

**LeTSGEPs** Leading Towards Sustainable Gender Equality Plans in research performing organisations



**LeTSGEPs**

# DRAFT

**Deliverable 4.4**

**GEPs Implementation Report 2.0**

**Due date:** M47 (November 2023)

**Actual submission date:** 04/12/23

**Project start date:** January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 - Duration: 48 months

**Work package concerned:** WP4

**Concerned work package leader:** UT

**Task leader:** UT

**Dissemination level:** Public



This project received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation program under Grant Agreement n° 873072

## List of abbreviations and acronyms

Acronym	
GB	Gender Budgeting
GE	Gender Equality
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
RPO	Research Performing Organisation
UT	University of Tirana
WG	LeTSGEPs Working Group
ICM	Institut de Ciències del Mar (ICM/CSIC)
UNIME	University of Messina
MISANU	Mathematical Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts
CY	Cergy Paris University
MPI-BI	Max-Planck-Institute for Biological Intelligence
ETF	Equality Task Force
AI	Artificial Intelligence

## Document review history

Date	Author	Feedback/Review	Version
23.11.23	UT	Circulation of the 1st DRAFT version to all partners for comments	1
30.11.23	UT	Revised DRAFT	2
01.12.23	UT	Final version	3

## Table of contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. GEPs' REFINING PROCESS ACROSS ALL RPOs</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. IMPLEMENTATION OF GEPs' MEASURES AND ACTIONS AS DEFINED BY EACH RPO</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND STRATEGIES USED TO SOLVE THEM</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>4. CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>ANNEX. 1</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>UNIME – Refined GEPs Implementation Report</b>	
<b>ANNEX. 2</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>ICM - GEPs Implementation Report</b>	
<b>ANNEX. 3</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>MISANU - GEPs Implementation Report</b>	
<b>ANNEX. 4</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>MPI-BI - GEPs Implementation Report</b>	
<b>ANNEX. 5</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>CYU - GEPs Implementation Report</b>	
<b>ANNEX. 6</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>UT - GEPs Implementation Report</b>	

## D4.4 GEPs' SUMMATIVE IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

### INTRODUCTION

The main scope of this deliverable is to report on the implementation of the refined Gender Equality Plans (GEP) of the six project partner institutions (UNIME, ICM, MISANU, MPG, CY and UT). Every institution has reported the whole process followed to refine the Gender Equality Plan, and has provided key information about the actions carried out in each area for more than one year. All institutions have reported on the status of each activity (implemented, ongoing or not implemented) and have provided a brief description of the outputs and the outcomes achieved.

In the following section, every institution has outlined the issues confronted during the implementations, the strategies employed to resolve them, and the emerging gender equality challenges that need to be addressed through the implementation of the refined GEP.

Each of the annexes (1-6) at the end of the document presents the report of the refined Gender Equality Plan for the six different project partners.

### 1. GEPs' REFINING PROCESS ACROSS ALL RPOs

The GEP refining process was a comprehensive and structured approach in all RPOs to develop and implement plans aimed at achieving gender equality within the institution. All project partners are dedicated to promoting gender equality and inclusivity within their academic community and beyond.

The first versions of GEPs have been designed in a participatory process right from the start and in this process were involved different stakeholders. This approach was also followed during the GEP refining process in all RPOs. During this phase, many of the stakeholders were involved through focus groups, workshops, group discussions or one-on-one meetings with the LETSGEPs team for development of the refined GEP. Through this process, all partners actively worked to identify areas where gender disparities may exist and formulate targeted actions to address them.

In this way, all GEPs represent the diverse needs of and situations in the different areas of each organisation and promote bottom-up processes. Meanwhile, two project partners<sup>1</sup> received requests to support other Higher Education Institutions in their countries in designing their GEPs. However, in rare cases fewer stakeholders showed little interest in participating in the process and/or providing feedback.

The specific objectives, measures, and actions for 2022-2024 were formulated through an ongoing reflective process initiated with the report on the 2021-2022 GEP. This process involved multiple brainstorming sessions with various stakeholders. By addressing issues identified during the

---

<sup>1</sup> MISANU and UT

implementation of the initial GEP and discussing the strategies employed to overcome them, we identified potential areas for future intervention to be addressed in the refined GEP.

The refined GEPs also allocate resources and assign responsibilities, establish the implementation schedule, and a monitoring and evaluation system based on gender-sensitive indicators. The refined GEPs are planned until the end of 2024 (with the exception of CY's GEP which will end in December 2023).

The new GEPs commits efforts in each of the areas of intervention recommended by Horizon Europe Programme. All institutions have addressed intervention in the following five areas:

- Increase the participation of women in research, innovation and improvement of their career prospects.
- Promote gender balance in leadership and decision making.
- Integrate a gender dimension into both research and teaching.
- Foster work-life balance and cultivate an inclusive organisational culture.
- Prevent gender-based violence, including addressing issues of sexual harassment.

Beyond these five areas, two partners incorporated three additional areas of focus: embedding a gender perspective in institutional culture, implementing gender budgeting, and fostering inclusive and non-sexist communication. The GEPs have been adopted by the highest decision-making bodies in May-June 2022 (according to institutions), and are published on the official webpage of the institutions. The plans were signed by the highest management level of each RPO, confirming that they acknowledge the high and strategic importance of the GEP for their institution and that they will fully support its implementation.

To systematically monitor the implementation progress of GEP measures, all implementing partners completed a dashboard file developed in the initial phase. This dashboard file serves as a management tool for all partners, enabling them to monitor and manage their progress in alignment with their individual plans. Additionally, it offers comparable information for all partners, which has been used for various deliverables.

By refining and implementing the GEPs, all ROPs demonstrated their commitment to creating an environment that values and supports diversity, ultimately fostering a more equitable and inclusive academic community.

The subsequent report is derived from an examination of the individual reports submitted by each implementing partner, a comprehensive analysis of the completed dashboard file, and the discussions conducted during several meetings.

## 2. IMPLEMENTATION OF GEPs' MEASURES AND ACTIONS AS DEFINED BY EACH RPO

The areas of intervention in the refined plans remain consistent with the initial plans. Four partners have concentrated on five pillars of intervention, as identified through analyses conducted during the assessment phase and detailed in their implementation reports at the conclusion of the first phase. These areas include: increasing the participation of women in research, innovation, and enhancing their career prospects; achieving gender balance in leadership and decision-making roles; integrating the gender dimension into research and teaching; fostering work-life balance and promoting an inclusive organizational culture; and preventing gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

Meanwhile, two institutions (ICM and MPI-BI) have identified eight pillars of intervention which are: gender inclusive institutional culture; gender budgeting and remuneration policy; inclusive and non-sexist communication, ensuring involvement and resources of Gender Equality Officers and structural anchoring of gender equality and non-scientific areas. Each of these fields has on average one or more measures with a set of actions (two to four actions) to achieve specific objectives and results.

Below is a report of activities carried out according to the areas of intervention for all RPOs.

### ***Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects***

Addressing the increase in the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects is a common intervention area across all the LeTSGEPs partners. Each institution, however, has identified its specific priorities and implemented distinct actions within this domain.

In this area, UNIME focuses on implementing measures and actions to ensure that gender equality is upheld in recruitment processes, the retention of talent, and career advancement opportunities. To address the identified gaps, UNIME organised seminars and workshops to promote its mission as a gender-inclusive and fair training and work environment. UNIME also provided scholarships for advanced training courses on gender culture, aimed at promoting attendance to a specific in-depth gender issue training course identified by the University.

Another measure identified by the institution was expansion of the social reporting organisational unit, which is also focused on gender reporting. The unit reports about gender budgeting and monitoring social accountability. UNIME also organised a women orientation for graduates and new graduates.

The ICM's objective in this area was to foster a gender-balanced research culture that promotes gender equality in scientific careers and allows capitalization on the talent of the ICM staff\_both female and male. Three measures have been implemented to achieve this objective. To overcome the so-called "glass ceiling" phenomenon within the institution, ICM designed a training programme to strengthen the professional skills, expertise, and leadership of women researchers (and technicians), by providing them with tools for their development based on their needs.

The institution also designed and implemented a pilot mentoring program (3 mentors (2 women, 1 man) and 3 mentees (all women) to support the female young researchers **to develop a professional career**. In order to be able to integrate **the gender aspects in internal funding** a new verification procedure has been established to ensure gender sensitivity in the awarding of funds through internal competitive calls. The gender dimension is also included in analysis reports for each of the internal calls (target audience, nominations, beneficiaries, and funds granted). As outstanding indicators, 60% of the people who have been granted funds are women, and in terms of funds, 48,5% have been granted to women, almost achieving the expected indicator.

MISANU actively worked during the last two years to increase women's participation in research and innovation. MISANU became a full member of the European Research Centers of Mathematics, and the Institute is represented by a female professor. Several female staff also obtained project grants from the Science Fund of Serbia which is an indicator of the progress done in this area. In the second half of 2023, several female staff obtained support from the Scientific Council for their future activities and applications in international forums for women in science. The institution also organised a *workshop on gender equality issues* this year which attracted more external than internal stakeholders.

Another measure that was implemented by MISANU in this area was **the celebration** of *Women's Day in Mathematics and Girls' Day in Information and Communication Technologies* in April and May 2023. The event's outreach was massive and many visitors visited the exhibitions organised by MISANU and the Center for Science Promotion. This activity targeted girls aged 14-30 and encouraged them to consider careers in STEM. Starting from the beginning of 2022 MISANU has adopted a gender sensitive budgeting process and for the second time was designed the budget using a gender budgeting approach.

MPI-BI identified and implemented several measures in this pillar. The institute set itself certain long-term goals for the proportion of women on scientific career levels. The proportion of women in Grade C increased from 36% to 43,18%, in Grade D from 59,26% to 68,89%, while there was a slight decrease in Grade B and no change in Grade A. Active preparations for recruitment of women in Grade A are ongoing (free positions in the next years).

MPI-BI has provided **training for career and empowerment** as well as **mentoring programs** for women and non-binary PhD students and Postdocs. A group of female scientists was formed, and they chose the training program themselves.

The mentoring program continued to be offered to the PhDs students and a similar program has also been created for the Postdocs students, which made the implementation easier and successful. The participation numbers slowly declined, and the institution will re-evaluate the need for this program in the future.

The institute has worked to extend the data collection. The implementation of this measure has encountered difficulties. Data collection for some indicators has not been completed, while some other indicators will be ready by the end of the year.

**Two awareness campaigns were conducted regarding the status of female researchers.** The purpose of the campaigns was to raise awareness about the importance of gender equality. High-ranking personnel of the Institute and young female researchers taking part in these campaigns shared openly their experiences and obstacles in science.

CY implemented several measures (awareness activities, Women and Science Award and Recruitment Analysis) to promote and advance women's career development. The Women and Science Award recognizes the achievements of women in the field of science and encourages their progress. Moreover, the department of Computer Science organised in December 2022 an event on "10 inspiring women in science".

The institution also raised awareness among faculty and department directors regarding the significance of gender balance in assigning supervisory roles and responsibilities for group tasks. Ongoing training sessions were conducted for members of recruitment committees to ensure fair practices. In the selection process for management and administrative positions at different levels, applicants are assessed solely on their skills and potential. This approach aims to eliminate gender bias and stereotypes, supported by continuous training for recruitment committee members.

UT took significant steps to implement the action planned. A Manual of gender indicators has been developed to collect and report gender indicators at UT according to the ISCED.

A workshop was organised with representatives of human resources offices in UT and in its main units for the presentation of the manual and training them how to use this manual. The purpose of this workshop was to increase the capacities of the staff for the collection of gender data based on this manual. In the workshop, information was shared with the attendees about why this manual is useful, who it helps, how it is organised and how it can be used. The workshop also aimed to increase the awareness of the staff responsible for the role and importance of gender disaggregated data. Several training modules are planned in the UT's Training Plan 2023-2027 for the consolidation of skills to collect the gender data.

The gender equality dimension has been included for the first time in the different strategies and regulations of UT such as: Strategy of University of Tirana 2023-2028; Teaching Strategy of UT 2022-2027; Training Strategy of UT 2023-2027; Code of Ethics of University of Tirana.

A workshop was organised to increase the capacities of the staff in gender responsive budgeting. This workshop aimed to increase the capacities of the staff in gender responsive budgeting. The representatives from academic staff and the administrative units participated in this workshop. Two departments of the Faculty of Economy have already integrated the analysis of expenses with gender lens.

### ***Gender balance in leadership and decision-making***

Gender balance in leadership and decision-making at UNIME aims to achieve a more inclusive and equitable environment within the institution. UNIME implemented two measures to address the **gender gaps** in this pillar. The institution investigated the decision-making processes (e.g. committees, board of directors) and carried out a survey on research projects in terms of gender (e.g. PI, research project members) in order to explore the gender gaps in decision making and in research projects and to address them in future plans. UNIME drafted two separate reports for each of these measures.

ICM has the objective of achieving gender balance in institutional governance by eliminating any barriers that prevent women from reaching leadership positions and enabling them to participate in



all decision-making spheres in this pillar. To achieve this objective, ICM was focused on three main measures: **engendering institutional governance, strengthening the gender equality mechanism and instrument and monitoring the institution activity with gender lenses**, as well as implementing several activities.

The institution has been committed to equality in the renewal of institutional positions in the management team and has achieved concrete results. So, one woman and one man occupying the two vice-directorships, and three women and two men are nominated in the recently created deputy directorships. There has also been an important feminization in the renewal of the chiefs of the 4 departments into which the ICM is organised.

The institution created a new position in organisational structure (Deputy Director for Equality). This role is integral to embedding equality within the ICM's organisational framework and plays a crucial role in monitoring and reporting on issues related to gender equality. Two gender experts are members of the two key committees of the institution: the scientific strategy committee and the transfer committee. Their role is to advance the cross-cutting adoption of the gender perspective in the scoping and definition of their respective institutional strategies.

ICM allocated resources for the implementation of the GEPs and an institutional annual budget for the Equality Task Force (ETF). The ETF has been strengthened as a mechanism in charge of fostering and monitoring effective equality measures. Training sessions are provided by LeTSGEPs coordination for the responsible personnel directly involved in the GEP implementation. A friendly version of the ICM's GEP has been developed and disseminated on a specific website specifically designed for this purpose.

ICM identified and implemented new indicators and analytical tools to monitor gender equality in different fields; as well as established and implemented the sustainable procedures to data collection and tools to monitor the GEP. ICM also has presented the GEP's implementation progress to the stakeholders.

There were zero female members in the Management Board of MISANU before GEP implementation. LeTSGEP's team put effort into pointing out this problem to their colleagues. During several months, the employees were invited to consider supporting one male and one female candidate for the member of the Management Board. At the same time, the team encouraged female colleagues to run for this position. In the elections held in June 2022, the majority of employees voted for one woman and one man as their representatives on the Board.

In September 2022, after consultations with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, a women professor was appointed as the representative of the Government of Serbia in the Board. In this way, the gender-balanced structure of the Board was achieved. Since 2021, MISANU also established a practice that the Chief and Vice Chief of each sector are colleagues of different sexes.

MPI-BI is self-committed to improve the Gender balance in leadership and decision-making by improving the women's proportion in the Board of Trustees and in the Scientific Advisory Board. The goals set for 2025 are already reached.

The election of a new president and presidential team took place in December 2022 at CY. The new team is composed of seven women (representing 41%) and ten men, marking significant progress in terms of gender representation. To further advance the representation of women in committees, the HR department diligently ensures that committees consist of at least 40% of each gender.

The UT's specific objective of this area is to promote career development of all staff, male and female and in particular encourage women to run to be a member of decision-making bodies. The institution has raised the capacities of academic and non-academic staff regarding the role of women in management of higher education institutions. UT in cooperation with LETSGEP's team organised an internal event dedicated to the role of women in higher education and in decision making. A list of future actions was identified to support women in their career at UT. The institution has also planned to carry out a study about the leadership model of the institution from a gender perspective.

