing and updating of UNICT's strategic commitments of (GEP, PAP and Gender Report).

#### ACTION 6

Promote OPs and prevent discrimination in culture, in institutional processes and practices by:

- using an institutional language that avoids any form of gender bias.

## WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

### Goals and actions

#### ACTION 7

Promote university's work-life policies that can ensure inclusive environments as far as equal opportunities and work-life balance are both concerned because:

- work-life balance is for the benefit of family and for that of teaching, technical and admin staff, including students.

#### ACTION 8

Work-life balance and organisational culture encompass:

- equal opportunities and good practices towards building more inclusive conferences;
- support for inclusiveness and gender equality in the organization of scientific and educational event programs and in their visibility.

#### ACTION 9

Promote university's policies towards equal opportunities and the organisational culture of work-life balance through:

- scheduling institutional and educational commitments consistent with employees' work-life balance.



# INTEGRATION OF GENDER DIMENSION INTO RESEARCH AND TEACHING

## Goals and actions

### ACTION 10

Integration of gender dimensions into research can be achieved if:

- effective reward measures to improve the integration of gender dimensions are truly taken within research.

### ACTION 11

Integration of gender dimension in university research policies:

- promotion of gender dimension in research programs.

### ACTION 12

Integration of gender viewpoint within teaching contents comes along with:

- inclusion of gender-sensitive and cross-cultural issues as well as specialist topics in UNICT training programme;
- programming gender-sensitive teaching models to comply with equal opportunities and gender equality plan;
- training of teaching staff.

### ACTION 13

Integration of gender dimensions in incoming, ongoing and outgoing orientation service. Deconstruction of gender stereotypes in the choice of study course and professional profile:

- can be achieved through training of high school students, including second and third-level UNICT's students;
- needs awareness-raising campaigns to be launched because of the influence of stereotypes in educational and professional choices.



# INCLUSION OF GENDER DIMENSION IN UNIVERSITY'S THIRD MISSION POLICIES AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

## Goals and actions

### ACTION 14

Promote the integration of gender dimensions in university's third mission policies based on equal opportunities by implementing:

- measures to prevent and fight discrimination and gender-based violence through awareness-raising and advocacy;
- UNICT'S Code of Ethics and Conduct in regard to reporting procedures in the workplace against discrimination, violent behaviour and sexual harassment.