



Gender equality in academia: key findings and further steps for the University of Ljubljana

December 2020, updated in september 2021

Univerza v Ljubljani



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1. GENDER EQUALITY IN ACADEMIA – GEAR MODEL

The GEAR (*Gender Equality in Academia and Research*) model was prepared by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)¹, which in 2017 published the Gender Equality in Academia and Research. GEAR tool. In a chapter entitled Guide to Structural Change in Academia and Research Organisations,² it defined the six fundamental steps to set up and implement gender mainstreaming in academia and research.

Below is a brief presentation of the GEAR steps and a **condensed** summary of how these steps are being realised at the level of the University in Ljubljana (UL):

Step 1 is a preliminary phase and focuses on understanding of the context within which the institution is positioned, to enable the institution, rather than simply copying the successful approaches of others, to customise measures – measures that fit the local conditions and can be aligned with the institution's objectives.

That is why the initial step necessitates a definition of potential support-finding and, above-all, the understanding of the gender mainstreaming cycle: **define – plan – act – check**.

Regarding Step 1 The UL has been participating in the implementation of an initiative on researchers' career development on a national scale since the very beginning³. Furthermore, **the UL management has been providing support for gender mainstreaming from the start**, which means that an important step has already been realised in the preliminary phase, i.e., Step 1 of the GEAR action plan.

Last but not least, the review and gaining of understanding of the context in which the UL is positioned indicates that gender mainstreaming is prescribed in the overarching national legislation, which the UL is obliged to comply with.

At this point, the preliminary phase transitions into Step 2, focusing on reviewing relevant legislation and policies within the national framework.

Step 2 envisages **analysing and assessing the state-of-play** in the institution:

- reviewing relevant legislation and policies in Slovenia;
- analysing sex-disaggregated data about staff and students;
- identifying the existing measures promoting gender equality.

1 [EIGE: EU objectives for gender equality in research](#)

2 [Gender Equality in Academia and Research. GEAR Tool.](#)

3 Defined in detail in the document entitled [The Evolution of Gender Mainstreaming at the University of Ljubljana.](#)

Regarding Step 2. In line with Step 2, the UL conducted an in-depth situation analysis⁴ before preparing its own strategy in 2012, identifying the already existing measures pertaining to gender mainstreaming. Furthermore, based on the internal analysis and evaluation of the realisation of the 2012–2016 strategy, the UL prepared a new UL Human Resources Strategy 2017–2020 with an Action Plan.⁵ The UL has also included this content in its annual reports, the *HR Excellence in Research* report as well as the interim evaluations of the UL Strategy.⁶

Step 3 focuses on **setting up a Gender Equality Plan (GEP)**:

- promote the participation of actors of all levels when defining the measures and actions of the GEP;
- get inspiration from measures implemented by other organisations, but always consider your own institutional context;
- define SMART objectives and measures for your plan (*specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-related*)⁷;
- identify and utilise existing resources when planning the measures.

Regarding Step 3. As part of Step 3, the UL defined and utilised the existing resources in the process of planning its measures, in accordance with the EIGE recommendations:

- in the preparation of new and/or revised regulations (Statutes of the UL⁸, Criteria for Appointment to the Titles of University Teachers, Researchers and Associates at the University of Ljubljana⁹, Guidelines for Employment of Higher Education Teachers and Researchers at the University of Ljubljana¹⁰, Policy Of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment of Researchers¹¹, Rules on the Election of the Bodies of the University of Ljubljana¹², etc.)
- within its workplace education and training programmes (Equal Opportunities and Managing Talents, Managing Resistance to Change, Interculturality in Higher Education, etc.);

⁴ [Status Analysis of the situation \(May 2012\)](#)

⁵ [UL Human resources strategy for researchers and teachers 2017-2020 with action plan](#)

⁶ The existing measures are discussed in detail in the document entitled [The Evolution of Gender Mainstreaming at the University of Ljubljana](#).

⁷ Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, feasible in terms of time.