### ***Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content***

The integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content at UNIME aims to contribute to a more inclusive, equitable, and academically enriching environment. UNIME has in its teaching plans modules that deal with topics of gender equality, like for example at the Department of Economics, there is a module on gender budgeting and the gender equality plan; at the Department of Medicine, there is a course on gender medicine; at the Department of Law, there is a laboratory on "Gender, Religion and Law".

The institution also has disseminated the findings and made more visible the research projects that incorporate a gender perspective, by creating a pool of good practices that can help highlight successful approaches and inspire others to integrate a gender perspective into their research.

The institution also encouraged the publication of research findings related to gender issues and promoted these publications through university channels (conference, congress, local workshop).

ICM is designing a toolkit to orient the inclusion of gender dimension in research projects. Best practices and tools for gender mainstreaming in research have been identified and an international event to exchange best practices on gender mainstreaming in science was carried out on January 20, 2023 (LeTSGEPs).

MISANU is dedicated to maintaining the highest level of scientific research in the field of mathematics, mechanics and computer science. The gender dimension is not easy to integrate into research and teaching content of subjects of these disciplines. However, increasing research interest in artificial intelligence (AI) among MISANU researchers opened interesting questions concerning gender-sensitive language in AI. Digitisation and the increasing role of AI in public administration in Serbia opens new possibilities for consideration of the gender dimension in computer science and data science that MISANU plans to use in the future.

**Data collection** on number and research topics with gender aspects has also been a priority of the MPI-BI team. The implementation of this data collection was discussed, and it was already approved by the leadership that it should be one of the major and important evaluations of the research done at the Institute. This was evaluated as a big success by the institution. The discussion however on which question specifically to integrate into the data collection for the report did not lead to a result in time for the sending out of the questionnaire in 2023. The institute will organise a series of

seminars on “Gender in Ecology and Neuroscience”. Two talks will still take place in 2023, two are planned so far for 2024.

The Gender Equality Officer at CY has been proactive in organising a series of meetings with the primary objective of equipping researchers with the knowledge and tools necessary to integrate gender considerations into EU-funded projects. These meetings were not limited to CY researchers but also extended to researchers within the EUTOPIA network. Specifically tailored to Economic studies, CY team initiated a bi-weekly webinar that continued until July 2023 and conducted a comprehensive workshop on Gender Economics in June 2022.

Starting in September 2023, they have transitioned from webinars to workshops, scheduling them twice a year to facilitate an even more in-depth exploration of the subject. The importance of addressing gender inequalities has been acknowledged across various academic disciplines, including Economics, Law, History, and Foreign and French Literature, where this issue is integrated into the curriculum. This comprehensive approach ensures that gender equality and its associated challenges are thoroughly considered across multiple facets of academia.

The specific objective of UT has been to ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into the research projects and teaching content. provide capacity building for young research staff on how to do this. Two Departments at the Faculty of Economy have taken actions to introduce the new chapters and topics related to gender mainstreaming, gender equality and gender budgeting. Gender budgeting is included as a specific topic in the Budgeting and Decision-Making courses. Other Gender Equality topics are successfully implemented across modules and program studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The interest of young researchers is increased to do research work on gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and other gender related issues. One PhD student is writing her thesis on Gender Budgeting and she has received a research grant from UT (in the form of a total reduction of her tuition fees), which confirms the dedication of the Institution itself. In the meantime, other PhD students have included the gender dimension in their research work and have published articles in various scientific journals.

### ***Work-life balance and organisational culture***

The intervention in this area aimed at solving all those problems that prevent the reconciliation of lifetimes for the family and work. The focus on work-life balance and organisational culture at UNIME is aimed at creating a supportive, inclusive, and healthy academic environment that values the well-being of its community members and strives for optimal personal and professional fulfilment. UNIME has implemented some action to achieve this goal such as: development of nursing areas, summer schools for children and adolescents; activation of agreements for sports activities for employees and their families and smart working; and the creation of “Pink (Pregnant)” parking spaces.

The objective of this field is to improve the work-life balance policy to ensure not only equal fruition by women and men but also that this conciliation does not penalise women's careers. One measure that integrates several actions was designed and implemented by ICM.

The institution has in place a lactation and restroom in the centre. The work meetings have been scheduled only within core hours. ICM has improved the databases for accurate capture of the use of work-life balance measures (according to the type and circumstances) disaggregated by gender.

The Adoption of the Rulebook on the approval of work from home and remote working is ongoing. In practice, most of the employees work from the office, but after the pandemic, the Institute recognized the problem of double organisational efforts for hybrid formats. Therefore, there is a fear of misusing the right of remote working, so the question still needs to be studied from all aspects. MISANU has supported the employees in critical situations, like illness and has organised different entertainment activities for employees and collaborators.

Before the design of the GEP, numerous measures existed at the Institute (MPI-BI) in the field of compatibility of family and career. Due to problems with compatibility still being reported, they wanted to know if the support programs were not meeting the needs or not known. The main goal was to understand the problem better. To achieve this goal they decided to extend data collection (usage of time in parental leave by mothers and fathers; knowledge about support offered by care officers; usage of support by care officers).

The data was collected in the same interviews as the data on family duties. Qualitative interviews with seven Postdocs with children by external person (LeTSGEPs project manager) provided important information on how to design a measure on hiring support/a temporal substitute during parental leave who would continue with experiments, so that the time is not lost for the advancement of the research project and on how we could improve the distribution of the information on the support offered by the care officer.

The HR department at CY has initiated the "HR Café," a platform designed for presenting and discussing topics related to career progression, bonuses, teaching or professional sabbaticals, leave rights, and salary details.

This pillar of GEP is considered important because of its impact on the other pillars for promoting women's careers in science, research, and academia. At the beginning of the project, it was a higher expectation for the academic staff and students to continue teaching from home as a new opportunity after the pandemic situation (Covid19). However, there is a gap in the legal framework and there is no opportunity to develop online teaching at UT until amendments of Law on "Higher Education and Scientific Research". There are not in place regulations with specifications such as offering classrooms for women academic staff with small children on the first and the second floor, or special parking places for women academic staff with small children. The announcement of such actions on the GEP 2022-2024 means that there is a sensibilization and also a reflection on what is happening in the practice of the organisational culture, but which is not yet formalised in regulations. The measures and actions proposed under pillar 4 on work-life balance and organisational culture do not have any financial cost, which means that they are easier to implement with a little willingness of the administrative staff responsible for such arrangements.

## **Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment**

UNIME aims to create an environment where all individuals are safe, respected, and can fully participate in their educational and professional pursuits without the fear of violence or harassment based on their gender. It reflects the university's commitment to upholding the principles of equality, safety, and human rights. UNIME has implemented several actions to achieve this goal. They have organized round tables and seminars to raise awareness about **gender-based violence including sexual harassment**, have adopted the guidelines for a non-discriminatory administrative language and provided internships for students to fight discrimination under the supervision of the UNIME Trust Advisor.

ICM took responsibility for providing safe work environments through implementing several actions to prevent sexual harassment and gender-based violence. The institute has elaborated a *protocol* that addresses sexual and gender-based harassment in the ICM. A zero-tolerance policy towards sexual and gender-based harassment has been declared by the Director and two individuals, who were responsible for the deployment of the ICM's Protocol, have been nominated and trained on sexual and gender-based harassment.

The institute has organised awareness-raising sessions on sexual and gender-based harassment for all staff: training on sexual and gender-based harassment prevention for the governing board and ETF and has presented the Protocol in a Friday Talk with young researchers. ICM has also conducted a survey on sexual harassment, to establish a perception baseline on this issue.

Prevention of gender-based violence and all kinds of discrimination is an important and sensitive topic requiring proper actions. MISANU **adopted a rulebook on the Prohibition of Sexual and Other Harassment**. The document was adopted in February 2023 by the Management Board. The document has defined the roles of gender equality officials and directors after receiving a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination.

Three measures were originally designed in this pillar by MPI-BI based on two surveys carried out among Institute members on witnessed and experienced discrimination and harassment incidents. The Institute organised annual talks and workshops on gender biases and discrimination to raise awareness. The participation was mandatory, and the topics discussed were on gender diversity and race, on prevention of sexualized harassment and discrimination, etc. In some cases, the talks were followed by training workshops. The Institute also has provided training **on prevention of sexual harassment for all employees** where the turnout has been high.

The Institution designed a Website with information on complaint procedures and publication of standardised form that allows for easy and anonymous reporting. This measure was proposed by a group of PhDs, who also had prepared the first version of the website and the form. They then were revised by the LeTSGEPs team. Website and form are now online, information on the new service has been sent out to all Institute members via email.

In order to ensure proper response to and handling of reported cases, the leadership personnel has been trained specifically on prevention and intervention in cases of sexualized harassment, discrimination and power abuse. This has been performed once already in an afternoon workshop following the general training. The second round is planned for December 2023.

To raise awareness about sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination, CY has leveraged initiatives supported by the French Ministry of Research, which places a strong emphasis on addressing these issues and allocated dedicated funding to institutions for this purpose. CY organised seminars and training sessions for governance members and graduate students in collaboration with external partners. Further events are planned in the upcoming academic year to reach a broader audience of researchers, instructors, and staff, ensuring they are well-informed about harassment and sexual violence.

During the Spring semester of 2023, several sessions on how to respond to reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence were offered to governance representatives and PhD students. Furthermore, in November 2022 and March 2023, they organised multiple events in collaboration with a theatre company and the Health Service of CY, furthering their efforts to address these crucial issues. The specific objective for this measure was to prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment.

UT have already developed and adopted a policy and procedures that safeguard academic, administrative personnel and students of the UT educational institutions from all forms of violence, harassment, and sexual harassment. The approval of this policy was followed up by several meetings that served to raise awareness about the adopted policy and procedures against any form of violence.

Some training sessions for female staff and students on how to distinguish and react to sexually-oriented language and attitude will be prepared and delivered in 2024 through the virtual training centre of UT.

Two project partners have formulated objectives and implemented actions in other areas as well. Below is a summary of their achievements in the last year.

### ***Gender inclusive institutional culture***

ICM has approved two measures with the objective to embed gender equality as a key and cross-cutting principle of the organisation and consolidate an institutional culture that is sensitive to gender equality and intolerant to discrimination based on gender. ICM have implemented several actions to increase the awareness and to make women researchers visible such as: different initiatives to make visible the contribution of women researchers and technicians at ICM (different media and communication tools); the Equality Task Force and GEP area on the institutional website is being permanently updated; inclusion of women researchers and technicians at ICM in networks of women researchers that contribute to national and international visibility; participation of ETF members as speakers in seminars, events, and congresses on topics related to gender equality and science, etc.

### ***Gender Budgeting and Remuneration Policy***

The measures of this field are addressed to guarantee equal pay between women and men, improving the control of factors that can lead to direct or indirect discrimination between women and men regarding remuneration.

ICM has established an initial methodology for gender budgeting analysis/audit (including the development of a set of specific qualitative and quantitative indicators). They have also worked to improve the budget management control tools and to collect all data regarding the ICM budget disaggregated by gender. ICM staff has developed an initial methodology for the gender pay gap (GPG) and the staff salary database is being revised on the basis of criteria for the identification of factors contributing to the gap, to facilitate further analysis and interpretation. The institution is also monitoring the funds assigned to the GEP's measures.

Meanwhile MPI-BI has been focused on capacity building on gender budgeting. One external expert was invited and held one training and one consultation workshop with the staff. Leadership personnel and people concerned with financial issues were invited. After the training, some new gender indicators were identified, collected and it will be analysed. The results of the analysis will be used for the GEP re-design by the end of 2023.

### **3. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND STRATEGIES USED TO SOLVE THEM**

Several obstacles have been highlighted by LeTSGEPs partners related GEP's implementation which are summarised below.

Increasing the participation of women in research and innovation and improving their career prospects is a complex challenge. Sometimes gender stereotypes and biases may lead to unconscious discrimination in recruitment and career advancement. To avoid these cases UNIME has planned and provided training for staff involved in recruitment and promotion processes. The staff is also encouraged to use the gender-neutral language to develop the job descriptions and criteria.

The lack of data has been a challenge to assess progress on gender balance in leadership and decision-making. To avoid this, UNIME collected data periodically and used them to track the representation of women in leadership positions. They also have done the regular review and report on gender diversity metrics.

UNIME has encountered some difficulties especially regarding the limited visibility of gender-inclusive research projects. The institution has promoted successful projects that have effectively integrated a gender perspective through sharing case studies, success stories, and testimonials from researchers who have benefited from such an approach in order to increase visibility.

Balancing family and work responsibilities is particularly challenging for women in research and innovation careers. UNIME has developed family-friendly policies, flexible working arrangements, and on-site childcare services to support women in research. Meanwhile the Institution has encouraged a culture of understanding and flexibility for all employees.

The actions envisaged in the UNIME GEP that concern work-life conciliation were those that had the least problems in implementation. However, for some actions such as the creation of the pink room there was the problem of spaces, of identifying rooms in each centre for the creation of the room

intended for breastfeeding. The administration of the university started by identifying a room in the central hub and is moving to identify others.

Preventing gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, through events and seminars at (UNIME) was an effective approach. However, there was low attendance and engagement at events and seminars on this topic. The institution promoted these events well in advance, used diverse communication channels, and offered incentives to the students (credits) to encourage participation in such activities.

In ICM, the implementation of the GEP has not encountered any major barriers to its implementation, although there have been some **limiting factors** that have slowed it down or limited its full development.

There was frequently limited participation of the target groups in the GEP initiatives because of a combination of factors: work overload and the perception that these initiatives deepen this situation, the perception that these are structural problems on which the ICM has limited capacity to influence, or even the perception that this problem does not affect them.

To overcome this problem, a dual **mitigation strategy** was being implemented: on the one hand, the active search for candidates according to profiles and activities; and on the other hand, seek the support of the management team to facilitate participation (for example, offloading people from work to facilitate said participation).

Some limitations were linked with the lack of specific information in the field of marine sciences about integration of the gender dimension into research. Further limits were expected when implementing the tool in projects given a certain perception that the ICM produces mainly basic science and that the research is gender neutral. To overcome this perspective, the Institute provided training and evidence that very few projects are truly gender neutral.

The main measure implemented in the field **work-life balance** was the creation of a lactation and restroom, which addressed one of the **main problems** faced by the ICM, the lack of space. The cession of space for it was the result of an important negotiation **strategy** and the direct involvement of the management team.

Since the approval of the ICM Protocol to address sexual and gender-based harassment some reports have been received. The change in the perception of many people to report such cases has been the elaboration of ICM protocol, appointed trained and trustworthy employees that treated such reports and the implementation of numerous training and awareness actions.

The implementation of the GEP has not encountered any significant barriers, and it was accompanied by constant support from the Institute's leadership (MISANU). However, some limiting factors have slowed or limited its full implementation in some areas such as: the legal framework, the need for more human resources and volunteers for specific actions, the lack of capacities in Serbia in gender budgeting, the workload of the target groups limits their participation in the implementation of some measures.

The Institute builded an image as a responsible RPO and a pleasant workplace for both genders. The female researchers were motivated and supported to carry out their research works. MISANU is a



small RPO and has an advantage to reach all employees and address issues in informal communications. This strategy was used in many complex situations.

MISANU faced challenges to improve gender balance in leadership. However, their experience and cooperation with main stakeholders shows that the role of leadership is unavoidable in achieving full gender balance inside institutions, especially in decision-making and top positions.

Integration of the gender dimension into mathematical research and teaching content is perceived as impossible and even as an exaggeration in consideration of gender topics. It is a fact that mathematics, computer science, and logic are gender-neutral studies, so setting this area in these disciplines should avoid general statements that confuse researchers. However, the researchers from MISANU recognised an exciting topic: the problem of gender-sensitive language in AI-generated texts. It opens possibilities for a future multidisciplinary project with humanities and social sciences.

