

Evaluation of the Gender Equality Plan for the University of
Warsaw
and the equality action plan for
2020–2024

Warsaw, 2025

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Introduction

The Gender Equality Plan for the University of Warsaw and the Equality Action Plan for 2020-2023 (hereinafter referred to as the Plan) – introduced by *Order No. 194 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw of 27 August 2020 on the "Gender Equality Plan for the University of Warsaw and the Equality Action Plan for 2020-2023"* – is the first comprehensive strategic document of the university devoted to the issue of gender equality and diversity in the broad sense. The Plan was developed with the entire academic community in mind.

- covering both employed persons and students, as well as those pursuing education within doctoral schools and doctoral studies. Its primary objective was to create an institutional framework and legal solutions, and to implement practical measures conducive to building a university environment based on respect for the principle of equal treatment, open to diversity, free from discrimination, and ensuring safety, dignity and conditions for free academic and professional development for everyone.

The plan was designed as an extension of the provisions contained in the Human Resources Development Strategy, taking into account the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers 2015-2019. This document integrated the university's existing equality policy activities with new initiatives responding to the current needs of the academic community. The strategy is also linked to the University of Warsaw (UW) receiving the HR Excellence in Research award from the European Commission.

In the course of work on the Plan, it was assumed that equality and diversity are values conducive to the development of science and constitute an integral part of the university's social mission, which is to ensure equal access to knowledge and development opportunities. The starting point for the development of the Plan was good practices in the field of equality policies and the need to disseminate them more effectively within the academic community, including through improved internal communication and systematic early response measures.

Based on research and consultations conducted at the University of Warsaw in 2018–2019, it was found that some members of the University community encounter barriers to equal conditions for academic functioning and development. These barriers take various forms and constitute a significant limitation to the full utilisation of the potential of academic and teaching staff and, in a broader perspective, to the institutional development of the University of Warsaw and the quality of Polish science. The diagnosis of the internal situation at the University of Warsaw

in terms of equality included an analysis of statistical data on employment, managerial positions, promotions, organisational structures, and a review of current university regulations and practices. The conclusions of the diagnosis revealed the existence of structural and organisational barriers in the area of gender equality and the need for systematic anti-discrimination measures.

The assumptions of the University of Warsaw's Gender Equality Plan were based on **a holistic approach to equality issues**, taking into account various aspects of the university's functioning and the need to build sustainable structures supporting equality and diversity. The Plan covered not only measures to combat gender discrimination, but also addressed the situation of other groups at risk of exclusion, including people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ people, people with care responsibilities, and foreign nationals. As a result of quantitative and qualitative research, document analysis and consultations, a Plan based on five strategic objectives was developed. Each of the objectives was operationalised by identifying specific target groups, a catalogue of actions, indicators for monitoring progress, and the organisational units responsible for their implementation. The Plan provided for a variety of actions, including

- disseminating knowledge about equality, diversity and anti-discrimination,
- promoting and publicising existing examples and solutions in the field of strengthening equality and diversity,
- counteracting stereotypes that influence recruitment, career development and the image of universities and science,
- supporting women at all stages of their careers, with particular emphasis on post-doctoral academic careers,
- supporting the reconciliation of work and family life, with particular emphasis on care responsibilities.

The Plan sets out **five strategic objectives**, the implementation of which was to lead to lasting changes in the university's equality policy. These objectives have both a legal and institutional dimension

- by influencing organisational procedures and structures, and awareness-raising by

influencing the attitudes and organisational culture of the academic community. The objectives were defined as follows:

- **OBJECTIVE 1.** Raising awareness of the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity.
- **OBJECTIVE 2.** Supporting the development of women's academic careers.
- **OBJECTIVE 3.** To increase gender balance in the recruitment of employees and in doctoral schools.
- **OBJECTIVE 4.** Facilitating the reconciliation of work and family life.
- **OBJECTIVE 5.** Increasing balanced gender representation in: chairing faculty and university committees, management staff, expert and review teams, and chairing scientific and popularisation events.