⁸ [Statutes of the University of Ljubljana](#) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos 4/17, 56/17, 56/17, 14/18, 39/18, 57/18, 66/18, 10/19, 22/19, 36/19, 47/19, 82/20, 104/20, 168/20, 54/21 and 97/21)

⁹ [Criteria for Appointment to the Titles of University Teachers, Researchers and Associates at the University of Ljubljana](#)

¹⁰ [Guidelines for Employment of Higher Education Teachers and Researchers at the University of Ljubljana](#)

¹¹ [Policy of open, transparent and merit-based Recruitment of researchers](#)

¹² [Rules on the Election of the Bodies of the University of Ljubljana – official consolidated version – in Slovene](#)

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- the Committee for Research and Development adopted a programme of regularly briefing the UL researchers on ethical principles.¹³

In addition, various actors are involved in the process, including the management, professional services and teaching staff. Furthermore, individual UL member faculties are also taking part, providing additional impetus to gender mainstreaming within their own bodies by adopting their own plans¹⁴.

Step 4 is focused on **implementing a Gender Equality Plan**, highlighting the following actions:

- give visibility to the Gender Equality Plan;
- be aware that adjustments to the plan may be needed.

Regarding Step 4. The UL ensured implementation of Step 4 by means of a quality system involving:

- self-evaluations;
- external evaluations and accreditations;
- renewed *HR Excellence in Research* award;
- quality indicators;
- habilitation procedures in line with the Criteria for Appointment to the Titles of University Teachers, Researchers and Associates at the University of Ljubljana.

In addition, the UL has taken into account the EIGE guidelines and does the following, among other things, in the course of implementing the plan:

- informs the public about the current situation (last year's¹⁵ and this year's¹⁶ International Women's Day, this year's International Day of Women and Girls in Science¹⁷);
- at its events, the UL gives special attention to this topic (celebration of the centenary, which kicked off with the event entitled Women in Art: Female Artists at the University of Ljubljana¹⁸, opening of an exhibition at the Small Gallery of the Bank of Slovenia (Mala galerija Banke Slovenije): Loud-Life; Feminist Art at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana, Part 2¹⁹, round table discussion of UL FF and UL FKKT in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the

¹³ [Framework programme of briefing researchers on ethical principles](#) – in Slovene

¹⁴ Among other efforts, [Framework for Designing the Gender Equality Implementation Plan at University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts \(UL FF\)](#)

¹⁵ [International Women's Day: An Equal World is an Enabled World.](#)

¹⁶ [International Women's Day](#)

¹⁷ [International Day of Women and Girls in Science](#) – in Slovene

¹⁸ [UL100 Women in Art: Female Artists at the University of Ljubljana](#) – in Slovene

¹⁹ [Loud-Life, Feminist art at the UL Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana, Part 2](#) – in Slovene

very first doctorate obtained at the University of Ljubljana: Dr. Anka Mayer. Her female predecessors and successors (1911–1931)²⁰;

- scientific-professional works/publications: among other things, (joint) publication of monographs relating to gender studies²¹, this year's completion of a project in which a research team comprising three UL member faculties examined the gender equality situation in education²²;
- competitions intended to raise awareness about the topic.²³

Step 5 involves **monitoring progress and evaluating the Gender Equality Plan**:

- monitoring and evaluation as part of the change process;
- baseline assessment (or '*ex ante* evaluation');
- monitoring implementation;
- evaluation to be context-sensitive;
- quantitative indicators;
- qualitative indicators;
- resources for sound monitoring and evaluation;
- evaluation as the key to sustainability and further enhancement.

Regarding Step 5. Monitoring progress and evaluation of the Gender Equality Plan is a phase that the UL is actively carrying out by preparing new indicators in this field, which have been implemented since the evaluation of the action plan pertaining to the UL Human Resources Strategy for Researchers and Teachers 2017–2020²⁴. These are namely the foundation for the preparation of regular annual monitoring of this field and the formation of an analytical review of the UL state in this field (preparation of a 'dashboard'). Furthermore, we are in the process of preparing a new UL strategy, which may constitute an important part of Step 6 once we can integrate this topic into the basic strategic system of how the University functions.

