



The evolution of gender mainstreaming at the University of Ljubljana

December 2020, updated in September 2021

Univerza v Ljubljani



For decades, the University Office for Quality Assurance, Analyses and Reporting has been conducting a periodical analysis to improve its activities, with the analysis gradually expanding to include the functioning of the entire UL. The Quality System Rules of the University of Ljubljana¹ clearly state, among other things, the purposes and objectives of this process as well as the mechanisms of quality monitoring and assurance, mentioning amongst them, as a basic element/mechanism, a closed loop, i.e., a process that runs continuously at all levels and within all activities. In view of the constant cycle of checking the objectives set and planning new measures, coupled with celebrating the memory of the UL's first female doctor of science, which also marked the very first doctorate obtained at the UL, it seems that now is the perfect time to review how gender mainstreaming is progressing at the UL.

As a special-status autonomous educational, scientific research and arts higher education institution, founded by the Republic of Slovenia (RS), the University of Ljubljana is bound to adhere to and fulfil legislative provisions. In the Republic of Slovenia, the gender equality principle is regulated by the Protection Against Discrimination Act (ZvarD)², Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act (ZEMŽM)³, Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015–2020 (ReNPEMŽM15–2)⁴, Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 2005–2013 (ReNPEMZM)⁵ and the Act Ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (MKPNZND)⁶. Gender mainstreaming is thus dictated already by the overarching legislation; at the same time, the UL's legal documents enable and encourage further institutional efforts in gender mainstreaming based on the institution's own specifics, analyses and situation.

Within the national framework, the gender equality principle in science has been further addressed in the following resolutions: Resolution on the National Research and Development Programme 2011–2020 (ReRIS11-20)⁷ and the Slovenian Strategy for Strengthening the European Research Area 2016–2020⁸.

It should be noted that the EC, in its strategic document on gender equality in the 2020–2025⁹ period, is positioning the European Union (EU) at the head of global efforts to achieve gender equality – for 2019, the Republic of Slovenia is ranked sixth¹⁰. Meanwhile, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) published the 2020 *Gender Equality*

1 [Quality System Rules of the University of Ljubljana](#)

2 [Protection Against Discrimination Act \(Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos 33/16 and 21/18 – ZNOrg\)](#) – in Slovene

3 [Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act \(Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos 59/02, 61/07 – ZUNEO-A, 33/16 – ZVarD and 59/19\)](#) – in Slovene

4 [Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015–2020 \(Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 84/15\)](#) – in Slovene

5 [Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 2005–2013 \(Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 100/05\)](#) – in Slovene

6 [Act Ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence \(Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia – International Treaties, No. 1/15\)](#) – in Slovene

7 [Resolution on the National Research and Development Programme of Slovenia 2011–2020 \(Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 43/11\)](#) – in Slovene

8 [SLOVENIAN STRATEGY for Strengthening the European Research Area 2016–2020](#)

9 [A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025](#)

10 [Equal Measures 2030 SDG Gender Index for 2019](#)

*Index*¹¹, ranking the Republic of Slovenia eleventh in the EU, with 67.7 out of the 100 possible points (0.2 points below the EU average) and highlighting improvement opportunities in terms of management positions and knowledge.

Far from being a silent observer in the process of integrating the gender aspect, the UL has been participating in the implementation of an initiative on both male and female researchers' career development¹² on a national scale since the very beginning. In accordance with this and relating to the initiative of the Rectors' Conference of the Republic of Slovenia of 19 November 2008, the UL has signed the Declaration¹³ of Commitment by Slovenian Universities on the Adoption of the European Charter for Researchers (Charter) and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (Code)¹⁴. By signing the Declaration, the UL demonstrated its engagement and commitment in implementing the principles of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers.

In accordance with the provisions of the Declaration, the UL Rector has adopted a policy of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers¹⁵, by means of which the UL has ensured consistent adherence to the equal opportunities principle in the recruitment process, career development and participation within its administrative bodies. By adopting the policy, the UL has taken care of further gender mainstreaming, namely with balanced gender representation in the processes of selecting and putting together selection committees and administrative bodies, recruitment, training, promotion, salaries, working conditions and integration of the gender aspect in the financing resources.

Before planning the strategy in 2012, the UL prepared an **in-depth analysis of the situation**¹⁶ and identified deficiencies broken down by substantive areas of recommendations defined in the Charter and Code. The internal analysis showed that the area of non-discrimination is legally well-regulated, which ensures that researchers and other groups of employees are not discriminated against by employers or fund providers in any way, including by gender. Likewise, working conditions for researchers were arranged in line with the existing legislation and sectoral collective agreements. The legislation has already partially enabled men and women to combine family and work, children and careers. The UL managed balanced gender representation in line with the possibilities and expressed interests by implementing national regulations and recommendations relating to equal opportunities for both genders. By adopting the Strategy for Researchers' Career Development for the Period 2012–2016¹⁷ and Action Plan¹⁸, the UL realised its commitment to comply with the Declaration and the Code. What's more, the then

11 [Gender Equality Index 2020, Slovenia for 2020, Progress on gender equality in Slovenia since 2010](#)

12 In the original, Slovenian language version of this document, we use the underscore to express that all genders are included ([Gender-inclusive Language Guidelines](#) – in Slovene), but due to differences in grammar and declension this is not needed in this English version.