The work-life balance was one of the most challenging areas of intervention for MISANU. The Institute needs financial resources to support actions in this area. This issue should receive the approval of the government, which has to approve the budgeting for such activities. However, MISANU will organise an outdoor workshop to present the Handbook and the results of the LeTSGEPs project. In the coming years, MISANU will have to find a way to improve gender budgeting and overcome the problem.

MISANU has not experienced any severe obstacles in the adoption of the Rulebook on Prevention of Sexual and Other Violence. However, it is notable that many colleagues refrained from taking part in the discussion of this sensitive issue.

The implementation of regular lunch meetings for women and non-binary researchers was not possible for most of the implementation phase due to the pandemic situation in MPI-BI. In order to make the event happen young researchers took over and prepared the discussion of papers on gender topics.

The initial design of the mentoring program was also too complex to implement, so the program was adapted to the mentoring sessions that were already in place before (for the PhDs) and a similar program for Postdocs was designed. That made the implementation easier and also benefited from the already well-known program for Postdocs.

Another issue encountered by the MPI-BI team during the implementation was the extension of data collection. Currently only a part of the Postdocs sends the filled form to the Gender Equality Officer when leaving the Institute. They are considering if and how they can make this mandatory.

Data collection on number and research topics of research projects with gender aspects was also a challenge for the institution. They got approval to collect the data on the framework of the Institute's report. Afterwards, it was complicated to find a set of questions that would be understood and accepted by the researchers.

MPI-BI received critical feedback especially by the English-speaking scientists on the English version for the first set of talk and training on prevention of sexual harassment. They identified two problems: The trainers had firstly mainly concentrated on intervention rather than prevention, and their English was not good enough to convey a differentiated view on this complex topic. For the

second set of talks and training the Institute hired trainers, who usually work for companies and are also more prevention oriented. The feedback was improved for the second set of talks

The most significant challenge that CY encountered was promoting events and increasing the participation of women in research and innovation. The solution that they adopted was to enhance their communication campaign by disseminating information through informal networks and social media.

Implementing the integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content has been relatively smooth. However, obtaining a comprehensive overview of researchers working on gender-related topics remains a formidable task, primarily due to the absence of a comprehensive census on this subject matter.

To address this issue, CY strategy involves ongoing communication about the gender requirements within Horizon projects and they are working on establishing a robust network of researchers focusing on gender-related topics. This network will serve as a platform for regular meetings and the sharing of essential legal and administrative documents related to gender equality, inclusion, and diversity concerns.

CY encountered a few challenges when organizing training sessions on sexual violence and harassment. Firstly, integrating these sessions into the regular yearly training schedule provided by HR proved to be a hurdle. Secondly, attendance at these sessions was not mandatory, which resulted in low participation during events and meetings.

To address these challenges, the Gender Equality Officer discussed these issues with the Vice President responsible for HR. For upcoming sessions, they plan to enhance communication through the network of colleagues working on gender-related topics to ensure broader engagement.

The lack of gender disaggregated data was a challenge which encouraged the UT team to develop a Manual on Gender Indexes based on the literature and adapted to institution context. This manual will help all academic and non-academic units to report on annual bases gender indicators and gender sensitive indicators for academic and administrative staff, scientific researchers, and students.

The drafting of the strategies and regulatory acts has been an inclusive process at the institution level. However, these documents were not gender sensitive. Last year some strategies and acts were redrafted, and the gender component was well reflected in all documents. LeTSGEPs team provided great support during the drafting process.

The UT team has encountered several **challenges in implementing actions** related to **work-life balance**. The Ministry of Education and Sport has not amended the law "On Higher Education". In these circumstances, UT could not reflect any changes in its own regulations regarding online or hybrid teaching and other related actions. As a counter action to this situation, the UT team is continuing to insist on raising awareness regarding the benefits of a work-life balance which should be supported by institutional and cultural changes.

The main challenge that UT faced with the actions for the area of gender-based violence was the **lack of capacities and expertise** within the institution. To overcome this challenge UT collaborated with the UNDP Albania office which provided training and expertise in this area.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

Since the approval of the refined GEPs, project partners have taken very significant steps to implement actions that were anchored in institutional policies and practices. All implemented actions have intended to correct gender gaps and inequality and/or to respond to the specific needs and priorities of women .

The implementation of the GEP has progressed at a good pace in a context very conducive to its development. This implementation is the result of the articulated efforts among multiple stakeholders in all project partners.

Many of the output indicators have already been achieved or exceeded and all project partners are in the way of the achievement of the outcome's indicators. However, only at the end of GEP implementation (December 2024) and after the assessment of the level of accomplishment and scope of the results will it be possible to see the transformative effect of the GEP.

The refined GEPs also allocated resources and assigned responsibilities, established the implementation schedule, and a monitoring and evaluation system based on gender-sensitive indicators. The refined GEPs are planned until the end of 2024. In the upcoming months, it is expected that all partners will implement the remaining actions and continue their work done so far, collecting data and output indicators that will be used to report about the implementation and to evaluate the impact of GEP at the institutional level.

However, some project partners have had limited resources to implement the plan, especially in the unexpected situation as it was the case of the fusion of two Institutes at Max Planck Society.

The dedication of research institutions to gender-related actions demonstrates their commitment to fostering a more equitable and inclusive educational environment. By addressing the critical issues and implementing the GEPs, the universities and research institutions are taking significant steps toward achieving gender equality and promoting a culture of respect, diversity, and gender inclusivity within the research community. Leadership support and communication within RPO are crucial and the best way to raise awareness and promote gender equality. Gender equality should be introduced in a consensual and inclusive process instead of being imposed by a decision.

The project LeTSGEPs will be finalised at the end of 2023 and the resources (human resources and budget) will end with it. Some key elements to ensure sustainability are:

- To ensure the necessary resources (human resources and budget) to guarantee the ongoing implementation of the planned actions.
- To advance the institutionalisation of the GEP as a tool to guide all gender equality interventions.
- Strengthening the capacities and competencies of the Gender Focal Point to drive/accompany the implementation of the GEP measures and to monitor them adequately
- Strengthening coordination and collaboration mechanisms between the different internal stakeholders with responsibilities in relation to the GEP.

## ANNEX. 1

# UNIME – Refined GEPs Implementation Report

### INTRODUCTION

UNIME is dedicated to promoting gender equality and inclusivity within its academic community and beyond. A fundamental component of its commitment to this important cause is the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) refining process.

The GEP refining process at UNIME is a comprehensive and structured approach to develop and implement plans aimed at achieving gender equality within the institution. These plans address a wide range of issues, including equal opportunities for career advancement, eliminating gender-based discrimination, and promoting a balanced work environment.

Through this process, UNIME actively works to identify areas where gender disparities may exist and formulates targeted strategies to address them. These strategies encompass various aspects of university life, from recruitment and retention of female faculty and staff to promoting a gender-inclusive curriculum and research agenda.

By refining and implementing Gender Equality Plans, UNIME demonstrates its commitment to creating an environment that values and supports diversity, ultimately fostering a more equitable and inclusive academic community. This process underscores the university's dedication to promoting gender equality and social progress in the field of higher education.

### 1. REPORT ON THE GEPs' MEASURES AND ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED

UNIME has instituted a comprehensive strategy for advancing gender equality, consisting of five distinct areas with specific measures and actions. These areas are designed to address different aspects of gender inclusivity and equal opportunity within the institution:

**AREA 1. Recruitment, Maintenance, Career Progression:** In this area, the university focuses on implementing measures and actions to ensure that gender equality is upheld in recruitment processes, the retention of talent, and career advancement opportunities. This includes promoting fair and unbiased recruitment practices, offering mentorship and support for career development, and actively working to eliminate gender-based disparities in academic and administrative roles.

**AREA 2. Leadership in Research and Decision Making:** UNIME is committed to fostering a gender-balanced representation in leadership roles, particularly in research and decision-making positions. Measures in this area include promoting equal access to leadership positions, creating pathways for women to hold key roles, and advocating for gender diversity on committees and governing bodies.

**AREA 3. Family-Work Reconciliation Policies:** Recognizing the importance of work-life balance, the university has developed policies and actions to support the reconciliation of family and work responsibilities. These measures include flexible working arrangements, parental leave options, and childcare services to facilitate the participation of both men and women in the university community.

AREA 4. Prevention of Discrimination and Sexual Harassment: UNIME is committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment by implementing measures to prevent discrimination and combat sexual harassment. This includes educational initiatives, reporting mechanisms, and support services to ensure that all individuals within the institution are treated with dignity and respect.

AREA 5. Gender Procurement: UNIME has recognized the importance of promoting gender equality in procurement processes and supply chain management. This area focuses on measures and actions aimed at ensuring that the institution's procurement practices are in line with gender equality principles.

### **1.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects.**

This area is aimed at addressing gender disparities and promoting gender equality in the fields of research and innovation.

The actions that have been implemented are:

- Promotion of UNIME's mission as a gender-inclusive and fair training and work environment.
- Scholarships for advanced training courses on gender culture.
- Expansion of the social reporting organisational unit, which will also focus on gender reporting
- Women orientation work, female work orientation project for graduates and new graduates

### **1.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making**

Gender balance in leadership and decision-making at the UNIME aims to achieve a more inclusive and equitable environment within the institution.

The actions that have been implemented are:

- Investigation of decision-making processes (e.g. committees, board of directors).
- Survey on research projects in terms of gender (e.g. PI, research project members)

### **1.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content.**

The integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content at the UNIME aims to contribute to a more inclusive, equitable, and academically enriching environment. It emphasises the importance of considering gender as a fundamental component of academic discourse and encourages a broader understanding of its role in various fields of study.

The actions that have been implemented are:

- UNIME has courses with teachings that concern gender equality, like for example at the Department of Economics, with the course of Social Accountability where there is a module on gender budgeting and the gender equality plan; at the Department of Medicine, there is a course on gender medicine; at the Department of Law, there is a laboratory on GENDER RELIGION AND LAW.

- Disseminating and enhancing the visibility of research projects that incorporate a gender perspective for promoting gender equality and ensuring that research outcomes are comprehensive and inclusive, by creating a pool of good practices can help highlight successful approaches and inspire others to integrate a gender perspective into their research.
- Encourage the publication of research findings related to gender issues and promote these publications through university channels (conference, congress, local workshop, ..).

#### **1.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture**

The focus on work-life balance and organisational culture at the UNIME is aimed at creating a supportive, inclusive, and healthy academic environment that values the well-being of its community members and strives for optimal personal and professional fulfilment.

The actions that have been implemented are:

- Development of nursing areas
- Summer schools for children and adolescents
- Activation of agreements for sports activities for employees and their families.
- Smart Working
- “Pink (Pregnant)” parking spaces

#### **1.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment**

The focus on preventing gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, at the UNIME aims to create an environment where all individuals are safe, respected, and can fully participate in their educational and professional pursuits without the fear of violence or harassment based on their gender. It reflects the university’s commitment to upholding the principles of equality, safety, and human rights.

The actions that have been implemented are:

- Congresses, round tables, seminars.
- Actions to combat sexism and homophobia
- Guidelines for a non-discriminatory administrative language
- Internship activity for students to fight discrimination under the supervision of the Unime Trust Advisor

## **2. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED FOR EACH AREA OF INTERVENTION AND STRATEGIES USED TO SOLVE THEM**

### **2.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career**

Increasing the participation of women in research and innovation while improving their career prospects is a complex challenge. Here are some issues and strategies that UNIME encountered during the implementation :

- Stereotypes and bias:

Problem: Gender stereotypes and biases may lead to unconscious discrimination in recruitment and career advancement.

Strategy: Implement unconscious bias training for staff involved in recruitment and promotion processes. Encourage the use of gender-neutral language in job descriptions and criteria.

- Work-Life balance challenges:

Problem: Balancing family and work responsibilities can be particularly challenging for women in research and innovation careers.

Strategy: Offer family-friendly policies, flexible working arrangements, and on-site childcare services. Promote a supportive work culture that values work-life balance.

## 2.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

Promoting gender balance in leadership and decision-making at the UNIME, or any academic institution, can encounter some challenges. Here are some common problems and strategies used to address them:

- Data collection and monitoring:

Problem: A lack of data and monitoring can make it challenging to assess progress.

Strategy: Implement data collection and reporting mechanisms to track the representation of women in leadership positions. Regularly review and report on gender diversity metrics.

- Work-Life balance challenges:

Problem: Women, particularly those with family responsibilities, may face work-life balance challenges in leadership roles.

Strategy: Offer flexible work arrangements and family-friendly policies to support a better work-life balance. Encourage a culture of understanding and flexibility for all employees.

## 2.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

On one hand integrating the gender dimension into research and teaching content at UNIME was not a critical initiative since UNIME already had courses with teachings that concern gender equality. From the other hand, we encountered some difficulties especially regarding:

- Limited visibility

Problem: limited visibility of gender-inclusive research projects

Strategy: showcase and promote successful projects that have effectively integrated a gender perspective. Share case studies, success stories, and testimonials from researchers who have benefited from such an approach.

## 2.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture

The actions envisaged in the UNIME GEP that concern work-life conciliation were those that had the least problems in implementation.

- Structural spaces:

Problem: for some actions such as the creation of the pink room there was the problem of spaces, of identifying rooms in each centre for the creation of the room intended for breastfeeding.

Strategy: the university started by identifying a room in the central hub and is moving to identify others.

## 2.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment

Preventing gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, through events and seminars at UNIME is an effective approach. However, there was only the following small issue:

- Low participation:

Problem: Low attendance and engagement at events and seminars on this topic.

Strategy: Promote these events well in advance, use diverse communication channels, and offer incentives to the students (credits) to encourage participation.

## CONCLUSIONS

UNIME, like many academic institutions, is committed to addressing a range of important areas related to gender equality and inclusivity. These areas encompass gender balance in leadership, the integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content, preventing gender-based violence and sexual harassment, promoting work-life balance and supportive organizational culture, and more. The university's efforts in these areas are aimed at creating a more equitable, inclusive, and diverse academic community where all individuals, regardless of their gender, have equal opportunities, support, and recognition.

To overcome the challenges associated with each of these actions, UNIME employs a variety of strategies, such as implementing affirmative action measures, offering mentorship and leadership development programs, challenging biases and stereotypes, and fostering a more inclusive organisational culture. These strategies are vital for achieving the university's goals of advancing gender equality, improving academic and research quality, and creating a safe and supportive environment for its students, faculty, and staff.

Ultimately, UNIME's dedication to these gender-related actions demonstrates its commitment to fostering a more equitable and inclusive educational environment. By addressing these critical issues and implementing these strategies, the university is taking significant steps toward achieving gender equality and promoting a culture of respect, diversity, and gender inclusivity within its academic community.



## ANNEX. 2

# ICM - GEPs Implementation Report

### INTRODUCTION

The Institut de Ciències del Mar (ICM) approved its first Gender Equality Plan (GEP 2021-2024), in May 2021, driven by its participation in the European Horizon 2020 project, *Leading Towards Sustainable Gender Equality Plans in Research Performing Organisations* (LeTSGEPs).

To comply with EU guidelines but also with the Spanish regulatory framework, the GEP, from its first version, was approved for a period of 4 years. The action aimed at redefining the GEP was used to adjust it, considering the lessons learnt during the first implementation period. The GEP is the result of the articulated efforts and consensus among multiple actors in the organisation. It also allocates resources and assigns responsibilities, establishes the implementation schedule, and a monitoring and evaluation system based on gender-sensitive indicators.