The implementation of the above objectives was aimed at introducing systemic solutions conducive to the fuller implementation of the principle of equal treatment at the university. The expected effects concerned changes in institutional practices, the creation of new procedures and the improvement of working conditions and scientific development - both in the areas of research, teaching and administration. It was assumed that these objectives are interrelated and reinforce each other, allowing for synergy in activities promoting equality. They were formulated in the spirit of the University of Warsaw's equality policy motto: **"we are all equal"**.

Evaluation – assumptions

In accordance with the original assumptions, the Plan provided for an evaluation after two years, i.e. in 2022. As a result of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, the schedule of activities was changed and, instead of an evaluation, annual reports on the progress of its implementation were prepared throughout the entire period of the Plan's implementation. The reports were published on the website www.rownowazni.uw.edu.pl and are available to the public. In the first year of the Plan's operation, a so-called "roadmap" was developed - a planning tool containing a list of actions that could be implemented under existing procedures, as well as a set of initiatives requiring additional resources and a timetable. For the purposes of ongoing monitoring, annual implementation reports were prepared, documenting the actions taken, the barriers encountered and

changes to the schedule. Due to the impact of external factors, in particular the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, some of the actions were delayed. As a result, the Plan's validity period was extended until the end of 2024, and this evaluation also covers an additional year of implementation, which allows for a more complete picture of the effects and better preparation for the next edition of the equality strategy at the University of Warsaw. The evaluation of the Plan is summarising and strategic in nature. Its objectives include:

- assessing the compliance of the Plan's implementation with its assumptions,
- identification of actions that have yielded lasting results,
- identifying barriers encountered,
- formulating recommendations for the coming years.

The methodology adopted includes an analysis of documents (regulations, reports, individual data) and the results of qualitative and quantitative research conducted in the University of Warsaw community¹. The evaluation concerns the five strategic objectives of the Plan and has been extended to include a horizontal perspective, taking into account key areas of the university's functioning:

- Institutional dimension – procedures, legal acts, organisational structures that determine the manner of decision-making and implementation of measures supporting equality;
- Data and monitoring – the scope and regularity of data collection, taking into account differences between units;
- Recruitment and professional development – measures supporting women, promotion mechanisms, mentoring and training;
- Organisational culture and anti-discrimination – level of awareness, preventive measures, availability of procedures and support;
- Work-life balance – implemented solutions, employee needs, assessment of the effectiveness of measures.

The evaluation resulted in this final report, which summarises the degree to which the objectives of the Plan have been achieved, identifies key challenges, reviews good practices and makes recommendations for the next edition of the Plan.

¹ Equality 2019, Equality 2024, Being a Parent at the University of Warsaw

Institutional dimension

1. Legal acts and operational documents concerning equality and diversity

The formal basis for equality measures at the University of Warsaw is provided by legal acts and strategic and operational documents implemented in recent years in response to the need for systemic countermeasures against unequal treatment and support for diversity.

Statute of the University of Warsaw

The principles of equal treatment at the University of Warsaw are set out in § 3 of the University Statutes. According to its provisions:

- paragraph 4 indicates that the constitutional principle of equal treatment of all members of the University community is the foundation of its activities. The University supports diversity and counteracts discrimination;
- paragraph 5 obliges the university to implement the highest ethical standards and to be guided by the principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

An overview of key strategic and operational documents that form the institutional basis for equality and diversity initiatives at the University of Warsaw also includes internal acts and programmes that are important for the development of a culture of equality and the promotion of diversity in the academic community of the University of Warsaw. These documents define the objectives and principles of the university's equality policy and provide a framework for specific actions to promote inclusiveness and combat discrimination. It is therefore worth highlighting the most important ones:

1. *The human resources development strategy at the University of Warsaw, which takes into account the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, as well as the internal analysis and action plan for 2015-2019 (THE HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS (HRS4R) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW WITH RESPECT OF THE PRINCIPLES OF THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR RESEARCHERS AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS - ACTION PLAN FOR 2015-2019).*