13 [Declaration of Commitment by the Slovenian Universities on the Adoption of the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#)

14 [European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#)

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

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

17 [The University of Ljubljana strategy for researchers' career development for the period 2012-2016](#)

18 [Action plan](#)

Vice-rector for Science and Research sent a letter to the European Commission in 2013 regarding the adoption of the strategy and the implementation of the Charter and the Code.¹⁹

Furthermore, based on an internal analysis and evaluation of the realisation of the 2012–2016 strategy, the UL prepared a new human resources strategy for the 2017–2020 period with an action plan.²⁰ In it, the main goal pertaining to gender mainstreaming was to establish a more balanced representation of genders in management positions.

In addition to following and adhering to the regulations at the European and national levels, the UL also advocates continued gender mainstreaming in its internal rules. The institution's master document, the Statutes of the UL²¹, accepts parenthood as one of the justifiable reasons for exceptional enrolment in a higher year as well as the extension of the student status. Furthermore, the Statutes provide the same right to extend the student status to student mothers who give birth during their studies, and male students who become fathers during their studies. In addition, the Statutes give the providers of educational, scientific research and artistic activities an equal right and chance not to have maternity, paternity or parental leave count into the period of election into a title.

Furthermore, the UL's Criteria for Appointment to the Titles of University Teachers, Researchers and Associates at the University of Ljubljana²², under special conditions for appointment to the titles, acknowledge the fulfilment of the condition of three months' uninterrupted teaching, research or artistic activity at a foreign university, research institution or important artistic institution to employees who look after and care for a child who needs special care and protection in accordance with regulations governing family benefits.

In the framework of consistent gender mainstreaming, the UL explicitly states in its Guidelines for Employment of Higher Education Teachers and Researchers²³ that the selection committees should be as gender-balanced as possible. In addition, the Guidelines state that selection of candidates must be based exclusively on an assessment of their ability, qualifications and academic achievements. For the purpose of strategic orientations stemming from the EU and Slovenian legislation, the UL also requires the following clause to be included in the related calls: **“The University of Ljubljana promotes gender equality in employment and work.”**

The UL also strives for gender equality through balanced gender representation in management positions and decision-making bodies, as its rules on the elections of bodies²⁴ contain a provision that the management of UL member faculties should aim for a

¹⁹ [EURAXESS: Declarations of endorsement of Charter & Code](#)

²⁰ [UL Human resources strategy for researchers and teachers 2017-2020 with action plan](#)

²¹ [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)

²² [Criteria for Appointment to the Titles of University Teachers, Researchers and Associates at the University of Ljubljana](#)

²³ [Guidelines for Employment of Higher Education Teachers and Researchers at the University of Ljubljana](#)

²⁴ [Rules on the Election of the Bodies of the University of Ljubljana – official consolidated version](#) – in Slovene

balanced gender representation when encouraging employees to stand as candidates.

Last but not least, in its Code of Ethics for Researchers²⁵, the UL incorporates principles that illustrate the highest standards in professional and scientific work, including that a researcher does not discriminate against their colleagues or students and others on the basis of gender.

Equal opportunities, respect for human rights and an ethical and responsible attitude towards the world are part of the UL's values and constitute the UL's pledge²⁶ as an employer to prevent any sexual and other harassment and bullying in the workplace. The UL employees thus operate in accordance with the following principles:

- every employee has the right to equal treatment, dignity and personal integrity;
- sexual and other harassment and bullying in the workplace is not acceptable at the University of Ljubljana;
- all employees are responsible for ensuring a working environment that is safe from discrimination, harassment and bullying in the workplace and that assures respect of the dignity of all employees.

In addition, the UL has adopted rules²⁷ to ensure an environment in which the dignity of employees and students is respected, along with measures for the elimination of the consequences of violations of dignity, and actions in the event of a false accusation of violations of dignity. In such an environment, there is no space for harassment, bullying or sexual harassment, either by the employer or superiors or providers of the higher education process, whereby the provisions of the rules apply *mutatis mutandis* also for actions relating to gender-based discrimination.

On its website, the UL has a tab entitled Protection of Dignity, where it raises awareness, informs and provides information on recognising and preventing violence in academic settings.²⁸

The last in the series of adopted documents is the Guidelines for Occasional Remote Work, which enables easier coordination of professional and private life, by means of which the UL pursues the enforcement of equal opportunities that lead to gender equality.

25 [Code of ethics for researchers](#)

26 [Employee pledge at the University of Ljubljana](#)

27 [Rules on Measures to Protect the Dignity of Employees at the University of Ljubljana and Students of the University of Ljubljana](#) (applicable in accordance with Article 195 of the Statutes of the UL) – in Slovene

28 [Protection of dignity: Recognition and prevention of violence in the academic environment](#) – in Slovene