Step 6 of the GEAR model defines **what comes after** the Gender Equality Plan, as each GEP concludes at some point in time, whereby the sustainability of some measures and procedures is already ensured, whereas others may still require further action.

20 [Centenary of the first doctorate at the University of Ljubljana](#) (UL FF, UL FKKT)

21 [Ženske v znanosti, ženske za znanost. Znanstvene perspektive žensk v Sloveniji in dejavniki sprememb](#) (En. [Women in Science, Women for Science. Scientific Prospects of Women in Slovenia and Factors of Change](#)) (UL FDV) – in Slovene

22 [UL FDV, UL FF, UL PeF research project: Gender Equality in Education](#) – in Slovene

23 Among other efforts, [UL FE: Competition intended to raise awareness about the issue of gender inequality in the economy](#) – in Slovene

24 [UL Human resources strategy for researchers and teachers 2017-2020 with action plan](#)

2. KEY FINDINGS AND SUGGESTED FURTHER STEPS (REGARDING STEP 6 OF THE GEAR MODEL)

2.1. KEY FINDINGS

In the framework of monitoring progress and making preliminary assessments, we have come to the following **key findings**:

- the national legislation enables and strives towards gender mainstreaming;
- the UL management has been providing support in the implementation of a balanced gender representation and broader gender equality from the start;
- in its fundamental documents, the UL has been advocating the gender equality principle through equal treatment of men and women;
- furthermore, the UL has adopted regulations to specifically address the issues of recruitment and the gender equality principle;
- the UL is implementing measures to protect employees against sexual or other harassment or bullying in the workplace;
- the UL is monitoring and reporting on the institution's situation regarding gender equality within external accreditations and evaluations;
- in the process of preparing activities, the UL is more or less systematically focused on the greater visibility of contributions by both genders;
- the UL has adopted regulations to enable balancing professional and private/family life as one of the most important conditions to enable equal opportunities for men and women in society and to achieve equal economic independence, which leads to gender equality (provisions in the Statutes of the University of Ljubljana, Criteria for Appointment to the Titles of University Teachers, Researchers and Associates at the University of Ljubljana, Guidelines for Occasional Remote Work on the Basis of an Agreement);
- in 2015, the UL Committee for Research and Development adopted a programme of regularly briefing the UL researchers on ethical principles;

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- the UL conducts training and education courses (Equal Opportunities and Managing Talents, Managing Resistance to Change, etc.) to overcome general obstacles;
 - the UL monitors its organisational culture annually through self-evaluation of each study programme;
 - the UL conducts gender-based situation analyses²⁵.

2.2. SUGGESTED FURTHER STEPS

Although the findings listed in subsection 2.1 indicate the ensured permanence of certain measures, further action within gender mainstreaming is necessary, as gender parity is yet to be achieved in a variety of areas.

The UL should take the following steps in this area:

- further participation in activities that address the gender equality principle both in the narrow and broader context, nationally and internationally (continuing, cyclical activity);
- continued gender mainstreaming upon each instance of preparing plans, proposals, regulations and other strategic documents of the UL (continuing, cyclical activity);
- greater highlighting of the gender equality strategy when forming the new strategy (by the end of 2021);
- continued and enhanced gender mainstreaming when forming the new strategy on researchers' HR development (by the end of 2021);
- continued and enhanced practice implemented thus far of zero-tolerance for sexual and other harassment and bullying in the workplace, and implementation of measures to prevent said harassment and bullying (new rules to be prepared on this subject by the end of 2021);
- formation/foundation of a committee for equal opportunities/gender equality, and definition of tasks and competences of said committee (late 2021, early 2022);
- inclusion of student representatives and student councils in activities relating to the gender equality principle (by the end of 2021);
- encouragement/invitation to stand as candidates and appointment of new managements of the UL member faculties (Vice-deans) in accordance with Article 34 of the Rules on the Election of the Bodies of the University of Ljubljana (September/October 2021);