The GEP commits efforts in each of the areas of intervention recommended by Horizon Europe: work-life balance and organisational culture, gender balance in leadership and decision-making, gender equality in recruitment and career progression, integration of the gender dimension in research content, and measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

In addition to these five areas, the ICM included three more areas of intervention: gender perspective in institutional culture; gender budgeting; and inclusive and non-sexist communication. For each of the 8 areas, specific objectives and results have been established underpinning a set of 14 measures that should allow us to achieve the overall objective of the GEP, which is to contribute to an institutional change that will lead to the adoption of gender equality as a cross-cutting principle of the ICM.

The GEP thus becomes the framework for action and ICM's roadmap to generate an organisation cultural change that allows the effective mainstreaming of gender equality in all areas and actions of the Institute.

### 1. REPORT ON THE GEPs' MEASURES AND ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED

The GEP is articulated around 8 fields of action and 14 measures:

Field 1: Women's participation in research: career progression and development. With the objective of fostering a gender-balanced research culture that promotes gender equality in scientific careers and allows capitalization on the talent of the ICM staff, both female and male, this field includes 3 measures:

- *M1.1. Overcoming the glass ceiling: Advancing women's researcher careers*
- *M1.2. Professional career development plans for female young researchers*
- *M1.3. Integration of gender aspects in internal funding*

Field 2: Institutional governance: Gender balance in decision-making bodies. This field has the objective of achieving gender balance in institutional governance by eliminating any barriers that prevent women from reaching leadership positions and enabling them to participate in all decision-making spheres. To achieve that three measures were designed:

- *M2.1. Engendering institutional governance: Improvement of gender balance in decision-making bodies*
- *M2.2. ICM's gender equality mechanism and instrument: institutionalising Equality Task Force (from now on, ETF) and GEP*
- *M2.3. Gender Monitoring*

Field 3: Gender dimension in research. With the objective to promote the inclusion of gender/sex dimension in research as a quality improvement factor, an ambitious measure was designed:

- *M3.1. Integrating the gender dimension in ICM's research,* oriented to the design of a toolkit to orientate this integration in research project content.

Field 4: Work-life balance and organisational culture. The objective of this field is to improve the work-life balance policy to ensure not only equal fruition by women and men but also that this conciliation does not penalise women's careers. One measure, that integrates several actions was designed:

- *M4.1. Improving work-life balance* looks to ensure the availability of structured mechanisms for work-life balance, favouring the maximum possibilities of conciliation for all staff.

Field 5: Prevention of gender-based violence/sexual harassment. With the objective of guaranteeing a work environment free of any manifestation of sexual harassment or gender-based violence through the promotion of a culture that respects equality and the implementation of the necessary instruments, also a unique ambitious measure was designed:

- *M5.1. Developing prevention and action against sexual harassment and gender-based violence* through which ICM takes responsibility for providing safe work environments.

Field 6: Gender-inclusive institutional culture. With the objective to embed gender equality as a key and cross-cutting principle of the organisation and consolidate an institutional culture that is sensitive to gender equality and intolerant to discrimination based on gender, two key measures were designed:

- *M6.1. Training on the inclusion of gender dimension within the ICM,* to favour the development of gender competence and improve the staff's knowledge and skills on gender equality issues.
- *M6.2. Increasing gender awareness: making women researchers visible.*

Field 7: Gender Budgeting and Remuneration Policy. The measures of this field are addressed to guarantee equal pay between women and men, improving the control of factors that can lead to direct or indirect discrimination between women and men regarding remuneration.

- *M7.1. Gender Budgeting,* the main purpose of which is to introduce gender equality into the budgetary process.
- *M7.2. Gender Pay Gap: analysis and action,* a measure aimed at assessing the transparency of retributive policy and whether there is a wage gap between women and men, and to address the factors that favour it.

Field 8: Inclusive and non-sexist communication. With the aim of implementing across the organisation the use of inclusive and non-sexist communication, one measure was designed:

- *M8.1. Promoting the use of inclusive and non-sexist communication* is a measure aimed at building capacity in the use of inclusive communication using a tailor-made guide and training to use it.

After the last period of implementation of the GEP measures (phase M30-48), these are the **main activities carried out and achievements**:

## 1.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improve their career prospects.

### ***M1.1. Overcoming the glass ceiling: Advancing women's research careers.***

- Designed a training proposal to strengthen the professional skills, expertise, and leadership of women researchers (and technicians), by providing them with tools for their development based on their needs.

### ***M1.2. Professional career development plans for female young researchers***

- A pilot mentoring program has been designed and implemented (3 mentors (2 women, 1 man) and 3 mentees (all women)).

### ***M1.3. Integration of gender aspects in internal funding***

- A new verification procedure has been established to ensure gender sensitivity in the awarding of funds through internal competitive calls. The gender dimension is also included in analysis reports for each of the internal calls (target audience, nominations, beneficiaries, and funds granted).

As outstanding indicators, 60% of the people who have been granted funds are women, and in terms of funds, 48,5% have been granted to women, almost achieving the expected indicator.

## 1.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

### ***M2.1. Engendering institutional governance: Improvement of gender balance in decision-making bodies***

- The active commitment to parity in the renewal of institutional positions in the management team, which has resulted in one woman and one man occupying the two vice-directorships, and three women and two men in the recently created deputy directorships. There has also been an important feminization in the renewal of the chiefs of the 4 departments into which the ICM is organised, with 3 women and 1 man currently heading departments.
- The creation of a Deputy Director for Equality, which places equality in the organisational structure of the ICM. This sub-directorate assumes, among other functions, those monitoring and reporting on issues related to gender equality, providing advice to management, promoting compliance with the GEP, providing guidance on the completeness and coherence of actions on gender issues within the regulatory frameworks of reference, and liaising between the Gender Working Group (ETF) and the management team.
- The presence of gender experts in the two key committees of the centre: the scientific strategy committee and the transfer committee, with the goal of advancing the cross-cutting adoption of the gender perspective in the scoping and definition of their respective institutional strategies.

### **M2.2. ICM's gender equality mechanism and instrument: institutionalising ETF and GEP**

- Public commitment from the directorate level promoting the GEP (Resolution-Letter)
- Resources for the implementation of the GEPs and an institutional annual budget for the Equality Task Force allocated.
- Communication/dissemination strategy in place.
- The ETF has been strengthened as a mechanism in charge of fostering and monitoring effective equality measures.
- Joint and coordinated GEP mechanisms for the ETF and the different institutional units involved in the implementation of the GEP have been established.
- Training sessions for the responsible personnel directly involved in the GEP implementation have been carried out by LeTSGEPs coordination.
- A friendly version of the ICM's GEP has been developed and disseminated on a specific website specifically designed for this purpose.

### **M2.3. Gender Monitoring**

- New indicators and analytical tools to monitor gender equality in different fields have been identified and implemented.
- Sustainable data collection procedures and tools to monitor evolution, and regularly assess the GEP have been established and are available.
- Sustainable procedures and cooperation with internal units to ensure regular data collection have been established and are operative.
- The information requested by the ICM Task Force in the databases to allow better and simpler monitoring and evaluation of the success of the measures has been incorporated.
- Presentations of GEP's implementation progress to the concerned stakeholders have been held.
- Permanent monitoring of the level of implementation of the measures and the achievement of the results considering the designed indicators.

## **1.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content**

### **M3.1. Integrating the gender dimension in ICM's research**

- Best practices and tools for gender mainstreaming in research have been identified (among others, Gender Wave (Baltic Gender) and What is the gender dimension in research?). In the process of identifying good practices, networks, and communities of practices on gender and science have been established (ACT LifeSciCoP), Gender Baltic and Sisters in the Arctic Blue Network).
- An international event to exchange best practices on gender mainstreaming in science was carried out on January 20, 2023 (LeTSGEPs).
- The toolkit for gender/sex mainstreaming is in the process of being designed. Identified case studies at the ICM to test the tool.

## **1.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture**

### **M4.1. Improving work-life balance**

- A lactation and restroom in the centre is in place.
- Work meetings only within core hours have been scheduled
- Improved ICM databases for accurate capture of the use of work-life balance measures (according to the type and circumstances) disaggregated by sex

## 1.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment

### **M5.1. Developing prevention and action against sexual harassment and gender-based violence**

- A *Protocol* to address sexual and gender-based harassment in the ICM (landing of the CSIC protocol) has been elaborated.
- A zero-tolerance policy towards sexual and gender-based harassment has been declared by the Director on the framework of the 25N
- Two individuals responsible for the deployment of the ICM's Protocol have been nominated and trained on sexual and gender-based harassment
- Awareness-raising sessions on sexual and gender-based harassment for all staff have been organised: training on sexual and gender-based harassment prevention for the governing board and ETF, presentation of the Protocol in a Friday Talk and hot topic session with young researchers
- As part of the staff survey on sexual harassment, to establish a perception baseline on this issue, has been conducted

## 1.6 Gender-inclusive institutional culture

### **M6.2. Increasing gender awareness: making women researchers visible**

- Numerous actions to disseminate ICM's GEP, the products derived from its implementations and/or about gender issues
- Different initiatives to make visible the contribution of women researchers and technicians at ICM (different media and communication tools).
- The Equality Task Force and GEP area on the institutional website is being permanently updated.
- Inclusion of women researchers and technicians at ICM in networks of women researchers that contribute to national and international visibility
- Visibility and recognition actions for women researchers at the ICM in the framework of significant dates such as 8th March 25th November, Girls and Science Day, etc.,
- Participation of ETF members as speakers in seminars, events, and congresses on topics related to gender equality and science
- Participation of ETF members as trainers in training sessions (other than ICM).
- ICM also organised the *1r Encuentro de Comisiones de Igualdad del CSIC*, and an international event on the inclusion of the gender perspective in marine research has been organised (LeTSGEPs)

## 1.7 Remuneration Policy

### **M7.1. Gender Budgeting**

- An initial methodology for gender budgeting analysis/audit (including the development of a set of specific qualitative and quantitative indicators) has been established.
- Work is being done to improve the budget management control tools and to collect all data regarding the ICM budget disaggregated by sex.
- Monitoring of the funds assigned to the GEP measures.

### **M7.2. Gender Pay Gap: analysis and action**

- An initial methodology for the gender pay gap (GPG) has been established and the staff salary database is being revised on the basis of criteria for the identification of factors contributing to the gap, to facilitate further analysis and interpretation

## **1.8 Inclusive and non-sexist communication**

### **M8.1. Promoting the use of inclusive and non-sexist communication**

- A guide on the inclusive and non-sexist use of language, both written and visual, adapted to research has been developed and is available on the institutional website.
- The guide on inclusive and non-sexist use of language has been disseminated among ICM staff, through a poster campaign and made accessible through the intranet.
- Periodic reviews on the use of inclusive communication are being conducted.

## **1.9 Unforeseen achievements**

Several unforeseen results have been achieved during this period. Many of these are directly linked to the implementation of specific measures and have been included in each of them (previous section)

In addition to these, there are other unforeseen results that are cross-cutting or result from the sum of efforts. Thus, underline:

- The ICM GEP has become a **best practice in GEP design** and is being used as a reference for the design of GEPs from other institutions.
- Articulated with the above (but also because of the enormous dynamism of the ETF), there are numerous consultancies on gender equality / GEP / Equality commissions provided both to ICUS (CSIC) and by other institutions,
- The inclusion of ICM researchers in **national networks and in key positions in the field of science and equality** (Member of the Women and Science Committee, advice to the Science Ministry, etc.)

It should also be noted that the ICM is increasingly aware of the needs of different collectives. The Equality Task Force (ETF) will now be an **Equality and Diversity Task Force (EDTF)**, and there will be an LGTBIQ+ sub-working group. The gender equality working group will continue to ensure an intersectional approach in all its initiatives.

## **2. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED FOR EACH AREA OF INTERVENTION AND STRATEGIES USED TO SOLVE THEM**

The implementation of the GEP has not encountered any major barriers to its implementation, although there have been some **limiting factors** that have slowed it down or limited its full development. These factors are of different orders:

- The possibility of acting only within the scope of the ICM's competencies. Some aspects of key transformation are within the scope of the CSIC's competencies.

- High "dependence" on ETF volunteer work. If it is an institutional instrument, even with the leadership of gender experts and the ETF, it should move towards collective ownership of it
- Difficulty of data availability in certain areas (not because of limited access but because of the lack of available and useful data for gender analysis).
- The slowness of some administrative processes.
- The workload of the target groups limits their participation in the actions of some measures.

To continue to make progress and counteract these factors, the high level of commitment of the management team has been key.

The M&E system has also played a key role in monitoring risks to the GEP, both those previously identified and those that have emerged during project implementation. This monitoring has been key to anticipating problems, managing risks and executing contingency plans, which has resulted, for example, in adjustments to the intervention to respond to a changing context.

The following is a breakdown of **the problems by areas of intervention and the main mitigation strategies implemented**:

### 2.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects.

Even though the necessity to increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects has been identified, there is frequently limited participation of the target groups in the GEP initiatives as a result of a combination of factors: work overload and the perception that these initiatives deepen this situation, the perception that these are structural problems on which the ICM has limited capacity to influence, or even the perception that this problem does not affect them.

To overcome this problem, a dual **mitigation strategy** is being implemented: on the one hand, the active search for candidates according to profiles and activities (starting some actions is complex but once established they work well); and on the other hand, seek the support of the management team to facilitate participation (for example, offloading people from work to facilitate said participation).

The *integration of gender aspects in internal funding* didn't find limiting factors or problems.

### 2.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

In this field of intervention, the measures have been widely implemented with no major problems or limiting factors.

### 2.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

In this phase of identifying good practices and designing the tool for the integration of sex/gender dimension in research content, the **limitations** have been linked to the lack of specific information in the field of marine sciences.

Further limits are expected when implementing the tool in projects given a certain perception that the ICM produces mainly basic science and that the research is gender neutral.

To overcome this perspective, the best **strategy** will be training and providing evidence that very few projects are truly gender neutral.

## 2.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture

The main measure implemented in this field, the creation of a lactation and restroom, addressed one of the main **problems** faced by the ICM, the lack of space. The cession of space for it was the result of an important negotiation **strategy** and the direct involvement of the management team.

A "problem" issue to be tackled, although it is structural in nature, is to break the women/work-life balance. It is time to think about measures to make it easier for men to reconcile work and family life.

## 2.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment

Despite the fact of previous **problems** related to harassment in the ICM, technical harassment and normalisation of some expressions of gender-based violence, and the distrust in the effectiveness of the centralised protocol in the CSIC, since the approval of the ICM *Protocol* to address sexual and gender-based harassment, some reports of harassment have been received.

**Strategical** for this change in the perception of many people has been the elaboration of our own protocol, having designated protocol referents (trained and trustworthy) and the implementation of numerous training and awareness actions.

## 2.6 Gender-inclusive institutional culture

The measure oriented to increasing gender awareness through making women researchers visible has been the one that more clearly evidences the high "dependence" on ETF volunteer work. Numerous actions to disseminate gender issues, to make visible the contribution of women researchers and technicians at ICM (especially in the framework of significant dates such as 8th March 25th November, Girls and Science Day, etc.), or the participation as speakers in seminars, events, and congresses on topics related to gender equality and science relies heavily on the ETF members.

The **strategy** to overcome this issue has been trying to widen the ETF and the group of people that support its initiatives in a volunteer manner. It has also been directly committed to management and management who, with their participation, "drag" other people to participate.

## 2.7 Remuneration Policy

The implementation of the two measures foreseen in this area (*M7.1. Gender Budgeting* and *M7.2. Gender Pay Gap*) face the same main **problem**: the centralisation of the data in the CSIC and, consequently, the difficulty in obtaining them and/or the difficulty in working with the data as they are provided.

To overcome this problem, a dual **mitigation strategy** has been implemented: on one hand, the manager has been lobbying for the necessary data to carry out both measures; on the other hand, the MCI databases have been worked on to have greater autonomy in obtaining, systematising, and exploiting the necessary data.