2. *HR Excellence in Research - Interim evaluation with Action Plan for 2022-2027* (renewal of HR Excellence in Research distinction, February 2022).
3. *Strategy of the University of Warsaw for 2023-2032* adopted by Resolution No. 299 of the Senate of the University of Warsaw of 29 June 2023 on the adoption of the Strategy of the University of Warsaw for 2023-2032.
4. *The "Initiative of Excellence - Research University (2020-2026)" programme* - a programme of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, which gives the University of Warsaw the opportunity to improve the quality of its scientific activity and the quality of education, and, consequently, to increase the international significance of the university's activities.
5. *Gender Equality Plan* - the main strategic document adopted by Order No. 194 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw of 27 August 2020 on the "Gender Equality Plan for the University of Warsaw and the Equality Action Plan for 2020-2023", setting out the objectives and actions for 2020-2023.
6. *Order No. 87 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw of 12 June 2023 amending Order No. 194 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw of 27 August 2020 on the "Gender Equality Plan for the University of Warsaw and the Equality Action Plan for 2020-2023"*, extending the implementation of the Plan until 2024.

Key operational documents

Operational documents that specify the rules, procedures and tools supporting equal treatment and counteracting discrimination play a key role in the implementation of the University of Warsaw's equality policy. These documents define standards of conduct, support the development of a culture of equality and provide the academic community with specific tools and guidelines to effectively combat all forms of unequal treatment. The most important of these include:

1. *Order No. 21 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw of 28 February 2024 on the policy of counteracting unequal treatment, discrimination, mobbing and other undesirable behaviour at the University of Warsaw*, the act regulates the current policy of counteracting discrimination, mobbing and other undesirable behaviour, replacing the previous Anti-mobbing Procedure of 2018 and the Anti-discrimination Procedure of 2020.

2. *Anti-discrimination Guidebook for students and employees of the University of Warsaw* – information material on types of discrimination and available forms of support.
3. Recommendations for non-discriminatory language at the University of Warsaw – a document supporting the development of communication in line with the principles of equality and inclusiveness.

2. Institutional framework

Effective implementation of the equality policy at the University of Warsaw requires not only clearly defined goals and actions, but also a properly constructed institutional framework. Organisational structures, procedures and assigned functions play a key role in ensuring consistency, sustainability and effectiveness in combating discrimination, promoting equality and supporting diversity. The implementation of the Plan at the University of Warsaw is based on specific institutional structures that support the implementation of equality measures and the prevention of discrimination. The main entities are:

- **Equality Team** (Chief Specialist for Equality at the University of Warsaw, Chief Specialist for Equality Research and Education, and Specialist for Equality Classes) – persons coordinating equality measures, responsible, among other things, for developing and monitoring equality policies and training;
- **The Academic Ombudsman Team for Students and Employees (*Ombudsman*)** – The Academic Ombudsman is an independent and neutral person to whom students and can confidentially and informally report problems concerning the university. She supports conflict resolution and ensures fair treatment members of the academic community, and is responsible for corrective measures within the informal procedure. She accepts reports, supports victims, and conducts mediation;
- **Commission for Unequal Treatment and Discrimination** (until 2024 operating under the name of the Commission for Counteracting Discrimination) - the Commission's tasks include examining reports of unequal treatment and discrimination, including harassment and sexual harassment;

- **The Commission for Mobbing and Other Undesirable Behaviour** (until 2024 operating under the name of the Commission for Counteracting Mobbing) – the Commission's tasks include examining reports of mobbing and other undesirable behaviour;
- **Team of Coordinators for Counteracting Unequal Treatment, Discrimination, Mobbing and Other Undesirable Behaviour** – responsible for receiving and assessing reports, forwarding cases to the appropriate Committee, collecting data and good practices, cooperating with university entities and initiating preventive and educational activities;
- **Equality representatives** in organisational units (faculties and doctoral schools) – the tasks of the representatives include providing information about the procedures and institutions available at the University of Warsaw aimed at counteracting unequal treatment, discrimination, including harassment and sexual harassment, mobbing and other undesirable behaviour;
- **Rector's representative for anti-discrimination and sexual harassment policy** (appointed for the 2020-2024 term);
- **Rector's Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment** (appointed for the term 2024–2028) – represents the Rector in matters related to equality and cooperates with committees, coordinators and plenipotentiaries working to combat discrimination and mobbing at the University of Warsaw;
- **Rector's Representative for Cultural Diversity** (appointed for the term 2024–2028);
- **Equality Observatory** – a unit responsible for collecting data on equality, conducting analyses and evaluations, and publishing the results on the website rownowazni.uw.edu.pl (currently being established);

Systemic support is also provided by, among others:

- **The University of Warsaw Psychological Support Centre** – offers support to students, doctoral students and employees in crisis situations. It provides assistance in the form of consultations, individual and group psychotherapy, intervention, workshops and psychoeducational activities. Assistance is provided in accordance with the principles of professional ethics and confidentiality;

- **Office for Persons with Disabilities** – its aim is to ensure the accessibility of the University for the entire academic community;
- **The Centre for Dispute and Conflict Resolution at the Faculty of Law and Administration** promotes a culture of amicable dispute and conflict resolution and develops mediation;
- **The University of Warsaw Law Clinic at the Faculty of Law and Administration** – provides free legal advice to people in difficult financial situations. Assistance is provided by students under the supervision of experienced coordinators.
- **Welcome Point** – provides information and support to foreign students, employees and guests of the University of Warsaw. It assists in matters related to studies, everyday life and adaptation in Poland, cooperating with other university units.

Faculty structures – local organisation and activities

At the level of organisational units of the University of Warsaw, there are structures supporting the implementation of equality policy and counteracting abuse. Their presence strengthens the actions taken at the central level and enables an effective response to the local needs of the academic community. The key elements of this structure include:

- Student and doctoral student councils – involved in equality activities (e.g. through participation in training and promotion of the idea of diversity);
- Research clubs and grassroots initiatives – play an important role in disseminating knowledge and organising events in the area of equality and diversity (e.g. Queer UW).

The institutional framework for equality and anti-discrimination at the University of Warsaw is based on well-developed structures, supported by educational, procedural and monitoring activities. The expansion of faculty structures, which ensure the implementation of equality policies in the everyday workplace and learning environment, is also of key importance. During the period covered by the Plan, equality structures at the level of organisational units of the University of Warsaw were significantly strengthened. Of particular importance was the introduction of the obligation to appoint equality officers in faculties and doctoral schools, as well as the creation of the possibility of appointing them in other university units. This measure has resulted in a systematic increase in the number of people performing this function – currently, 32 officers are active in 29 units.

These individuals play an important role in implementing equality policy in their local communities, forming a vital link in the network of support and response to undesirable situations. Representatives receive regular training and informational and educational materials, and in the future, additional forms of support are planned, such as intervision and supervision, to enable the exchange of experiences and the development of competencies.

The effectiveness of these mechanisms should be regularly evaluated based on data collected and analysed by *the Equality Observatory* and analyses of the effectiveness of interventions. Most of the support institutions and descriptions of procedures and processes are available at www.rownowazni.uw.edu.pl.

Complaint procedures

The University of Warsaw has two channels for responding to cases of unequal treatment:

Formal channel

Formal complaint proceedings based on the procedure described in *Order No. 21 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw of 28 February 2024 on the policy of counteracting unequal treatment, discrimination, mobbing and other undesirable behaviour at the University of Warsaw*. Complaints may be submitted by persons affected by the violation, exclusively in person (not anonymously), if the incident concerns a member of the University of Warsaw community and took place within three years of the incident. Complaints are submitted to the Team of Coordinators, who examine the validity of the complaint and, if there are grounds for doing so, refer the case to the appropriate Commission. Within the Commission (on unequal treatment and discrimination or on mobbing and other undesirable behaviour), an Opinion Team is appointed to conduct an investigation. If violations are confirmed, the Committees recommend corrective measures for the perpetrator (e.g. training, termination of contract) and the victim (e.g. psychological support, change of supervisor). The Rector makes the final executive decisions within one month of receiving the Committee's opinion.

Informal path

Informal remedial proceedings conducted by the Academic Ombudsman Team of the University of Warsaw serve to resolve conflicts and problematic situations in

academic environment – without initiating formal procedures. This applies to issues such as: tensions in employee, student or doctoral student relations, feelings of unfair or unequal treatment, violations of procedures or communication. Actions are based on the principles of confidentiality, impartiality, independence and informality. Possible forms of support include individual consultations, corrective measures or referral of the case to mediation (with the consent of the parties). The procedure is supportive, based on dialogue and respect, and its aim is to build a safe and fair academic environment.

