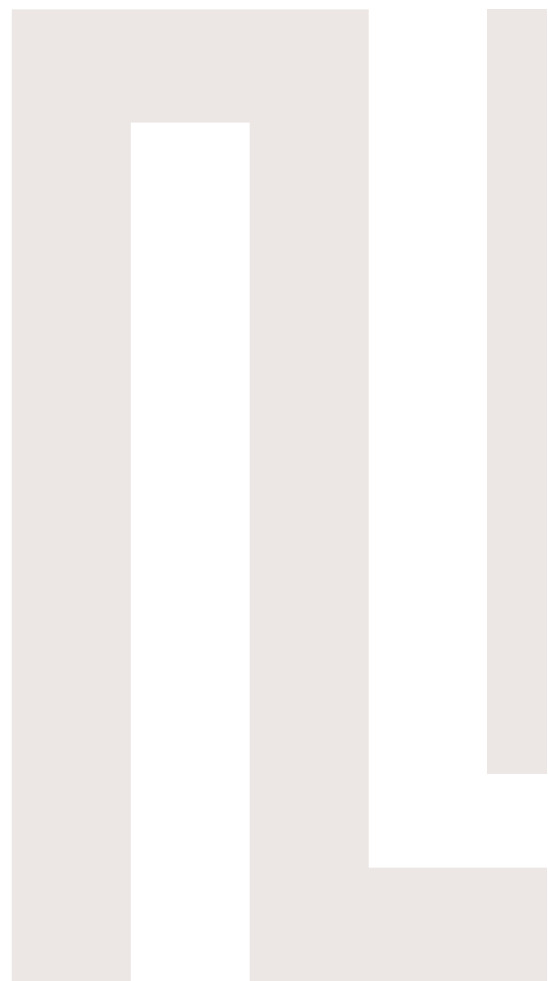


Gender Equality Plan

2023-2028



The importance of Gender Equality

Gender equality is a basic human right that is protected by international and regional human rights agreements, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹ and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)². In Europe, a region strongly committed to upholding human rights, recognizing the significance of equality for the other half of the population, is a top priority for the human rights agenda.

The importance of gender equality within university.

Gender equality plays a crucial role in universities by ensuring equal educational opportunities, promoting diversity and inclusivity, challenging gender stereotypes, establishing a safe and inclusive campus environment, empowering all genders in academia, and advancing research and knowledge. It guarantees that universities are fair and inclusive spaces that equip students and staff, to thrive in a diverse and democratic society.

Vision of Universiteti Metropolitan Tirana

Universiteti Metropolitan Tirana (UMT) was established in 2010 with the vision to build a modern, future-oriented university, valuable to Albanian society, contributing to the rise of standards of democracy in the country, as well as to economic, social and cultural development at national and regional levels.

Gender equality within Universiteti Metropolitan Tirana

As a university closely linked to industry, UMT follows global developments with anticipation. In this direction UMT's mission is to create, develop, convey and protect knowledge through teaching, research, service provision and training of senior specialists in the fields of engineering, architecture, computer science and economics, in line with the country's development priorities.

In support of the importance of the fundamental right of equal opportunities, Universiteti Metropolitan Tirana, has initiated several activities, projects, agreements and other mechanisms to enhance a gender equality culture within and outside the university. UMT has been the first university in Albania to sign the Women Empowerment Principles (WEP) launched by UN Women and Global Compact in 2022.

WEPs³ provide a holistic framework for companies to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community and drive positive outcomes for society and business. Launched in 2010 by UN Women and UN Global Compact, the WEPs are synchronized with international labour and human rights standards and grounded in the recognition that businesses have a commercial interest in, and a moral responsibility for, gender equality and women's empowerment.

UMT has also implemented various national and international projects that focused in the promotion of equal opportunities in the academic and research activities.

¹ <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf>

² <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>

³ <https://www.weps.org/>

Focus of the Gender Equality Plan

The current plan evolved after a context analysis of the structure and human resources of Universiteti Metropolitan Tirana. The need to adapt some mechanisms emerged, so that UMT is in line with European initiatives on gender equality.