## 2.8 Inclusive and non-sexist communication

In relation to the use of inclusive and non-sexist language, there are still **limits and resistance** to its use. From the Equality Task Force, and with the support of the communication area, efforts are being made so that more and more people can use inclusive and non-sexist language.

As a **mitigation strategy**, the integration of the gender expert in the executive committees (scientific strategy and transfer) ensures that the strategic documents of the ICM use inclusive and non-sexist language.

## CONCLUSIONS

The GEP has become the framework for action and ICM's roadmap to generate an organisation cultural change that allows the effective mainstreaming of gender equality in all areas and actions of the Institute.

Since its approval, the ICM has been taking very significant steps with the implementation of actions of a transversal nature that are anchored in institutional policies and practices, and positive action measures aimed at correcting situations of inequality or responding to the specific needs and priorities of women.

The implementation of the GEP has progressed at a good pace in a context very conducive to its development. This implementation is the result of the articulated efforts among multiple actors in the ICM.

Many of the output indicators have already been achieved or exceeded and we are in the way of the achievement of the outcome's indicators. However, only at the end of GEP implementation (December 2024) and after the assessment of the level of accomplishment and scope of the results will it be possible to see the transformative effect of the GEP.

As part of the conclusions, we want to consider 2 key aspects (besides the limiting factors): lessons learned and future reflections (from a sustainability perspective).

### Lessons learned

As lessons learned, we would like to highlight what we consider to be the **success factors** that have led to the successful implementation of the GEP. Thus,

- Commitment to and promotion of the GEP by the management and directors (creation of a deputy direction on equality)
- Development of the GEP in the framework of a European project (access to funds/gender expertise)
- Having gender experts and their incorporation into the executive committees
- Strength and dynamism of the ETF (voluntary work).
- Articulation with different internal actors
- Allocated funds (implementation of GEP and ETF)
- Drawing on good practices/lessons learned from other institutions

## Future reflections

The actions foreseen for the next period are already specified in the sections dedicated to the measures. The GEP lasts until the end of 2024.

However, progress needs to be made in addressing a fundamental issue: the **sustainability** of the GEP. The project LeTSGEPs will be finalised at the end of 2023 and the resources (human resources and budget) will end with it.

We consider are key elements to ensure sustainability:

- To ensure the necessary resources (human resources and budget) to guarantee the ongoing implementation of the planned actions.
- To advance the institutionalisation of the GEP as a tool to guide all ICM's gender equality interventions.
- Strengthening the capacities and competencies of the Equality Task Force (ETF) to drive/accompany the implementation of the GEP measures and to monitor them adequately
- Strengthening coordination and collaboration mechanisms between the different ICM internal stakeholders with responsibilities in relation to the GEP.

The GEP keeps being a living document. Considering the results of this mid-term assessment some adjustments and improvements can be made to respond appropriately to new challenges and context.

## ANNEX. 3

# MISANU - GEPs Implementation Report

### INTRODUCTION

Mathematical Institute SANU adopted its first GEP in May 2021, in a process that involved internal and external stakeholders of the Institute. Excited about being one of the first research-performing institutions with comprehensive and tailor-made GEP, MISANU carefully designed the implementation plan. The Plan was icebreaking because it predicted revolutionary and progressive measures such as introducing gender budgeting, establishing gender equality and discrimination prevention officer positions and gender balance in decision-making bodies of the Institute.

Despite the Plan being ambitious, MISANU made significant progress in the implementation, so the refined version of GEP has to acknowledge the new situation. At the same time, a new law on gender equality in Serbia was adopted, and one of the obligations of all government-funded institutions is to report annually on the level of gender equality within them. These circumstances, as well as the various activities of the MISANU LeTSGEPs team, put GEP high on the management board's agenda. It is worth mentioning that MISANU hosted the project meeting in June 2022, which increased the visibility of the project outside our institutions and made the Institute a partner of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development in gender equality.

Besides positive experience from the first year of implementation, the refined version reflected some challenges in applying specific measures. The new GEP reorganised some efforts and grouped them according to the area of interventions. Also, Mrs Biljana Nedeljkov, our first gender equality and discrimination prevention officer, had a significant role as her reports were also discussed at the Management Board.

The refined GEP was adopted in June 2022 after a smooth and short process. The stakeholders of the Institute were notified and informed, but compared to the first GEP, fewer of them showed interest in engaging more in the process of its adoption. However, other academic institutions in Serbia solicited support from MISANU in designing their GEPs. MISANU networked with the School of Electrical Engineering, University of Belgrade, which is a member of the sister project MINDtheGEP, and members of the core LeTSGEPs team took part in training and activities of this project.

MISANU is a relatively small institution and, in this process, had two essential push forwards. The first is understanding the top management and that former director, prof. Zoran Marković is the leader of the MISANU core team, and Dr. Đorđe Baralić, deputy director of the Institute, is a team member. The second advantage is that the routine and organisation of a small institute provide enough place and time for informal, face-to-face meetings where all doubts and concerns can be discussed and clarified constructively. The experience of MISANU is that we succeeded in having around 40% of our employees involved in some project activity. Our mentor, Mrs Aleksandra Drecun, did a tremendous job improving this document.

The refined GEP is planned until the end of 2024; after that, the new one will be adopted, considering the implementation report. However, the current GEP is a live document that can be changed accordingly.

## 1. REPORT ON THE GEPS' MEASURES AND ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED

This Plan envisages three types of measures according to their character: institutional (IM), scientific-research (SRM) and promotional (PM). All these measures strive to support the achievement of work-life balance for MISANU employees.

Institutional measures are measures that should improve the legal framework of MISANU in the field of gender equality and prevention of discrimination, as well as the improvement of this aspect at the Institute. Scientific-research measures are measures related to the issue of gender equality in activities related to scientific-research activities, while promotional measures include measures related to the popularisation of scientific work and gender equality. The following table lists the Measures envisaged for implementation during the implementation of this Plan.

*Table: Overview of the Measures envisaged by the Plan*

Acronym of measure	Name of Measure
IM1	Application of gender sensitive budgeting
IM2	Support for a gender-balanced Management Board structure
IM3	Adoption of the Rulebook on the approval of work from home and remote working
IM4	Adoption of the Rulebook on Prevention of Sexual and Other Violence
SRM1	Inclusion of MI SANU associates in the relevant international scientific associations of women
SRM2	Monitoring the gender structure of authors in the repository of MI SANU, members of working bodies and election commissions, and lecturers at departments and seminars of MI SANU
SRM3	Support for young researchers in career planning
SRM4	Integration of Gender Dimension in Research and Innovation
PM1	Annual workshop on gender equality issues
PM2	Celebrating Women's Day in Mathematics and Girls' Day in Information and Communication Technologies
PM3	Realisation of excursions for employees and associates of MI SANU

After the last period of implementation of the GEP measures (phase M30-48), these are the **main activities carried out and achievements:**

### 1.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects.

MISANU was actively working to increase women's participation in research and innovation. Several female colleagues obtained project grants from the Science Fund of Serbia. It is not an achievement of the work of the MISANU LeTSGEPs team, but it is the most crucial indicator showing our progress in this area.

The MISANU LeTSGEPs team successfully organised the workshop (Measure *PM1 Annual workshop on gender equality issues*) for the third time. The activity was planned in both GEPs of MISANU, but this year's workshop attracted more external than internal stakeholders of the Institute. In the scope of promotion of science, MISANU successfully implemented the *PM2 Celebrating Women's Day in Mathematics and Girls' Day in Information and Communication Technologies* in April and May 2023. The event's outreach was massive; over 20000 visitors saw the exhibitions organised by MISANU and the Center for Science Promotion. Most importantly, the activities targeted girls aged 14-30 and encouraged them to consider careers in STEM.

For the Institute, one of the most essential GEP measures is *SRM1 Inclusion of MI SANU associates in the relevant international scientific associations of women*. MISANU became a full member (the first from South East Europe) of the European Research Centers of Mathematics (ERCOM), and our representative in this organisation will be Prof. Silvia Ghilezan. After relative inactivity, in the second half of 2023, several female colleagues obtained support from the Scientific Council for their future activities and applications in international forums for women in science.

Measure *SRM2 Monitoring the gender structure of authors in the repository of MI SANU, members of working bodies and election commissions, and lecturers at departments and seminars of MI SANU* is implemented to measure our progress in this area. MISANU is still collecting and studying data obtained in 2023.

Despite the goodwill of our collaborators, MISANU has yet to succeed in systemising the implementation of measure *SRM3 Support for young researchers in career planning*. The members of the Institute are already overloaded by work in the Institute to accept a new voluntary commitment. However, good interpersonal relations and a friendly atmosphere fostered informal tools to advise and help younger colleagues plan their future. Currently, it is the most suitable way to work in this area.

MISANU designed its second budget using a gender budgeting approach. Despite the implementation of measure *IM1 Application of gender-sensitive budgeting*, the line in the budget related to the activities concerning women in science needs to be revised to cover all the activities discussed inside the team and working group.

## 1.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

One of the main achievements of MISANU is the full implementation of measure *IM2 Support for a gender-balanced Management Board structure*. Before GEP, out of five members of the Managing Board, there were zero female members. It was a challenging task to achieve due to the complicated rules that defined the Board's structure. Two members were appointed by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and in its Department for Mathematics, Physics and Geo Sciences, no female members are to be delegated to the Board.

MISANU LeTSGEP's team put effort into pointing out this problem to their colleagues. During several months, the employees were invited to consider supporting one male and one female candidate for the Board representing the members of the Institute. At the same time, the team encouraged female colleagues to run for this position, as one of the challenges was to find a female candidate. In the elections held in June 2022, most employees voted for Prof. Ivana Atanasovska and Prof. Miodrag Mihaljević as their representatives on the Board.

In September 2022, after consultations with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, prof. Mila Stojaković was appointed as the representative of the Government of Serbia in the Board. In this way, the gender-balanced structure of the Board was achieved.

Since 2021, thanks to the efforts of the MISANU LeTSGEPs team, MISANU established a practice that the Chief and Vice Chief of each of its sectors are colleagues of different sexes. Also, the Vice President of the Scientific Council of MISANU is Prof. Andreja Tepavčević. The Institute is praised among other institutions in Serbia as an example of an RPO supporting women to be its representatives in external bodies and commissions.

## 1.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

Our measure *SRM 4 Integration of Gender Dimension in Research and Innovation* concerns the topic that it is not implemented easily inside pure mathematics and computer science as research content is mostly gender neutral. However, increasing research interest in artificial intelligence among MISANU researchers opened interesting questions concerning gender-sensitive language in AI.

The above issue was discussed during the visit of Mrs Brankcia Janković, The Commissioner for Protection of Equality of the Republic of Serbia, to MISANU in September 2023. Digitisation and the increasing role of AI in public administration in Serbia opens new possibilities for consideration of the gender dimension in computer science and data science that MISANU plans to use in the future.

## 1.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture

As an RPO funded by the government, MISANU has no funding to improve its employees' work-life balance. However, the Institute has practice supporting the employees in critical situations, like illness or death of a family member.

Implementing the measure *IM3 Adoption of the Rulebook on the approval of work from home and remote working* is ongoing. In practice, most of our employees work from home, but after the

pandemic, the Institute recognised the problem of double organisational efforts for hybrid formats. Therefore, there is a fear of misusing the right of remote working, so the question still needs to be studied from all aspects.

The employees of MISANU initiated the measure *PM3 Realisation of excursions for employees and associates of MI SANU*, which will be released in December 2023 as an outdoor workshop, the presentation of the Handbook, and the closure of the LeTSGEPs project.

### 1.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment

MISANU has a long tradition of good personal relations among colleagues and tolerance. However, even in an institution with good practice, people generally feel uncomfortable discussing this topic openly. Our Gender Equality and Discrimination Prevention Officer designed the Rulebook on Prevention of Sexual and Other Violence, which was further improved by the Director and MISANU LeTSGEPs team.

The implementation phase of our *IM4 Adoption of the Rulebook on Prevention of Sexual and Other Violence* lasted four months. The document included solutions from some other institutions from Serbia and abroad. The goal was to obtain a document supporting the Statute of the Institute in this area.

MISANU obtained an essential and precise document defining the actions and the roles of gender equality officers and Directors upon receiving a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination. The document was adopted in February 2023 by the Management Board; in addition, all employees have abided to respect others in the employment contract, which also explicitly states strong sanctions if the employee commits any act of physical or verbal aggression.

## 2. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED FOR EACH AREA OF INTERVENTION AND STRATEGIES USED TO SOLVE THEM

The first years of GEP implementation of MISANU were characterised by the strong will of all stakeholders to make the Institute recognised as one of the best examples of good practice in Serbia. Therefore, the implementation of the GEP has not encountered any significant barriers, and it was accompanied by constant support from the Institute's leadership. However, some limiting factors have slowed or limited its full development in some areas. There were several factors of distinct nature:

- The complex legal framework and the position of MISANU in Serbia's research system.
- The need for more human resources and volunteers for specific actions.
- The lack of capacities in Serbia in gender budgeting, particularly the limited space for MISANU administration to implement it.
- The workload of the target groups limits their participation in the actions of some measures.
- Other relevant issues concerning the status of scientists in Serbia.

MISANU introduced the position of Gender Equality and Discrimination Prevention Officer to secure and monitor GEP implementation. Despite objective limiting factors, the Officer and MISANU LeTSGEPs team kept GEP visible; some positive culture change occurred, and the process was

irreversible. Situations where the implementation was slowed, were resolved by strategies that used adaptation in objective circumstances and friendly relations among the involved stakeholders.

The following is a breakdown of the problems by areas of intervention and the main mitigation strategies implemented:

### **2.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects.**

MISANU experienced an inevitable decline of interest in gender topics after the pandemic as workload and travel increased. Nevertheless, the interest among external stakeholders increased as many other RPOs in Serbia are starting the process where we were four years ago. Having an annual workshop on gender issues is an excellent way to celebrate equality and diversity but also to make the Institute more visible outside. The event is also a good opportunity for networking and establishing future multidisciplinary projects.

Promoting women in STEM in Serbia cannot be separated from the broader problem of declining interest in studying fundamental subjects and academic careers. In MISANU's case, the best the Institute can do is to support young people and, through these activities, point out these problems to the government and society. At the same time, the Institute builds an image as a responsible RPO and a pleasant workplace.

The best way to motivate female researchers to integrate into international scientific consortia is to support and emphasise their individual initiatives and efforts inside an RPO. Many responsibilities generally overload researchers, and engaging them is good if their work is connected and put in a gender equality context.

Last but not least, a small RPO has its size as an advantage in reaching all employees and addressing issues in informal communications. It is a strategy that can be beneficial in many complex situations.

### **2.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making**

MISANU LeTSGEPs team did tremendous work in achieving gender balance in leadership. Although the problem was recognised as the biggest issue in the Institute, the road to change was long because of the complex position of the Institute in the academic system. Being under the auspices of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, some top positions in decision-making are automatically reserved for the members of the Academy. However, no female members are in the Department of Mathematics, Physics and Geo Sciences. Indeed, it meant that women could not occupy these positions by the current laws.

MISANU must acknowledge that the Serbian Academy recognised the problem of the small number of women in the Academy. As a step to change this, the Academy supported our project by its authority. MISANU, with the support of SANU, pointed out the problem to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, who, in August 2023, appointed Prof. Mila Stojaković as its representative on the Managing Board. The appointment was made after three editions of talks and, in our firm belief, is an example of good practice in addressing this kind of problem to the highest levels of decision-making structures in the state.



Other efforts were taken to encourage female members to run for the member of the Managing Board. Empowering strong female candidates was an important part of the process because most women were reluctant to participate in the election. Most female colleagues did not consider the issue necessary, as they never experienced discrimination at work. Parallely, the MISANU team raised awareness among the members of the Institute to support one male and one female candidate in the voting, which was accepted by 98% of the voters.