Counteracting sexual harassment

As part of its systemic efforts to prevent sexual harassment, the University of Warsaw has implemented a number of complementary educational, informational and institutional initiatives. Their aim is to raise awareness among the academic community, provide practical tools for responding to cases of abuse, and build a safe working and learning environment. Key documents include:

- *Preventing sexual harassment at the university. University of Warsaw guide. (Guide to the prevention of sexual harassment)* – a guide devoted to the issues of defining, recognising and responding to sexual harassment.
- Online course *on preventing sexual harassment at the university*, aimed mainly at students, doctoral students and employees.
- On-site training courses, including those for disciplinary officers, members of disciplinary committees, representatives of student government, and equality officers appointed at faculties and doctoral schools of the University of Warsaw, devoted to standards of response, support for victims victims and applicable university procedures.

Conclusions

The University of Warsaw has an extensive, multi-level institutional system supporting activities for equality, counteracting discrimination and counteracting sexual harassment. It includes both central structures, such as the Chief Equality Specialist, the Equality Observatory (currently in the process of being established

of establishment), the Committees for Counteracting Unequal Treatment and Discrimination, Mobbing and Other Undesirable Behaviour, and the Academic Ombudsman – as well as local structures in the form of equality representatives in faculties and doctoral schools. This model is an example of good practice and demonstrates the university's strong commitment to creating a safe, open and inclusive academic environment.

Strengths:

- A key value is the presence of specialised individuals in coordinating positions, responsible for the consistency and implementation of equality policy. The Chief Equality Officer, supported by the Chief Equality Research and Education Officer and the Equality Officer, oversees the coordination of activities across the university. This allows not only for the planning and implementation of systemic activities, but also for monitoring their progress on the basis of data and research;
- The work of the Academic Ombudsman and the Team of Coordinators for Counteracting Unequal Treatment, Discrimination, Mobbing and Other Undesirable Behaviour offers members of the University of Warsaw community real, accessible and multi-faceted assistance. The existence of alternative paths – from informal support and mediation to formal proceedings – increases the chances of a quick and adequate response to problematic situations.
- Equality officers in faculties and doctoral schools play an important role – they are not only the link between central structures and local needs, but also initiators of equality measures, ambassadors of anti-exclusion policies and the first point of contact for people experiencing inequality.

Areas requiring strengthening and development:

- The multitude of institutions and procedures, while ensuring flexibility, can also cause confusion. It is recommended to streamline the system for submitting complaints and requests and to clearly present the available support channels, e.g. in the form of an integrated information platform and a transparent map of procedures. A clear definition of the roles and competences of individual bodies will increase the sense of security and willingness to use support mechanisms.

- Formalising the functioning of the Equality Observatory as an analytical and research unit, which will be a valuable resource supporting data-based decision-making and enabling the formulation of accurate recommendations;
- It is crucial to provide regular, specialised training for people performing functions related to counteracting discrimination and mobbing – committee members, coordinators, spokespersons and representatives, new employees and students. This training should cover not only legal and procedural basics, but also soft skills, including recognising microaggressions, responding to situations of psychological violence, elements of mediation and psychological support.
- The functional workload of key positions (especially the Chief Equality Officer and the Academic Spokesperson) requires monitoring and, if necessary, an increase in human, financial and space resources. Effective and rapid processing of reports requires administrative support and sufficient working time.
- The implementation of a diverse and participatory equality policy requires greater involvement of representatives of the student and doctoral communities, both in information activities (campaigns, training, debates) and in the design and consultation of systemic solutions. Increasing the role of student councils in equality activities will allow for a better response to the specific needs of members of the University of Warsaw community;
- It is recommended to develop mechanisms to standardise the implementation of equality policy in individual units. The following may be helpful in this regard: regular meetings of the network of representatives, systematic exchange of experiences and good practices, and publication of reports on the implementation of local activities. In addition, it is worth considering the implementation of a system of awards for departments particularly involved in promoting equality and combating exclusion.

In summary, the institutional foundations of the equality policy at the University of Warsaw are solid and well-designed. Their further development should move towards consolidation and professionalisation of activities, deepening internal education, and consistent dissemination of equality standards and tools at all levels and in all organisational units of the University of Warsaw. This approach will increase the effectiveness of interventions, strengthen the culture

of openness and shared responsibility, and make the University of Warsaw an institution that genuinely supports diversity.

