APPROVED BY
Resolution of the Senate of Vilnius
Gediminas Technical University No.9-3.1 of
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THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN OF VILNIUS GEDIMINAS TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY FOR 2022–2027

Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (hereinafter VILNIUS TECH or the University) as an autonomous, innovative, and open higher education institution shall strive for equality, economic progress, and welfare through the top-level studies and scientific research. The mission of VILNIUS TECH is to educate and develop a publicly responsible, creative, and competitive individual who is receptive to science, the latest technologies, and cultural values; to promote scientific progress, social and economic well-being; and to create the value that ensures the development of both Lithuania and the region in a global context while respecting individual beliefs, rights, and aspirations of all members of the University community.

VILNIUS TECH shall promote equality and diversity showing zero tolerance for discrimination in any activity. *The Gender Quality Plan of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University for 2022–2027* (hereinafter - *the Gender Equality Plan*) was created in order to attract the attention of all members of the VILNIUS TECH community to the significance of gender equality and to encourage changes in this area.

The main goal of the *Gender Equality Plan* is to help ensure equal opportunities for all current and prospective members of the VILNIUS TECH community regardless of their gender and to systematically address gender issues. This plan aims to create structural and cultural transformations in the area of equal opportunities at the University. The plan is expected to facilitate the creation of a safe and equality-based climate in the University, to reduce the prevailing stereotypes of choosing a profession, and to ensure prevention of discrimination.

The Plan of Gender Equality is prepared in accordance with the directives and provisions of the European Union, *the Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans*[1] and recommendations prepared by the European Commission, the laws and other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania.

The European Commission promotes the gender equality in scientific research and innovations.

The Gender Equality Strategy[2] provides for the framework for the European Commission work in gender equality and sets the goals and key actions of the policy for the period of 2020–2025. The European Commission strives for ensuring gender equality, when gender-based violence, sex discrimination and structural inequality between women and men are seen as unacceptable. Implementing the goals, attempts are made to ensure equality between women and men in Europe regardless of their differences, to enable them to be equal, to freely live the life of their choice, to have equal opportunities to attain their goals and to participate in society on an equal basis as well as to take leading positions.

Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council [3] on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation states that it is necessary to eliminate all the legal and organisational obstacles in employing, retaining and developing the career of female researchers while respecting

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[1] *Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans, 2021*
[2] *A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, 2020*
[3] *Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, 2006*

the existing EU legal framework on gender equality. The Directive aims to ensure the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation.

Gender equality is seen as priority area in the programme "European Horizon" and stricter *provisions*[4] are imposed on it. Public institutions, research organisations and higher education institutions seeking to receive funding under the European Horizon program from 2022 must adopt a *Gender Equality Plan*. These provisions aim to ensure sustainable institutional changes and to better integrate the gender aspect into the projects for improving the quality of scientific research.

Gender equality in research and innovations[5] is a priority in the European Research Area (hereinafter - ERA). In accordance with the programme of *ERA Communication*[6] of 2012, the European Commission has set 3 objectives for cooperation with the countries of the European Union and for promoting institutional change:

1. gender equality in the research career;
2. gender balance in decision-making;
3. integration of the gender aspect into the content of scientific research and innovations.

The European provisions have been transferred to the national documents.

The Law on Equal Treatment of the Republic of Lithuania[7] aims to ensure the implementation of the provisions of Article 29 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania enshrining the equality of persons and prohibition against restrictions on human rights or extensions of privileges on grounds of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views.

The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Republic of Lithuania[8] regulates and ensures the implementation of equal rights for women and men enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania. Attempts are made to prohibit any gender-based discrimination; to foresee measures that ensure equal conditions for women and men when admitting to vocational training establishments and higher education institutions, improving qualifications, developing professional skills and providing practical work experience.

Article 26 of the Labour Code of Republic of Lithuania[9] outlines the obligation of an employer to follow the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination on other grounds. It is important to note that Point 6 of this Article states that an employer who has an average number of employees of more than 50 must adopt and publish, in the ways that are accustomed at the workplace, the measures for implementation of the principles for the supervision of the implementation and enforcement of the equal opportunities policies.

The Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania *On the Approval of Recommendations for Ensuring Equal Opportunities for Men and Women in Lithuanian Research and Study Institutions* [10] provides for the guidelines on the promotion of equality between women and men and the elimination of inequalities in research and studies.