²⁵ Document entitled [SITUATION ANALYSIS: Structure of UL academic staff and gender representation in bodies and management positions](#)

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- encouragement to stand as candidates and appointment of committee members at the UL and member faculties, taking into account the gender equality principle and the 50% gender ratio for those occupying the management positions of said committees (e.g., President, Vice-president) (by the end of 2021);
 - encouragement to stand as candidates for members of management boards of UL member faculties, taking into account the gender equality principle (before the elections);
 - continued contribution to knowledge society without gender stereotypes through the UL Career Centre – activities and projects intended to familiarise/direct high-school students with/to study programmes where the opposite gender prevails significantly (continuing, cyclical activity, information days);
 - balanced promotion of results and achievements of UL employees, and promotion of UL's achievements in implementing gender mainstreaming (continuing, cyclical activity);
 - awareness raising and inward communication regarding the situation and activities relating to the principle of balanced gender representation (continuing, cyclical activity);
 - continued and enhanced training courses pertaining, in the narrow and broader contexts, to the gender equality principle, for all/various groups of employees, including management staff (late 2021, continuing, cyclical activity);
 - encouragement to and support of research²⁶ (continuing, cyclical activity):
 - in the field of gender equality,
 - in the field of multifaceted discrimination,
 - in the field of gender stereotypes in the media;
 - tenders/projects that include this topic and involve the participation of students (continuing, cyclical activity);
 - continued involvement in the field of quality – monitoring, analyses, which will provide a more long-term picture/trend, inclusion of the evaluation in the annual Business Report with Quality Assurance Report (continuing, cyclical activity);
 - accelerated monitoring of success in pursuing the gender equality principle within the existing reporting and evaluation systems, and acting based on data obtained in regular decision-making processes (continuing, cyclical activity);
 - formation of indicators for monitoring career progress by gender (in 2022);

²⁶ Starting point: [Report on the EU Strategy for Gender Equality \(2019/2169\(INI\)\)](#), Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

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- continued and enhanced monitoring of organisational culture within the annual process of self-evaluating study programmes (in 2022, continuing annual activity);
 - launch of the existing employee satisfaction survey and inclusion of one or several questions on satisfaction with the current state in gender equality (in 2022, continuing, cyclical activity);
 - inclusion of a question in student surveys regarding the treatment of/response to equality in teaching (in 2022, continuing, cyclical activity);
 - further development and improvement of data collection²⁷ broken down by gender²⁸ (in 2022, continuing, cyclical activity):
 - number of employees by gender at all levels, by disciplines, functions (including administrative/support staff) and contractual relationships with the organisation;
 - average number of years that men and women need to advance in their careers (by levels);
 - differences in salaries by gender and employment position;
 - number of men and women in academic and administrative decision-making positions (e.g., in committees, commissions, juries);
 - number of male and female candidates applying for individual jobs;
 - number of men and women who have left the organisation in previous years, with years of service within the organisation;
 - number of employees by gender who request parental leave, whether they use it, its duration, and how many employees return after such leave;
 - number of days of absence of men and women given the reason for said absence;
 - number of hours of training attended by men and women, or number of credits;
 - number of male and female students at all levels and for all disciplines.

²⁷ In compliance with the GDPR.

²⁸ Suggestions summarised by data that need to be analysed, in:

European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender equality in academia and research : GEAR tool, Publications Office, 2017, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2839/0272> (page 6)

[Report on the EU Strategy for Gender Equality \(2019/2169\(INI\)\), Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality](#) (pages 19-20, point 39)

Financing of all of the above steps:

The UL will provide the resources necessary for implementation with the existing human resources/employees, by financing the listed activities from development funds and by drawing on EU funds earmarked for this subject-matter.

Monitoring and reporting:

The UL will report on an annual basis in its Business Report and Quality Assurance Report, which constitutes the University's self-evaluation.