OBJECTIVE 1. Awareness of the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity

One of the objectives of the Plan was to raise awareness of equality issues and promote openness to diversity throughout the academic community. From the outset, this objective was treated as the foundation for other areas of activity, and its implementation was intended to support the development of an institutional culture based on equality, respect and inclusion. The actions taken under this objective were multidimensional and included education, development of information resources, creation of procedures, strengthening of structures responsible for equality issues, and conducting research and diagnostics. The initiatives were addressed to both employees (administrative, teaching and research staff) and students, doctoral students and management. The implementation of activities under this objective is not only an educational process, but also part of a deeper change in the organisational culture of the University of Warsaw.

Educational and training offer

As part of its educational activities, the University of Warsaw has prepared and implemented a wide range of educational programmes on equality and anti-discrimination. The educational offer in the area of equality, diversity and counteracting sexual harassment and unequal treatment has been significantly expanded. The training courses were addressed to both students (including doctoral students) and employees (academic teachers, administrative staff, unit managers). The proposed educational forms included, among others:

- Online course "Kurs na Równość" (Course on Equality) - (available in Polish, English and Ukrainian), covering the basic issues of counteracting discrimination and promoting equality in the academic environment;

- Online course "Counteracting sexual harassment at the university" (available in Polish and English) - discussing forms of harassment, response strategies and forms of support available at the University of Warsaw;
- Online course "Bullying in the workplace – prevention, recognition and response" - aimed at employees (available in Polish and English)
- Online course "Discrimination, Conformity and Resistance - History and Memory of the Bench Ghetto and Other Forms of Exclusion within University Walls" (available in Polish for students and doctoral candidates).
- Workshops on developing attitudes of equality among students at the University of Warsaw;
- Training course "Developing attitudes of equality - anti-discrimination activities at the University of Warsaw"; Training course entitled “How to deal with people who have experienced sexual violence” – training for representatives of the student council, faculty equality officers representing students, University of Warsaw disciplinary spokespeople, and university disciplinary committees for employees, doctoral students and students of the University of Warsaw.

Since 2022, the training offer has been systematically developed, including through the preparation of an English version and pilot implementations in Ukrainian, which has made it accessible to members of the international community at the University of Warsaw. Based on data from 2021-2024, over 1,000 students studying at the University of Warsaw have participated in online training courses ("Equality Course", "Counteracting Sexual Harassment at the University", "Mobbing in the Workplace", "Discrimination, Conformism and Resistance") for students at the University of Warsaw. Of these, 5,370 completed online training in English and 140 students in Ukrainian. The data indicate a systematic increase in interest in the course and its important role in promoting equality awareness among the academic community at the University of Warsaw. Between 2020 and 2024, a total of 26 working people, including UW employees and doctoral students, took part in the online course "Course on Equality - Counteracting Discrimination at the University of Warsaw". A total of 42 people took part in the training course "How to deal with people who have experienced sexual violence".

Strengthening the equality infrastructure

An important step was the development of a structure responsible for the implementation of equality policy:

- the network of equal treatment representatives in units was expanded (see *Institutional Framework* for more details),
- an "Anti-Discrimination Procedure" was implemented and an electronic form for reporting violations was created and made available on the equality website and the website of the Coordinators for Counteracting Unequal Treatment, Discrimination, Mobbing and Other Undesirable Behaviour,
- an "Anti-Discrimination Guide" and recommendations on non-discriminatory language were developed,
- a dedicated equality website rownowazni.uw.edu.pl was created, containing, among other things, extensive educational resources, a list of support institutions and detailed descriptions of support procedures for various groups (e.g. parents, neurodiverse people, people belonging to the LGBTQ+ community).

Research and monitoring

As part of strengthening knowledge about the state of equality at the University of Warsaw, diagnostic activities were carried out. These included:

- university-wide qualitative and quantitative research entitled "Being a parent at the University of Warsaw 2022-2023";
- research on experiences of violence, discrimination, including sexual harassment and other undesirable behaviours, entitled "Equality at the University of Warsaw 2019" and "Equality at the University of Warsaw 2024".
- analysis of pay equality between male and female academic teachers at the University of Warsaw based on gender 2017-2022.
- Quantitative data on employment and promotions broken down by gender (to a limited extent) was collected.