After all, MISANU faced challenges in the whole process that could only be resolved with extensive support from the leadership. Our experience shows that wise leadership is unavoidable in achieving full gender balance inside institutions, especially in decision-making and top positions.

### **2.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content**

Integration of the gender dimension into mathematical research and teaching content is perceived as impossible and even as an exaggeration in consideration of gender topics. It is a fact that mathematics, computer science, and logic are gender-neutral studies, so setting this area in these disciplines should avoid general statements that confuse researchers.

The approach should use concrete and clear examples. For example, research using data in applied mathematics should consider the gender structure of the data. Statistical treatment of populations is better if they address results classified by gender, etc.

Researchers from MISANU recognised an exciting topic: the problem of gender-sensitive language in AI-generated texts. It opens possibilities for a future multidisciplinary project with humanities and social sciences.

### **2.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture**

For MISANU, work-life balance is one of the most challenging areas of intervention, as the Institute needs financial means and ways to support actions in this area. This issue is yet to be recognised in Serbia by the government, which has to approve the budgeting for such activities.

However, something will be done to measure PM3. MISANU will organise an outdoor workshop to present the Handbook and the results of the LeTSGEPs project. In the following years, MISANU will have to find a way to improve gender budgeting and overcome the problem of linear budgeting of the academic institutions in Serbia.

### **2.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment**

MISANU has not experienced any severe obstacles in the adoption of the Rulebook on Prevention of Sexual and Other Violence. However, it is notable that many colleagues refrained from taking part in the discussion of this sensitive issue. The whole process was led and carefully monitored by our gender equality and discrimination prevention officer.

## CONCLUSIONS

The resume of our experience should start with the constatation that each RPO has to consider gender equality and related documents, especially GEP, in its context and needs. When the employees recognise it as a shared value and goal and the defined activities as something alive and suitable for everyone, the implementation is smooth and without barriers. Indeed, gender equality has to be notable in the everyday life of an RPO rather than in the papers and the documents.

Leadership support and informal communication inside a small RPO are crucial. It is the best way to raise awareness and solve all eventual doubts and concerns. Gender equality should be introduced in a consensual and inclusive process instead of being imposed by a decision. The interest in GE topic in an RPO whose 90% of research concerns pure mathematics among the employees certainly varies, but the case of MISANU shows that it is possible to inform and present the fundamental principles of GE to everyone so that they recognise their importance for the future development of the institution.

People working on gender issues in an RPO should be patient and open to answering all concerns and doubts, especially those that point out possible misuse of the right to gender equality or false accusations. It is essential to clarify that even though we are not experts or researchers in gender studies, we can improve many things and ask our external stakeholders for help when needed.

Each RPO has its limiting factors in implementing GEP, and the lack of funding and human resources seems universal. However, flexibility in the process is the best mitigation strategy to come out with them. GEP is a living strategic document that can be changed if the circumstances require it.

## ANNEX. 4

# MPI-BI - GEPs Implementation Report

### INTRODUCTION

The Max-Planck-Institute for Biological Intelligence adopted its first GEP in May 2021, after a thoroughly participative process which included stakeholders from all fields and career levels in data collection, data analysis and measure design. The GEP is coherent with LeTSGEPs standards as well as the Max Planck Gender Equality Standards for MPG GEPs. There is one difference however in the MPG standards to the Horizon Europe standards for GEPs: MPG GEPs are meant to focus on the main sights of inequality detected in the data collection, while the Horizon Europe (HE) standards suggest a standard of five main fields of action. Though our GEP originally followed the MPG standards, in the end we implemented measures for all five fields of action that are part of the HE standards. A re-design was done in June 2022 - based on the experiences with the implementation so far: mainly a re-design of single measures to make them more compatible with structures and processes that were already there. Also the structure of the GEP was revised, due to feedback by the MPG commission for evaluation of the MGP GEPs that the structure was hard to understand. During the implementation phase there was a big unexpected challenge: Fusion of the MPI of Neurobiology with the MPI for Ornithology. Phase of limited time resources, uncertainties and restructuring. In the last year of the project: process to integrate the MPI for Ornithology in the implementation.

### 1. REPORT ON THE GEPs' MEASURES AND ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED

#### 1.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects.

Based on the data collection and the identified main sites of inequality the following measures were planned:

##### 1. **Commitment of the Institute leadership and all stakeholders with recruitment responsibility to certain goals in the proportion of women among Directors, Group Leaders and Post Docs**

MPI-BI set itself certain long-term goals for the proportion of women on scientific career levels. These are results so far: The proportion of women in Grade C increased from 36% to 43,18%, in Grade D from 59,26% to 68,89%, while there was a slight decrease in Grade B from 40% to 37,5%, no change in Grade A (no change in personnel so far). Regarding the decrease of women in Grade B it has to be considered that all three female scientists that left the Institute during the implementation phase have secured themselves professorships at Universities, so that we can speak of highly successful career developments. At the same time one man and one woman were newly recruited in Grade B, so that the overall decrease in women in that Grade is mainly due to three women leaving for higher positions in other organisations. Active preparations for recruitment of women in Grade A (scouting and invitations for symposium, especially of female researchers) are ongoing (free positions in the next few years).

## **2. Regular lunch-meeting for women and non-binary researchers**

The implementation of this measure was not possible at first for most of the implementation phase due to the Corona pandemic. Afterwards it took place, announced as a journal club and prepared by active PhD students. One of these events was used to contribute to the discussions on another GEP measure, the criteria list for authorships, which was very useful.

## **3. Career and empowerment training for women and non-binary PhD students and Postdocs**

A group of female scientists was formed, who were in charge of the organisation of the training. They chose the training program themselves. There was positive feedback on the training.

## **4. Mentoring Programm**

After initial problems with the implementation, the measure was adapted to the mentoring sessions that were already in place before (for the PhDs). A similar program was thus created for the Postdocs, which made the implementation easier and finally successful.

The participation numbers slowly declined however towards the end of the project duration. We are now going to re-evaluate the need for the program.

## **5. Criteria List for an Authorship on a publication**

This measure sparked lots of discussion, but also resistances. To facilitate the discussions there was also a journal club on the topic, in which also the director in charge of gender equality took part. Consequently a commission was formed to decide on common criteria. While there was certainly The measure however did not succeed in creating a binding process, handout etc. so far.

## **6. Regular report on progress, project contributions and authorships to PIs**

The report is implemented for the Postdocs as part of the Postdoc-Advisory-Committee meeting and form.

For the PhDs there were organisational problems: the International Max Planck Research School for PhDs connected to the Institute has also PhD students belonging to the surrounding universities, not only Institute PhDs. Additionally, the Thesis Advisory Committee meetings, differently to the equivalent meetings for the Postdocs, did not seem the right place to discuss this topic. A new solution is planned: The form will be sent out to all Institute PhDs by the office of the Managing Director, who can hand in the form individually.

## **7. Extended data collection:**

### **Off-boarding survey:**

After debates in the Working-group subgroups of Postdoc, a form was Implemented for the Postdocs. The distribution to Postdocs leaving the Institute has started. First answers were received. The design of the form for the PhDs is currently underway.

### **Numbers on wrap-up postdoc opportunities being offered:**

We gather this data as part of the off-boarding survey.

### **Numbers of applicants for Postdoc positions that are invited for a talk:**

The data collection process for this indicator is difficult and not implemented yet. We however implemented additional measures regarding the recruitment of Postdocs, see measure 9.

### **Gender balance in applications at graduate schools**

The first set of data is expected in December 2023.

### **Extended analysis on publications: family duties as a hindering factor?**

Seven qualitative interviews with Postdocs with children (one hour each) were conducted by an external person (LeTSGEPs project manager) on this topic, among others.

### **Additional measures that came up during the implementation:**

#### **8. Two awareness campaigns for Women's Day on the situation of female researchers**

The first campaign features high-ranking personnel of the Institute with portrait photos and statements on why they regard gender equality as an important topic. The second campaign featured a series of videos with young female researchers sharing openly their experiences of obstacles in science.

#### **9. Website with information for future Postdocs on application procedure**

In order to contribute to a more balanced gender ratio on the Postdoc level, MPI-BI posted on its website all relevant information for persons considering a Postdoc at the Institute: Information on where to find open positions and how to apply if there is no open position advertised (which had not been announced publicly before), on support measures for Postdocs with families and from abroad, on gender and diversity goals and on other relevant support measures and networks.

### **1.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making**

#### **10. Self-Commitment to goals until 2025 for nomination in regards to gender-balance in committees and honorary positions**

The self-commitment contains the following goals: Board of trustees: 30% women; Scientific Advisory Board: 40% women; honorary Positions: gender parity.

- improvement in women's proportion in Board of trustees: from 12,5% to 29,4%
- Scientific Advisory Board: Target of 40% reached
- Honorary Positions: women's proportions among PhD and Postdoc-representatives improved (waiting for exact numbers)

### **1.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content**

#### **Originally foreseen:**

#### **11. Data collection on number and research topic of research project with gender aspects**

The implementation of this data collection was discussed and it was already approved by the leadership that it should be a of the one major and important evaluation of the research done at the Institute: the Scientific Advisory Board-report. This was a big success. The discussion

however on which question specifically to integrate into the data collection for the report did not lead to a result in time for the sending out of the questionnaire in 2023, however.

### **Additional measure, which came up during the implementation phase:**

#### **12. Seminar series “Gender in Ecology and Neuroscience”**

Two talks will still take place in 2023, two are planned so far for 2024. We were able to win one Harvard professor and one Harvard Postdoc as speakers.

### **1.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture**

Already before the design of the GEP, numerous measures existed at the Institute in the field of compatibility of family and career (child care places in own child care facility as well as contracts with other facilities, parent child office, counselling by care officer, support offers by private care and service provider, financial support for day care of children 0-12 months, reimbursement for child care on business trips, part time work, family friendly scheduling of meetings, seminars and workshops, prolongation of limited contract for 6 months after pregnancy, parental leave).

Due to problems with compatibility still being reported, we mainly wanted to know if the support programs were not meeting the needs or not known. So the main goal was to understand the problem better. Therefore the measure was:

#### **8. Extended Data Collection (Usage of time in parental leave by mothers and fathers; Knowledge about support offered by care officer; Usage of support by care officer)**

This data was collected in the same interviews as the data on family duties as potential hindering factor for publications: Qualitative interviews with seven Postdocs with children (one hour each) by external person (LeTSGEPs project manager) and gave us important information on how to design a measure on hiring support/a temporal substitute during parental leave who would continue with experiments, so that the time is not lost for the advancement of the research project and on how we could improve the distribution of the information on the support offered by the care officer. This will be written down in the new GEP by the end of 2023.

### **1.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment**

Based on two surveys among Institute members on witnessed and experienced discrimination and harassment incidents three measures were originally designed in this field:

#### **13. Annual awareness-raising talk and workshop on gender biases and discrimination (mandatory participation )**

Done. First talk was on gender diversity and race. The following two were in combination with the training on prevention of sexualized harassment and discrimination. First the talk and then the training workshop.

#### **14. Trainings on prevention of sexual harassment for all employees**

Performed twice so far. High turnout.

## **15. Monitoring of reports on discrimination, sexualized harassment and gender-based violence**

We have not repeated the survey yet, which was originally planned for the monitoring, but we introduced the measure below (website and reporting form), which allows for easier reporting of incidents and thus also helps with the monitoring.

Additional measures, which came up during the implementation phase:

## **16. Website with information on complaint procedures and publication of standardised form that allows for easy and anonymous reporting**

This was a bottom-up measure, proposed by a group of PhDs, who also had prepared the first version of the website and the form. They then were revised by the LeTSGEPs team. Website and form are now online, information on the new service has been sent out to all Institute members via email.

## **17. Training specifically for leadership personnel on prevention and intervention in cases of sexualized harassment, discrimination and power abuse**

In the general training on prevention of sexualized harassment and discrimination it became clear that in order to ensure proper response to and handling of reported cases, the leadership personnel has to be trained specifically. This has been performed once already in an afternoon workshop following the general training. The second round is planned for December 2023.

## **1.6. Ensuring involvement and resources of Gender Equality Officers and structural anchoring of gender equality**

Numerous measures to ensure **integration and resources of the GEOs** were already in effect before the design of the GEP : GEOs from scientific as well as administrative area, GEO taking part in two most important committees of the Institute, cost-centre and budget, designated personnel resources (additional hours for assistant), regular internal and external communication by GEOs (website, intranet, newsletter), participation and presentation in annual works council meetings, Scientific Advisory Board contains part on gender equality which is written in consultation with the GEOs.

Measures in order to structurally anchor gender equality in the Institute were also already in place: one director among the Board of Directors being in charge of considering and advocating gender equality issues, survey on “gender equality at the Institute” every three years, gender equitable language as a standard for all communications plus recommendation which form to use.

New measures planned in the context of the GEP were:

### **18. Annual budget for GEO with yearly discussion on amount**

Has been implemented. The yearly amount has been increased each time.

### **19. Annual meeting on gender equality progress and regular exchange between Managing Director and GEOs**

Implemented. The director in charge of Gender Equality additionally attended the Gender Budgeting training and consultation and part of the Working Group meetings.

## 1.7 Non-scientific area

Based on data collection of personnel data for the non-scientific area the following measures were foreseen:

### **20. Self-commitment to goals regarding administrative staff: 20% men in administration until 2030**

The proportion of men among clerks/administrators has been increased from 6,25% to 8,33% during the project duration, among skilled trades occupations from 40% to 45,95%. There is still no man among the secretaries.

### **21. Participation in Girls' and Boys' Day**

The participation in 2021 was not possible due to the Corona pandemic. In 2022 the communication's department was not able to organize it due to the additional workload in course of the fusion of the Institutes.

### **22. Gender sensitive and attractive representation of the Institute at vocational training fairs**

For the participation of MPI-BI in vocational training fairs it was made sure that a gender-mixed team represented the organisation and that all material on display had a gender-sensitive design.

### **23. Support of staff members in lower pay grades to get higher qualified jobs within the Institute**

- creation of a new internal and on the job training program that allows to fulfill the requirements for higher remuneration group in the field of animal caretaking
  - > four women taking part
  - > due to collaboration with chamber of commerce training certificate also valid outside MPG
- two further women promoted to a higher payed jobs inside the institute
- one woman got a better paid job at another Institute based on the training program

## 1.8 Gender Budgeting

### **24. Gender Budgeting Capacity Building**

Dr. Regina Frey, German Gender Budgeting expert, was invited and held one training and one consultation workshop at MPI-BI. Leadership personnel and persons concerned with financial issues were invited. All relevant persons followed the invitation: the director who is in charge of gender equality, the head of administration, the head of the personnel department, the research coordinator/office of the managing director, the head of the animal facilities, one research group leader, the head of accounting, the Central Gender Equality Officer and the local Gender Equality Officers.

### **25. Gender Budgeting Analysis**

After consultation with Regina Frey the following Gender Budgeting indicators were collected: hours of usage of the Imaging Services by gender of researchers, number of researchers who have a student assistant working for them by gender, number of student assistants in



research groups by gender of group leader, office and laboratory space occupied by the research groups by gender of group leader, recipients of awards by gender, honorary positions by gender, travelling of PhDs by gender, budget for gender equality in comparison to whole budget. The results of the analysis will be used for the GEP re-design end of 2023.

### **3. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED FOR EACH AREA OF INTERVENTION AND STRATEGIES USED TO SOLVE THEM**

#### **3.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects.**

##### **26. Commitment of the Institute leadership and all stakeholders with recruitment responsibility to certain goals in the proportion of women among Directors, Group Leaders and Post Docs**

Slight decrease of proportion of women in Grade B became apparent just now in the data collection for the evaluation of LeTSGEPs. We have to look into the backgrounds and possible reasons. Results will be used for redesign of GEP till the end of year 2023.