The analysed context for this plan was:

- Number & gender of students enrolled per faculty and per study program;
- Number & gender of students graduated per faculty and per study program;
- Correlation between UMT graduates' academic title and professional engagement, per gender;
- UMT academic staff and their academic title;
- UMT admin staff and their position;

The context analysis identified the necessity to undertake reinforcing measures to further support gender equality aims.

Measure 1: Increase women's involvement in scientific research & innovation, to enhance their career.

Sub-measure 1.1: Encourage and reinforce effective units on institutional level.

Action 1.1.1: Data collection for gender equality at Universiteti Metropolitan Tirana.

This action involves collecting gender-disaggregated data to assess the current situation and identify gender disparities within the university. The data to be collected can provide insights into areas where women may be underrepresented or facing barriers, helping to inform targeted interventions.

Action 1.1.2: Appointing those responsible for gender equality on institutional level.

This action focuses on appointing a part-time resource, in the HR Department, to deal with gender equality issues.

Action 1.1.3: Training of persons responsible for gender equality within university.

This action aims to provide training and capacity-building opportunities for the individuals responsible for gender equality within the university by experts of this field. The training can enhance their knowledge and skills in gender analysis.

Sub-measure 1.2: Encourage both genders to participate in scientific research and innovation.

Action 1.2.1: Training both genders to undertake scientific research and participate in innovation and start-up projects.

Action 1.2.2: Encourage flexibility in working hours in the office, to increase participation in research & innovation.

Action 1.2.3: Improve incentives through adjustment of various financial and time bonuses.

Action 1.2.4: Otherwise support both genders to obtain scientific degrees.

The above actions and sub-measures collectively contribute to increasing participation in scientific research & innovation, and therefore enhance staff career prospects at UMT. By providing support, and promoting gender equality, the university creates an environment that also helps women to thrive and succeed in the scientific domain.

Measure 2: Gender balance in management and decision-making

Sub-measure 2.1: Promotion & support of gender balance at the university decision-making level

Action 2.1.1: Creating and facilitating a working group, trained through Action 1.1.3., that will promote gender equality at the university managerial level.

Women participation at university decision-making level is very high, indeed. Action 2.1.1 aims at training a working group, through a suitable funded programme, to assist the university to further benefit from a culture free of gender bias, if applicable indeed.

Measure 3: Inclusion and promotion of a gender perspective in the content of scientific research and teaching

Sub-measure 3.1: Promotion of scientific research with content from a gender perspective

Action 3.1.1: Training of scientific researchers on how to adopt a gender perspective in scientific research projects.

This action involves providing training, through capacity-building opportunities, to staff working on scientific research projects, on how to adopt a gender perspective in their research.

Action 3.1.2: Identification and promotion of successful cases of scientific research with gender content.

This action aims to identify and promote examples of scientific research projects that have successfully incorporated a gender perspective. By showcasing these successful cases, the university highlights the value and impact of including gender content in research.

Sub-measure 3.2: Promotion of gender content in teaching and projects

Action 3.2.1: Encouragement and promotion of staff for the inclusion of modules with a gender approach in teaching or inclusion within the subject module.

This action focuses on encouraging and supporting academic staff to include modules or components with a gender approach in their teaching.

Action 3.2.2: Training for academic staff and working groups on how to develop a gender perspective in syllabi.

This action involves providing training to academic staff and working groups to help them adopt a gender perspective in the development of subject syllabi by experts in the field. The training equips them with the knowledge and tools to incorporate gender content effectively, ensuring that gender issues are integrated into the learning objectives, topics, and teaching materials.

These actions under sub-measure 3.1 and sub-measure 3.2 collectively contribute to the inclusion and promotion of the gender perspective in the content of scientific research and

teaching. By providing training, identifying successful examples, and promoting the integration of gender content, the university aims to create a more inclusive and gender-responsive academic environment. This ensures that scientific research and teaching reflect the complexities and realities of gender dynamics, contributing to a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the subjects being studied.