During the period analysed, no Equality Observatory was formally established, and its functions were partially performed by the Equality Team. The diagnostic activities carried out so far, although valuable, were sporadic and unsystematic. The University of Warsaw does not currently have a permanent, cyclical system for monitoring equality data, which limits the ability to observe changes, detect inequalities early on, and plan long-term interventions. Therefore, the following is recommended:

- The introduction of regular analyses of personnel data from the perspective of gender, age, function, and form of employment (*e.g., analysis of differences in the promotion paths of women and men, review of the participation of different age groups in open competitions, analysis of by gender and type of position*).
- Regular surveys of the experiences of students, doctoral students and staff in the area of counteracting discrimination, harassment, exclusion and microaggression (*e.g. continuation and development of the "Equality at the University of Warsaw" survey - every 5 years, in quantitative and qualitative form*).
- Conducting thematic diagnostic research on selected groups of the academic community, such as LGBTQ+ persons, parents and guardians, neurodiverse persons, and persons with disabilities.
- Monitoring the availability and use of equality tools in units (*e.g. analysis of knowledge of anti-discrimination procedures, number of reports, recognition of representatives, availability of training and materials*).
- Analysis of conditions and barriers to combining professional and care roles (*e.g. studies similar to "Being a Parent at the University of Warsaw" conducted every two years, taking into account different stages of life and family situations*).
- Mapping differences between organisational units (*e.g. review of local equality measures, support for people with special needs, differences in HR policies or organisational atmosphere*).

The introduction of regular, well-documented analyses will not only provide a better understanding of the dynamics of change in organisational culture, but also provide a basis for accurate planning of further activities within the GEP 2025-2029 and the university's equality strategy.

Organisational culture

The implementation of measures under this objective is not only an educational process, but also part of a deeper change in the organisational culture of the University of Warsaw. It is not just about imparting knowledge, but about triggering mechanisms of reflection, sensitivity and responsibility towards possible structural inequalities and the everyday experiences of members of the academic community. Five years into the implementation of the Plan, it is clear that awareness of equality issues has increased and that the subject itself is no longer marginalised. However, changing organisational culture is a process that takes time.

engagement and confrontation with reality, which can be difficult and complex. Both quantitative and qualitative research² indicate that the awareness of the University of Warsaw community in the area of equality and diversity is gradually increasing. The majority of respondents assess the university as a place friendly to women and people of different nationalities. A significant proportion of respondents declare that they are familiar with the channels for filing complaints, know the procedures and have access to information about support institutions.

The current situation in terms of organisational culture and anti-discrimination at the University of Warsaw paints a picture of an institution that has undertaken a number of systemic measures in recent years to build a safe, equal and open academic environment. The evaluation conducted as part of the "Equality at the University of Warsaw 2024" study reveals specific areas where further improvement is possible and necessary.

It is worth mentioning that in recent years, the University of Warsaw has implemented many institutional solutions that serve as examples of good practice on a national scale, including integrated anti-discrimination and anti-mobbing procedures, the expansion of the network of equality representatives, the introduction of mandatory training and e-learning courses, the availability of information brochures, and information and education activities carried out by the Equality Team and other units.

At the same time, however, the survey shows that despite institutional progress and increased awareness, some members of the UW community still experience unequal treatment in the form of microaggressions, sexual or stereotypical comments (approx. 15% of respondents). This is particularly true for more vulnerable groups: women, LGBT+ people and neuroatypical people (64% indicated women as the group most often experiencing unequal treatment). It is also important to note the clear hierarchical relationships – 57% of respondents indicate people higher up in the structure as the source of unequal treatment. Academic and teaching staff are also perceived by doctoral students and students as the group most often responsible for undesirable behaviour. One of the conclusions of the research is the need to organise and educate about a wide range of discriminatory phenomena. Discrimination, unequal treatment and symbolic violence take various forms – they can be overt or subtle, systemic or

² Equality at the University of Warsaw 2019 and Equality at the University of Warsaw 2024.

incidental, directed at entire groups or individuals. Their occurrence depends on the position, identity and situation of the person concerned – therefore, anti-discrimination measures must take into account differences in experience, including between people of the same gender or professional role. From the perspective of organisational and strategic challenges, it is also important to note the link between an atmosphere of equality and inclusiveness and the mental health of community members. People who experience marginalisation, exclusion, lack of recognition or disregard for their needs are in a state of chronic tension, which directly affects their mental well-being. Therefore, equality measures should be seen as part of a strategy to care for the mental health of employees and students, and not merely as a formal or educational obligation.