##### **27. Regular lunch-meeting for women and non-binary researchers**

The implementation was not possible for most of the implementation phase due to the Corona pandemic. Afterwards it took place less often than planned, due to the high workload of the Gender Equality Officers during the fusion of the two Institutes. In order to still make the event happen young researchers took over and prepared the discussion of papers on gender topics.

##### **28. Career and empowerment training for women and non-binary PhD students and Postdocs**

no problems

##### **29. Mentoring Programm**

The original design proved to be too complex to implement, so the program was adapted to the mentoring sessions that were already in place before (for the PhDs) and a similar program for Postdocs was designed. That made the implementation more easy and also benefited from the already well-known program for Postdocs.

Towards the end of the project duration the participation numbers declined, during our next Working Group meeting we will gather feedback on what the PhDs and Postdocs say about possible reasons for that. (No need anymore/need fulfilled/new needs?)

##### **30. Criteria List for an Authorship on a publication**

This measure was met with a lot of interest as well as a lot of resistances. In order to mitigate the resistances a commission of leading researchers was formed to decide on a common basis for the criteria. Still the measure ended up as a voluntary measure.

##### **31. Regular report on progress, project contributions and authorships to PIs**

In implementing the measure for the PhDs there were organisational problems: the International Max Planck Research School for PhDs connected to the Institute has also PhD

students belonging to the surrounding universities, not only Institute PhDs. Additionally the Thesis Advisory Committee meetings, differently to for the Postdocs did not seem the right place to discuss this topic. -> New solution planned: Form will be sent out to all Institute PhDs by the office of the Managing Director. The PhDs can then hand in the form individually.

### **32. Extended data collection:**

#### **Off-boarding survey:**

Currently only a part of the Postdocs sends the filled form to the GEOs when leaving the Institute. We are considering if and how we can make this mandatory.

#### **Numbers on wrap-up postdoc opportunities being offered:**

Resistances to implement it as a duty for the PIs to report those numbers. We then implemented as part of the off-boarding survey, so that the Postdocs can report themselves if they have been offered a wrap-up contract.

#### **Numbers of applicants for Postdoc positions that are invited for a talk:**

Same problem. Here we have not found a solution yet.

#### **Gender balance in applications at graduate schools**

No problems.

#### **Extended analysis on publications: family duties as a hindering factor?**

No problems.

### **3.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making**

#### **33. Self-Commitment to goals until 2025 for nomination in regards to gender-balance in committees and honorary positions**

No problems.

### **3.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content**

#### **34. Data collection on number and research topic of research project with gender aspects**

While getting approval of doing this data collection in the framework of the one important evaluation of the Institute's research, the Scientific Advisory Board report, was a big success, afterwards it was complicated to find a question/a set of questions that would be understood and accepted by the researchers and lead to the expected results, as there were diverse and critical voices on the different versions of the questions. This made clear that the understanding of sex and gender and how this plays a role in the Institute's research is controversial and that it is hard to find a consensus in time for sending out the questionnaire. We expect a positive effect of the seminar series on the topic and a better common basis for the discussion in the next evaluation round.

### **35. Seminar series “Gender in Ecology and Neuroscience”**

No problems.

## **3.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture**

### **8. Extended Data Collection (Usage of time in parental leave by mothers and fathers; Knowledge about support offered by care officer; Usage of support by care officer)**

No problems.

## **3.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment**

Based on two surveys among Institute members on witnessed and experienced discrimination and harassment incidents three measures were originally designed in this field:

### **36. Annual awareness-raising talk and workshop on gender biases and discrimination**

For the first set of talk and training on prevention of sexual harassment we received critical feedback especially by the English-speaking scientists on the English version. We saw two problems: The speakers/trainers had firstly mainly concentrated on intervention rather than prevention, and their English was not good enough to convey a differentiated view on this complex topic. For the second set of talk and training we then hired trainers, who usually work for companies and are more used to an international setting and are also more prevention-oriented. In the second round we received better feedback by the participants.

### **37. Trainings on prevention of sexual harassment for all employees**

See above, the second round went well. In the course of the training however we realized that for the leadership personnel the “normal” training is not enough and are now planning the additional training for leadership personnel, see below.

### **38. Monitoring of reports on discrimination, sexualized harassment and gender-based violence**

Survey was not repeated yet due to a big number of surveys performed at the Institute at the time, but we introduced a specific website and reporting form, see below, which allows for easier reporting of incidents and thus also helps with the monitoring.

Additional measures, which came up during the implementation phase:

### **39. Website with information on complaint procedures and publication of standardised form that allows for easy and anonymous reporting**

The implementation was unexpectedly complex due to legal details of the complaint process, so that we had numerous revisions of the website and form.

### **40. Training specifically for leadership personnel on prevention and intervention in cases of sexualized harassment, discrimination and power abuse**

No problems so far.

## **3.6. Ensuring involvement and resources of Gender Equality Officers**

### **41. Annual budget for GEO with yearly discussion on amount**

No problems.

**42. Annual meeting on gender equality progress and regular exchange between Managing Director and GEOs**

No problems.

**3.7 Non-scientific area**

Based on data collection of personnel data for the non-scientific area the following measures were foreseen:

**43. Self-commitment to goals regarding administrative staff: 20% men in administration until 2030**

No problems.

**44. Participation in Girls' and Boys' Day**

The participation in 2021 was not possible due to the Corona pandemic. In 2022 the communication's department was not able to organize it due to the additional workload in course of the fusion of the Institutes.

-> No active problem-solving measures. The pandemic as well as the additional workload is temporary.

**45. Gender sensitive and attractive representation of the Institute at vocational training fairs**

No problems.

**46. Support of staff members in lower pay grades to get higher qualified jobs within the Institute**

This measure was a big success. One inherent problem could not be solved however: the promotion of the women left vacancies in lower paid positions, which were then again filled mostly with newly hired women. The possibilities for the Institute to fundamentally improve the working conditions, especially the salaries in these jobs, are very limited due to the principles of public service. The cleaning jobs are additionally at risk to be outsourced to external service providers, which entails even worse working conditions. We fundamentally solve this problem, but the Central Gender Equality Office is working on a Gender Budgeting handbook for all Max-Planck Institutes which will contain a part on working conditions in low pay-grades and outsourcing of service tasks, in order to raise awareness on the problem.

**3.8 Gender Budgeting**

**47. Gender Budgeting Capacity Building**

No problems.

**48. Gender Budgeting Analysis**

No basic problems, but we are not satisfied with the significance of the data yet. We will revise the set of indicators in the next GEP implementation phase.

## CONCLUSIONS

Essential to a successful implementation were mainly two factors: The participative way of designing and implementing the GEP, under constant input and discussion of the groups of affected stakeholders and the powerful position of the Gender Equality Officer(s) at the Institute, being in powerful positions in their main jobs at the Institute.

Limiting factors were firstly time and personnel sources, especially in the unexpected situation of the fusion of two Institutes with a great amount of additional workload especially for the administrative personnel and secondly the acceptance of measures that have a deep impact on essential processes of the recognition of success and the selection of personnel - the discussions on these measures are still ongoing - which is necessary to reach a common understanding and find a measure design accepted by all stakeholders.

## ANNEX. 5

# CYU - GEPs Implementation Report

### INTRODUCTION

#### Summary of the geps' refining process

A revised version of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) received the President's approval in May 2022.<sup>2</sup> The updated GEP resulted from a comprehensive review of actions that had been successfully accomplished and those that remained outstanding. During this process, we carefully pinpointed and articulated the primary obstacles and challenges encountered in implementing the GEP. We explored potential modifications and adjustments to the GEP to address and overcome these challenges. Each issue was examined in detail, and we engaged in discussions to identify solutions.

To further enhance the effectiveness of our GEP, we made slight refinements to its structure. Notably, some GEP measures were adjusted due to feasibility issues, time constraints, or scope limitations. The initial version of the GEP had been notably ambitious, and as we proceeded with its implementation, it became evident that certain measures faced constraints in terms of required personnel and financial resources.

#### 1. REPORT ON THE GEPs' MEASURES AND ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED

We directed our implementation efforts toward three key areas while working through all five pillars of our gender equality plan:

**Conducting Training and Awareness Sessions:** To raise awareness about sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination, we leveraged the initiatives backed by the French Ministry of Research. The ministry has placed a strong emphasis on addressing sexual violence and has provided dedicated funding to institutions for this purpose. In this supportive environment, we conducted seminars and training sessions for CY mentors, governance members, and students, in collaboration with external partners. Furthermore, we have plans for additional events in the forthcoming academic year, with the aim of reaching a broader audience of researchers, instructors, and staff members to ensure they are well-informed about issues related to harassment and sexual violence.

**Collecting Wage and Salary Data:** The Gender Equality Officer successfully obtained wage and salary data after extensive negotiations with the governance. The results of this analysis will be disclosed upon approval, marking a noteworthy accomplishment for our institution, as few other French institutions undertake such analyses.

**Promoting Gender Integration in Research:** The Gender Equality Officer conducted multiple meetings aimed at equipping researchers with the knowledge required to incorporate gender considerations in EU-funded projects. With a particular emphasis on Economic studies, we also hosted a webinar and a workshop on Gender Economics.

---

<sup>2</sup> The GEP is available [online](#) in both French and English.

Starting from November 2022, the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) has received valuable support with the recruitment of an Inclusion Officer. This dedicated role involves closely monitoring the administrative aspects of each measure while also independently advancing equality and inclusion initiatives. The Inclusion Officer plays a crucial role in facilitating the implementation of measures promoted by the Gender Equality Officer.

For instance, the Inclusion Officer is actively involved in the implementation of a program providing free sanitary napkins for students. These napkin dispensers are conveniently placed in restrooms near the libraries, and their upkeep falls under the library's responsibility.

While this measure was not initially a part of the GEP, it has undeniably contributed to the well-being of students. It was introduced at the start of the academic year in September 2023 and promoted as part of CY's commitment to providing free access to sanitary napkins for all students.<sup>3</sup>

### **1.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects.**

To promote and advance women's career development, several measures have been put into action:

- Women and Science Award: this annual award recognizes the achievements of women in the field of science and encourages their progress.<sup>4</sup> Moreover the department of Computer Science has organised in December 2022 an event on “10 inspiring women in science”.<sup>5</sup>
- Awareness among Faculty and Department Directors: this measure focuses on raising awareness among faculty and department directors about the importance of gender balance when assigning supervisory roles and responsibilities for group tasks. It involves continuous training for members of recruitment committees to ensure fair practices.
- Objective Recruitment Analysis: during the selection process for management and administrative positions at various levels, applicants are evaluated solely based on their skills and potential. This approach aims to eliminate gender bias and stereotypes and is reinforced by ongoing training provided to recruitment committee members.

### **1.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making**

In December 2022, a significant transformation took place within the institution as it underwent the process of electing a new president and presidential team, which saw nearly a complete overhaul. The restructured presidential team now boasts a notable achievement with seven women (representing 41%) and ten men, marking a substantial advancement in terms of gender representation.

To further advance the representation of women in committees, the HR department diligently ensures that committees consist of at least 40% of each gender. Additionally, during the selection of

---

<sup>3</sup> Source:

<https://www.cyu.fr/universite/media-et-communication/actualites/a-cy-cest-regle#:~:text=CY%20Cergy%20Paris%20Universit%C3%A9%20agit,un%20acc%C3%A8s%20gratuit%20pour%20tous.>

<sup>4</sup> Source:

<https://www.cyu.fr/recherche-et-valorisation/7eme-prix-des-femmes-et-des-sciences-de-cy-alliance#:~:text=Le%20prix%20Des%20Femmes%20et,d%27appartenance%20%C3%A0%20CY%20Alliance.>

<sup>5</sup> Source: <https://www.cyu.fr/recherche-et-valorisation/dix-femmes-science-inspirantes-etis>

senior management positions across various organisational levels, applications are meticulously evaluated based solely on qualifications and potential. This approach is intended to eliminate any bias against either gender, and the institution commits to this approach through continuous training provided to members of recruitment committees.

### **1.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content**

The Gender Equality Officer has been proactive in organising a series of meetings with the primary objective of equipping researchers with the knowledge and tools necessary to integrate gender considerations into EU-funded projects. These meetings were not limited to CY researchers but also extended to researchers within the EUTOPIA network. Specifically tailored to Economic studies, we initiated a bi-weekly webinar that continued until July 2023 and conducted a comprehensive workshop on Gender Economics in June 2022.

Starting in September 2023, we have transitioned from webinars to workshops, scheduling them twice a year to facilitate an even more in-depth exploration of the subject. The importance of addressing gender inequalities has been acknowledged across various academic disciplines, including Economics, Law, History, and Foreign and French Literature, where this issue is integrated into the curriculum. This comprehensive approach ensures that gender equality and its associated challenges are thoroughly considered across multiple facets of academia.

### **1.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture**

The HR department has initiated the "HR Café," a platform designed for presenting and discussing topics related to career progression, bonuses, teaching or professional sabbaticals, leave rights, and salary details.

### **1.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment**

To raise awareness about sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination, we harnessed the initiatives supported by the French Ministry of Research, which has placed a strong emphasis on addressing these issues and allocated dedicated funding to institutions for this purpose. In this supportive environment, we organised seminars and training sessions for CY governance members, and graduate students in collaboration with external partners. Additionally, we have plans for more events in the upcoming academic year, aiming to reach a broader audience of researchers, instructors, and staff to ensure they are well-informed about harassment and sexual violence.

During the Spring semester of 2023, several sessions on how to respond to reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence were offered to governance representatives and PhD students. Furthermore, in November 2022 and March 2023, we organised multiple events in collaboration with a theatre company and the Health Service of CY, furthering our efforts to address these crucial issues.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Source: <https://www.cyu.fr/campus/au-quotidien/se-soigner/journee-droits-des-femmes-2023-programme-sante>.



## **2. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED FOR EACH AREA OF INTERVENTION AND STRATEGIES USED TO SOLVE THEM**

### **2.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects.**

The most significant challenge we encounter is promoting events and increasing attendance. The solution we have adopted is to enhance our communication campaign by disseminating information through informal networks and social media.

### **2.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making**

While there haven't been any issues related to the implementation of this measure, it is primarily driven by a legal requirement that is effectively monitored by the HR department. However, we should also remain vigilant to ensure that women are not disproportionately burdened or overrepresented in traditionally male-dominated fields of research that may experience frequent demands. Balancing gender equality across all research domains is a key consideration.

### **2.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content**

Implementing these measures has been relatively smooth, thanks to the substantial number of colleagues actively engaged in gender-related research areas. However, the primary challenge lies in effectively communicating the gender-related requirements within Horizon projects.

In general, obtaining a comprehensive overview of researchers working on gender-related topics remains a formidable task, primarily due to the absence of a comprehensive census on this subject matter.

To address this issue, our strategy involves ongoing communication about the gender requirements within Horizon projects, primarily facilitated through the Department of Research Valorization. Additionally, we are working on establishing a robust network of researchers focusing on gender-related topics.

To support this initiative, the Gender Equality Officer has taken unofficial records of colleagues working on these subjects and has collaboratively created a Gender and Inclusion Network on Teams, alongside the Inclusion Officer. This network serves as a platform for regular meetings and the sharing of essential legal and administrative documents related to gender equality, inclusion, and diversity concerns.

### **2.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture**

No issues have been reported regarding this measure because the HR department has implemented it effectively and provided comprehensive information to all staff members.

### **2.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment**

We encountered a few challenges when organizing training sessions on sexual violence and harassment. Firstly, integrating these sessions into the regular yearly training schedule provided by

HR proved to be a hurdle. Secondly, attendance in these sessions was not mandatory, which resulted in low participation during events and meetings.