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[4] *Gender Equality: a Strengthened Commitment in Horizon Europe*, 2021

[5] *Gender Equality in Research and Innovation*, 2021

[6] *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth, 2012*

[7] *Law on Equal Treatment of the Republic of Lithuania* (consolidated version 01-07-2021- 31-12-2021) No. IX-1826, approved by the Seimas of Republic of Lithuania on 18 November 2003

[8] *Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Republic of Lithuania* (consolidated version 01-07-2017) No. VIII-947 approved by the Seimas of Republic of Lithuania on 1 December 1998

[9] *Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Republic of Lithuania* (consolidated version 01-11-2021–31-12-2021) No. XII-2603, approved by the Seimas of Republic of Lithuania on 14 September 2016

[10] *Order on the Approval of Recommendations for Ensuring Equal Opportunities for Men and Women in Lithuanian Research and Study Institutions* (consolidated version 13-02-2015) No. V-1265, approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania on 23 December 2014

The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman adopted the Regulations[11] that list specific measures used to protect employers from (sexual) harassment or stalking. This document can also be applied in institutions that seek to ensure equality and dignity of their employees. The document explains what behaviour is considered inappropriate in the workplace. The regulations advise to respect the private lives of colleagues, to avoid behaviour that is unpleasant to others.

The Guidelines for the Prevention and Treatment of Sexual Harassment [12] prepared by the Lithuanian University Rectors' Conference in 2020 emphasise that harassment is a form of behaviour that is unacceptable in a university, such behaviour violates dignity of another person, his/her academic freedom, creates an undesirable atmosphere and hinders implementation of the University's mission. In universities it is recommended to appoint specialists responsible for prevention and control of harassment. The University has to establish such working conditions that prevent harassment and bullying in the academic community.

The Plan of Gender Equality also considers the internal documents of VILNIUS TECH.

The Statute of VILNIUS TECH[13] emphasises that the University enjoys autonomy, which embraces academic, administrative, economic and financial management activities based on democratic self-governance, academic freedom and respect for human rights. The members of the University community are guaranteed academic freedom that encompasses freedom of thought and expression, the ownership of creation and intellectual work, in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Lithuania and international agreements and equal rights of participation in competitions.

The Strategic Development Plan of VILNIUS TECH for 2014–2021[14] states that highly qualified research and teaching staff is a key factor in ensuring the quality of academic performance. The following measures are outlined to attain the set goals: equal opportunities to work and improve their qualifications for every member of the community, regardless of gender, nationality or disability; improvement of academic career system that ensures sufficient potential of higher level researchers, search for young talents and favourable path of their career; development of professional upgrading system that ensures increase in motivation, creation of possibilities for learning and teaching.

The Declaration on Equal Opportunities for All of VILNIUS TECH[15] lays down the principles of non-discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, faith, belief or opinion, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin and religion.

The Code of Academic Ethics of VILNIUS TECH[16] provides for such fundamental values of academic ethics as academic integrity, responsibility, equality, justice, non-discrimination, accountability, transparency, sustainable use of resources, academic freedom, impartiality of assessment of research papers, confidence and respect. In the case of a breach of ethics, all the members of VILNIUS TECH community are provided with an opportunity to address the Committee of Legal Affairs and Ethics.

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[11] *The Regulations for the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment or Stalking Adopted by the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman No. V-22, 10 July, 2018*

[12] *Guidelines for the Prevention and Treatment of Sexual Harassment of the Lithuanian University Rectors' Conference*

[13] *The Resolution on Amendment of Appendix 1 of the Resolution of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania "On the Approval of the Statute of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University"(No. XI-2150, 28 June 2012)*

[14] *The Strategic Development Plan for 2014-2020 of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University approved by the Resolution of the Council of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (No. 1-4, 30 March 2021).*

[15] *The Declaration on Equal Opportunities for All of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University approved by the Resolution of the Senate of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University* (No. 91-3.2, 27 September 2016)

[16] *The Code of Academic Code of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University approved by the Resolution of the Senate of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (No. 81-2.5, 5 May 2015)* (consolidated version 18_02-2020, Resolution No. 116-3)

The Description of Internal Study Quality Assurance[17] outlines that the University seeks to create own culture of quality in the organisation, where contribution of each member of academic community is important. The University also promotes, provides support and evaluates activities related to improvement of the community's competences addressing the principles of lifelong learning.