Measure 4: Work-life balance and organizational culture

Sub-measure 4.1: Implementation of rules for increasing flexibility to enable work-life balance.

Action 4.1.1: Creating the possibility of working with flexible schedules.

This action involves implementing policies and practices that allow employees, including both women and men, to have flexible work schedules. By offering options such as flexible hours, or compressed workweeks, the university supports work-life balance for its staff, in line with national legislation. This enables employees, and especially women, to better manage their family responsibilities while fulfilling their professional obligations.

Sub-measure 4.2: Promotion of an organizational culture with gender equality content and improvement of work-life balance

Action 4.2.1: Organization of activities that promote gender equality and the improvement of work-life balance.

This action involves organizing various activities and initiatives that promote gender equality and work-life balance within the university by experts in the field.

Action 4.2.2: Encouraging information sharing, strengthening relationships, and promoting the values of achieving gender equality.

Action 4.2.2 emphasizes the importance of information sharing, communication, and relationship-building to promote gender equality. It may involve creating platforms for sharing best practices, success stories, and research related to gender equality. Additionally, it aims to promote the values and principles of gender equality throughout the university community, fostering a culture that values and supports gender equality efforts.

These actions under sub-measure 4.1 and sub-measure 4.2 collectively contribute to promoting work-life balance and creating an organizational culture that embraces gender equality. By implementing flexible work arrangements, providing opportunities for young women, organizing activities, fostering cooperation, and promoting information sharing, the university aims to create an inclusive and supportive environment where all individuals can thrive, regardless of their gender, and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

The above should be seen not as an expense, but as an investment for the university.

Measure 5: Measures to prevent Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Sub-measure 5.1: Creation of a working environment based on the principle of information, awareness, and action within the framework of gender equality.

Action 5.1.1: Drawing up an annual plan with awareness activities for the prevention of GBV at the institutional level.

This action involves developing an annual plan that outlines specific activities and initiatives aimed at raising awareness about gender-based violence (GBV) and how to prevent it. The plan may include training sessions by experts in the field, workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns focused on staff, students, and other stakeholders about the various forms of GBV and strategies to prevent it.

Action 5.1.2: Encouraging the reporting of problems related to GBV to the persons responsible for gender equality in the university.

Action 5.1.2 emphasizes the importance of creating a safe and supportive environment where individuals feel comfortable reporting incidents or problems related to GBV. It involves encouraging staff, students, and other members of the university community to approach the designated persons responsible for gender equality to report any issues or seek assistance.

These actions under sub-measure 5.1 collectively contribute to creating a working environment that actively addresses GBV. By, encouraging reporting, and raising awareness through campaigns and collaborations, the university aims to prevent and combat GBV within its community. These measures prioritize the safety and well-being of all individuals, promoting a culture of respect, equality, and zero tolerance for GBV.

Remarks

Universiteti Metropolitan Tirana, a university with a strong emphasis on academic, professional, and research advancement, recognizes the significance of the ongoing development within the academic community it has built over the years. By implementing the Gender Equality Plan, Universiteti Metropolitan Tirana is committed to addressing the existing gaps and enhancing them to provide greater equality of opportunities for its students, faculty, and administrative staff over the next five years.

"This publication reflects the views of the authors only, and the European Commission or other granting authority cannot be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein. Authors have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information provided in this publication.

The development of the publication was supported by the European Commission through the Horizon Europe project "R&I policy making, implementation and support in the Western Balkans", grant agreement 10105887. More information on the POLICY ANSWERS project can be found at www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu.

The authors also acknowledge the support of the project LeTSGEPs "Leading Towards Sustainable Gender Equality Plans in research performing organizations" which received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme under the grant agreement 873072. More information on the LeTSGEPs project can be found at <https://letsgeps.eu>."

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