To address these challenges, the Gender Equality Officer discussed these issues with the Vice President responsible for HR. For upcoming sessions, we plan to enhance communication through the network of colleagues working on gender-related topics to ensure broader engagement.

## CONCLUSIONS

In June 2023, CY received recognition for its remarkable achievements when the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Ranking was announced. We proudly secured the 3rd position in France for Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5), which is dedicated to Gender Equality. This remarkable achievement underscores the significant progress we have made in advancing gender equality within our institution.

However, we acknowledge that there is still important work to be done. One key project on our agenda is the establishment of a centralized reporting system for incidents related to discrimination, sexual violence, and harassment. This system will serve as a crucial tool in our commitment to maintaining a safe and respectful environment on campus. It will allow us to effectively monitor such incidents and ensure they are addressed promptly and appropriately. If needed, we will involve both the legal and medical departments to provide comprehensive support to those affected.

This project exemplifies our dedication to fostering an inclusive and equitable university community. It will be a pivotal component of our upcoming gender and inclusion plan, which we are actively developing over the next few months. This plan will outline our strategies and objectives for further promoting gender equality, inclusion, and intersectionality within our institution. We are committed to continuously striving for progress and ensuring that our university remains a beacon of equality and respect for all.

## ANNEX. 6

### UT - GEPs Implementation Report

#### INTRODUCTION

UT is the first academic institution in Albania that approved and implemented a gender equality plan for the period June 2021- May 2022. The first GEP introduced by UT was drafted based on the context analysis of the institution and the needs that were revealed from a survey that was carried out with the university staff before the introduction of GEP. The first GEP had 13 actions, and most of them were implemented in the period June 2021-May 2022.

Considering that the GEP was designed and implemented for the first time, we evaluated the implementation of this document as a success story for UT. LeTSGEPs/UT created an excellent network of stakeholders during this year and made a lot of progress with the collection of gender disaggregated data, which gave the working group more confidence in redefining some measures and actions in the GEP for 2022-2024.

The GEP for 2022-2024 has been designed in a participatory process, and different stakeholders were involved in this process. The specific objectives, the measures, and the actions for 2022-2024 were based on a continuous reflective process that started with a report for the 2021-2022 GEP and continued with several brainstorming sessions organised with gender equality experts and stakeholders at UT. The identification of problems found during the implementation of the first GEP and the discussion of measures that were taken to overcome challenges allowed for the identification of future areas of intervention to be addressed in the following GEP.

The revised version of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) received the Rector's approval in June 2022 and is available [online](#) in both Albanian and English.

#### 1. REPORT ON THE GEPs' MEASURES AND ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED

UT's GEP is based on the institutional context and needs and has been elaborated based on an analysis carried out for the implementation of the first plan.

The main goal is to continue to increase awareness and design and implement measures and actions that transform organisational processes, cultures, and structures in order to reduce gender inequalities through fostering the use of Gender Responsive Budgeting and other tools.

The intervention of the institution is focused on the following areas for the period 2022-2024:

- Increase the participation of women in research, innovation and improvement of their career prospects;
- Foster gender balance in leadership and decision- making;
- Integrate gender dimension into research and teaching;
- Enhance work-life balance and organisational culture;
- Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment.

Based on the analysis the main specific objectives have been identified:

- Awareness-raising/capacity building on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers.
- Promote career development of all genders, and in particular encourage women to run for membership in decision-making bodies;
- Ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into all research content and provide capacity building for research staff on how to do this
- Support the reconciliation of career and family life and promote a healthy work-life balance
- Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment

UT has been taking very significant steps with the implementation of actions planned. Some activities are mentioned below:

- A Manual of gender indicators has been developed to collect and report gender indicators at UT according to the ISCED. A workshop was organised with representatives of human resources offices in UT and in its main units for the presentation of the manual and training them to use this manual.
- The gender equality dimension has been included for the first time in the different strategies and regulations of the UT such as: Strategy of University of Tirana 2023-2028; Teaching Strategy of UT 2022-2027; Training Strategy of UT 2023-2027; Code of Ethics of University of Tirana.
- A workshop was organised to increase the capacities of the staff in gender responsive budgeting. Two departments of the Faculty of Economics have already integrated the analysis of expenses with gender lens.
- The LeTSGEPs' methodology for the design and implementation of GEPs was shared with 8 other universities and research institutions in Albania which published their first GEPs in 2023.
- An internal event was organised regarding the role of women in higher education management. The heads of departments from two Faculties were invited to discuss their challenges in their paths of career and about the role of women in decision making in Higher Education.
- UT adopted a policy and the procedures that safeguard academic, administrative personnel and students from all forms of violence, harassment, and sexual harassment. The approval of this policy was followed up by several meetings that served to raise awareness about the adopted policy and procedures against any form of violence.

### **1.1 Increase the participation of women in research and innovation and improvement of their career prospects.**

The specific objective of this area was to raise awareness on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers.

The first measure was about enhancing the quality of data analysis through gender disaggregated data. At the beginning of the project, gender-based indicators were inadequate to do a comparative analysis with the EU universities under LeTSGEPs. A Manual of gender indicators has been developed for collecting and reporting gender indicators at UT according to the ISCED.

After the research in the literature, as well as, based on the almost 4-year experience already gained within the LETSGEP project, our project team drafted the Gender Indicators Manual, as a selection and adaptation in the Albanian language of the statistical gender indicators that are used today widely from Institutions of higher education and scientific research, in EU countries.

The Gender Indicators Manual contains methodological guidelines for data collection and calculation of the gender indicators. This manual was drawn up based mainly on the "She Figures Handbook 2018", making an adaptation of it, referring to a part of the gender indicators, used in institutions of higher education and scientific research.

This measure also aimed at capacity building of staff that are working in the human resources department to collect gender-sensitive data according to the manual.

In UT, during October 2023, a workshop was organised with representatives of human resources offices in UT and in its main units for the presentation of the manual of gender indicators in UT and to inform and train them about the use of this manual. The purpose of this workshop was to build the capacities of the staff for the collection of gender data based on this manual. In the workshop, information was shared with the attendees about why this manual is useful, who it helps, how it is organised and how it can be used. The building of staff capacities will continue with other training for the use of this manual, depending on the needs of the staff of the human resources offices, to report gender statistics, based on this manual. Training for this purpose are also planned in the training strategy document in UT 23-28.

The UT project team has provided updated gender data until September 2023, for some indicators such as academic senate members, board of administration members, heads of departments, deans, vice deans, academic staff of category A, academic staff of category B, academic staff of category C, ect., from the human resources structures at UT. For other indicators, updated data will be collected in the future.

The workshop held during October 2023, with representatives of human resources offices in UT and in its main unit for the presentation of the manual of gender indicators in UT, also aimed to increase the awareness of the staff responsible for the role and importance of gender data. In the Training Plan of UT 23-27, several training sessions are planned for the consolidation of skills in the collection of gender data.

The second measure was focused on increasing capacity to apply gender equality in institutional policies. In October, the UT project team organised a workshop on the role and importance of Gender Responsive Budgeting in HEIs. In this workshop, there were participants from the finance office, the services office, the communication sector, PhD students, lecturers from several departments. This workshop aimed to increase the capacities of the staff in gender responsive budgeting.

Two departments of the Faculty of Economics, the Department of Management, and the Department of Accounting, in the proposed budget for 2023, have already integrated the analysis of expenses on a gender lens. In the future, this practice is suggested to be followed by other units as well.

The years 2022 and 2023, were important because UT was involved in the drafting of several important strategic documents. Representatives of the UT project team have been part of the working groups for the drafting of these documents. In the discussion processes about the content of these documents, the participants discussed and were informed about the role and importance of including gender issues in these strategic documents of UT. Although in GEP 22-24 it was planned, only the drafting of the new Strategic Plan with gender lenses, it currently results that, gender equality dimension has been included for the first time in some different strategies and regulations of UT, as stated below:

- Strategy of University of Tirana 2023-2028
- Teaching Strategy of UT 2022-2027
- Training Strategy of UT 2023-2027
- Code of Ethics of the University of Tirana

## **1. 2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making**

The specific objective of this area was to promote career development of all genders, and in particular encourage women to run to be a member of decision-making bodies.

UT has started with capacity building activities regarding the role of women in higher education management. One internal event was dedicated to the role of women in higher education and in decision making. Heads of departments from the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Social Sciences were invited to discuss their challenges and their paths of career. At the end of the meeting the participants drafted a list of future actions to be taken to better support women in their career. The event included a brainstorming session about possible areas of training to later draft a training programme on "Women in higher education management" (an action foreseen in our GEP 2022-2024).

The GEP of UT foresees a study about the leadership model of the institution from a gender perspective. This action has not started yet but will take place after the training programmes.

## **1.3 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content**

The specific objective has been to ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into the research projects of UT and provide capacity building for young research staff on how to do this. To achieve the objective, UT has designed several measures and actions such as: 1: Incorporating the gender perspective in developing the research projects by a) providing training workshops on how to apply the gender perspective in research projects; b) establishing systematic data collection, analysis, and benchmarking systems regarding gender in research (including projects and publications) in all its aspects, i.e., funding allocations, gender diversity in research teams, gender dimension in research; c) requiring all applicants to write a section on the applicability of integrating a gender perspective into

their research in internal research fund application proposals; and 2) Capacity-building and awareness-raising on gender perspective in research and teaching content by a) disseminating and enhancing the visibility of research projects that incorporate a gender perspective, e.g., by creating a pool of good practices and b) developing a mentoring programme with young researchers for the inclusion of the gender perspective in their research.

Integrating the gender dimension in research and teaching has received an overall satisfactory outcome. Gender budgeting is included as a specific topic in the Budgeting, and Decision Making courses. Other Gender Equality topics are successfully implemented across modules and program studies at the Faculty of Economics and Faculty of Social Sciences of the UT. Research has also begun and at least one PhD student is working on Gender Budgeting specifically, writing her thesis on this topic. Many more PhD students are focused on Gender Equality in general and are working towards preparing a PhD in this field. The PhD student working on Gender Budgeting has received a research grant from the UT (in the form of a total reduction of her tuition fees) which confirms the dedication of the Institution itself.

Also, a Manual on Gender Indexes has been prepared by the LeTSGEPs team at the UT and is available to be used by the administration staff of the UT which will facilitate the systematic data collection analysis and benchmarking, which is another action of this dimension of the UTs GEP.

#### **1.4 Work-life balance and organisational culture**

The specific objective of pillar 4 on work-life balance and organisational culture at the GEP 2022-2024 of UT is “Support the reconciliation of career and family life and promote a healthy work-life balance”. There is one Measure 4.1 “Clear workplace regulations to avoid burden on women”, with three specific actions: 1) A more flexible work-from-home regulation for parents of young children for hours beyond classes; 2) Offering classrooms for women academic staff with small children on the first and second floor, if possible; and 3) Offering special parking places for women academic staff with small children under 5 years old, as they may be late because parking is problematic in the vicinities of the faculties of UT.

This pillar of GEP is considered important because of its impact on the other pillars for promoting women’s careers in science, research, and academia. At the beginning of the project which started during the pandemic Covid19 situation, it was a higher expectation for the academic staff and students to continue teaching from home as a new opportunity with the online Teams Platform. However, there was a gap in the legal framework regarding extension of the online teaching beyond the pandemic situation. Still, there is no opportunity to develop online teaching at UT until amendments of Law 80/2015 on “Higher Education and Scientific Research in Institutions of Higher Education in the Republic of Albania” to foresee online teaching applicable to higher education. In the situation that such changes are not happening this year, UT is not reflecting any change in the regulations offering online working and more flexible work-from-home arrangements. Although there is not yet mentioned in any document about flexible work-from-home, in practice the academic staff is free to use the time beyond the classes at home and not in the rooms/offices at the university. UT Regulation, article 81, page 40, on teaching in unusual circumstances, foresees online learning only if the unusual conditions such as pandemics, riots, and natural conditions are verified. The same

situation is also regarding the other actions, which means that there is not any regulation with specifications such as offering classrooms for women academic staff with small children on the first and the second floor, or special parking places for women academic staff with small children. The announcement of such actions on the GEP 2022-2024 means that there is a sensibilization and also a reflection on what is happening in the practice of the organisational culture, but which is not yet formalised in regulations. The actions planned in the GEP document of UT are foreseen until May 2024. So, although the LeTSGEPs project will be finalised at the end of 2023, the progress to be made in addressing such actions will continue next year.

The workshops are organised to present and discuss measures and actions aimed at raising attention to such issues, although it needs to be immediately reflected in the regulatory framework of UT. In such workshops, it was evident that issues of work-life balance and organisational culture opened a lot of discussions and proposals, which means increased staff awareness of the importance of such preliminary actions for flexibility in the working environments. The measures and actions proposed under pillar 4 on work-life balance and organisational culture do not have any financial cost, which means that they are easier to implement with a little willingness of the administrative staff responsible for such arrangements.

### 1.5 Prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment

The specific objective for this measure was to prevent gender-based violence including sexual harassment. UT has already developed and adopted a policy and procedures that safeguard academic, administrative personnel and students of the UT educational institutions from all forms of violence, harassment, and sexual harassment. The approval of this policy was followed up by several meetings that served to raise awareness about the adopted policy and procedures against any form of violence.

Some training sessions for female staff and students on how to distinguish and react to sexually-oriented language and attitude will be prepared and delivered in 2024 through the virtual training centre of UT.

## 2. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED FOR EACH AREA OF INTERVENTION AND STRATEGIES USED TO SOLVE THEM

**Problem 1:** The lack of sex-disaggregated data was the first challenge for the context analysis of the first GEPGB. The primary sources were the INSTAT and UT administrative data, but the team had to prepare statistical data according to the ISCED classification, which needed to be included.

**Strategy:** The lack of some indexes, which we could not provide in the first phase, encouraged our team to define, as one of the measures in the UT second GEP design, a Manual on Gender Indexes based on the literature in the field and adapted to our context.



This manual will help the UT human resources and statistical office staff, as well as people working in other structures, to provide annual gender statistics for academic staff, scientific research, and students, all according to ISCED classification.

**Problem 2:** The drafting of the strategic documents of UT was an inclusive process and the integration of the gender dimension in these strategic documents required analysis of the context and discussions about the role and importance of its inclusion in these documents.

**Strategy:** After the analysis processes, the suggestions given by the members of the team project of UT, as well as discussions and awareness about the importance of including this dimension, it was decided that in all these strategic documents, the gender dimension should be included.

The drafting of the regulatory documents of UT was an inclusive process and the integration of such gender dimensions in regulations requires time.

**Problems encountered:** Increasing further interest on behalf of young researchers. Finding new ways to implement gender dimension in teaching, capacity building.

**Strategy:** Through training workshops and meetings that will be organised with the academic and administrative staff, always will be mentioned the need for introducing such actions to the new regulatory framework, because balancing family and work responsibilities is particularly challenging for women in research and academic careers. Offering alternative proposals for family-friendly policies, flexible working arrangements, and a supportive work culture that values work-life balance will be part of various discussions at all levels, from the department level to the university level.

**Strategy:** To tackle the above difficulties we aim to increase visibility by preparing papers on gender equality and presenting them at internal events at the institution, such as workshops at the Department and Faculty level, international conferences organised in the UT, and other measures.

## CONCLUSIONS

UT is committed to addressing a range of important areas related to gender equality, under the LeTSGEPs project and active stakeholder engagement shows their awareness of the importance of gender equality issues in changing the organisational culture. Workshops and training activities were ground-breaking to start new discussions when meeting internal stakeholders, always with positive feedback on their side and a new awareness of the advantages of introducing such measures on work-life balance as a new approach of GEP at the institutional level. As the actions planned in the GEP 2022-2024 of UT are foreseen until May of 2024, the engagement of LeTSGEPs team for their implementation will continue next year and in the future.