VILNIUS TECH ensures fair remuneration system regardless of gender or any other discriminatory grounds. The internal procedures that regulate remuneration procedures of lecturers, researchers[18], administrative or other employees[19] also function in the University. The Description outlines the composition of remuneration, principles of its calculation and payment procedure. They also define sizes of remuneration coefficients, which have to be followed awarding payment.

VILNIUS TECH implements transparent selection of new employees and all the applicants are evaluated applying the same criteria. The job descriptions provide for qualification requirements for a given position, which are followed announcing and implementing new employees' selection.

The distribution of VILNIUS TECH staff according to gender in 2020: 54.3 % of all the employees are men, 45.7 % are women. Male students equal 67.3 % and there are 32.7 % of female students. It is important to carry out a more comprehensive analysis on gender equality at the University. It should help to observe the situation of gender equality and to identify the areas that require improvement.

The Plan of Gender Equality of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University is based on five goals which will be attained through the indicated activities and their efficiency will be monitored using indicators.

[17] *The Description of Internal Quality Assurance of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University* approved by the Resolution of the Senate of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (No. 118-1, 19 May 2020)

[18] *The Description of the Remuneration Procedure of Lecturers, Scientific Workers and Other Researchers at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University* approved by the Resolution of the Council of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (No. 3-1, 6 October 2020)

[19] *The Description of the Remuneration Procedure of Non-academic Staff of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University* approved by the Resolution of the Council of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (No. 3-2, 6 October 2020)

THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN FOR 2022–2027

GOAL	MEASURES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE PERSONS, DIVISION	IMPLEMENTATION					
				2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Strong gender equality policy	To incorporate gender equality provisions into the strategic documents.	Renewed *Strategic Action Plans*.	Council, Senate, Rector, vice-rectors, deans, responsible administrative divisions	X			X		
	To prepare and publicise the Policy on Personnel integrating the aspect of gender equality into it.	The prepared and publicised Policy on Personnel.		X					
Organizational structure to ensure the implementation of gender equality policy	To establish a separate position or to expand an already existing position delegating the functions of ensuring equal opportunities and coordinating implementation of anti-discrimination policy.	A newly established position or expanded functions of an existing position for coordination of gender equality assurance.	Rector, vice-rectors	X					
	To evaluate the situation of gender equality at VILNIUS TECH.	The prepared analysis of gender equality.	Academic Affairs Office, Science and Research Office, Human Resources Office	X	X	X	X	X	X
	To draw up *The Document on the Process of Implementing Gender Equality Policy and Monitoring*.	Drawn-up *Procedure for Implementation and Monitoring of Policy on Equal Opportunities.*			X				
Gender balance in decision-making, recruitment and study, career growth	To make attempts to include representatives of both genders into the lists of candidates implementing the procedures of selecting, electing to management and decision-making positions, decision-making bodies (committees, councils, commissions and others), giving awards, delegating to external organisations.	The renewed and updated (if necessary) recruitment and selection procedures of other candidates.	Council, Senate, Rector, vice-rectors, deans, Human Resources Office, heads of divisions	X		X		X	

	To increase transparency of recruitment and admission to studies, to promote observation of anti-discrimination principles.	The reviewed and renewed descriptions of work positions. The admission procedures were renewed and updated if necessary.		X X		X X		X X	
Environment conductive to gender equality in the academic community	To enhance psychological support to staff and students by organising consultations and trainings. To establish conditions favourable to combining work, studies and family.	The increased numbers of consultations, trainings and participants. Informing employees and heads of divisions and a booklet about flexible working conditions and benefits for those raising children.	Rector, vice-rectors, deans, Human Resources Office, Academic Support Centre	X X	X X	X X	X X	X X	X X
Equality-oriented communication	To include the principles of gender balance into communication. To form internal and external news maintaining retaining gender balance. Education of the community on gender equality themes. Increasing awareness of *the Regulations of Academic Ethics*.	Publicising the plan and principles of gender equality. Application of gender equality principles on the VILNIUS TECH website and increased numbers of publications and releases related to gender equality. Organised trainings on gender equality issues. Informing employees and students about *the Regulations of Academic Ethics*, functions of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Ethics, infringement procedures .	vice-rectors, Public Communication Office**,** responsible administrative divisions, faculties	X X X	X X X X	X X X	X X X X	X X X	X X X X

It should be noted that gender equality is only one of the aspects to ensure equal opportunities. This plan is expected to initiate changes in all the areas related to equal opportunities.

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