Conclusions

In summary, the University of Warsaw is undergoing a process of cultural change that requires both the continuation of systemic measures and the strengthening of everyday equality practices in the workplace, in research and in education. Further investment in information and training activities and initiatives supporting a community-based approach to equality is recommended. A lasting, profound and participatory change in organisational culture is key to the effective implementation of the Inclusive Gender Equality Plan 2025-2029. Key areas for further action include:

- Strengthening the role of organisational leaders (deans, heads of units) as promoters of a culture of equality – through training, expert support and feedback from the community;
- Systematic dissemination of knowledge about support tools and procedures – in particular among new members of the community and students, with an emphasis on clear, accessible communication;
- Developing attitudes of responsibility and mindfulness – through educational activities focused on recognising microaggressions, exclusionary language and hidden forms of inequality;
- Further developing initiatives that promote equality, e.g. the Pink Box;
- Incorporating equality and inclusivity into mental health and wellbeing strategies – recognising that a sense of justice and safety is an important factor for the entire university community.

Good practices:

Task Force Network – teams operate in faculties, institutes and other organisational units as part of the implementation of the JNU GEP and are open to the entire JNU academic community. You can join them at any time. All you need to do is write which team you want to join. You can join more than one task force operating within the JNU GEP or create your own. Their aim is to initiate educational activities, monitor issues related to discrimination and mobbing, and support people experiencing unequal treatment. The initiative allows for better recognition of the specific needs of individual departments and involves the academic community in the process of creating an inclusive environment. The teams' work focuses on several problem areas, i.e. employee satisfaction, work-life balance, anti-discrimination procedures, gender in teaching and research, and inclusive language. (Jagiellonian University)

Awareness training for employees – organising regular (twice a year) training courses covering awareness issues and combating stereotypes for all interested employees. The training courses are dedicated to university authorities, administrative staff, and teaching and research staff. (Wrocław University of Technology)

Keeping gender-specific statistics and reporting them annually in the area of recruitment (candidates and admitted persons) for first- and second-cycle studies and for the Doctoral School. Activities include: initiating proceedings for the award of doctoral degrees and doctoral defences; recruitment (candidates and accepted applicants) for specific job groups; use of maternity and parental leave; obtaining academic degrees and titles; promotions; entrusting functions and membership in collegial bodies resulting from nominations; management and implementation of research projects. (University of Rzeszów)

OBJECTIVE 2. Supporting the development of women's academic careers

In 2020-2024, the University of Warsaw implemented measures to support the development of women's academic careers, with particular emphasis on those at an early stage of their academic careers. The implementation of this objective focused on creating support networks, developing competences, mentoring and building an environment conducive to equal opportunities. These measures were aimed at counteracting entrenched structural and cultural barriers that

hinder women's academic career development and promotion. Among the measures implemented, the following are worth noting:

- The University of Warsaw Doctoral Students Network (since 2022) – a permanent initiative aimed at women pursuing a doctorate; it includes monthly meetings, training, contact with experts, communication channels (mailing, Facebook group); recognised as good practice in the ESG catalogue;
meeting topics: grants and publications, public speaking, how to deal with teaching, being a woman in science, how to organise your doctoral work, NCN Prelude – how to prepare, IDUB for doctoral students, parenthood at university;
- The Young Female Researchers Programme – mentoring and coaching for women at the beginning of their scientific careers (2 editions, 33 participants), training in research skills and career planning;
- Support activities in doctoral schools: the "Equality" course, consultation workshops for female doctoral students;
- Collection and publication of good practices of UW units on the website rownowazni.uw.edu.pl – however, without a regular cycle and promotion;
- Monitoring of data with regard to gender – conducted sporadically, mainly in the context of opening doctoral programmes and defences; lack of systematic reporting of data on promotions, employment and grants.

Conclusions

Activities aimed at female doctoral students and young researchers have been well received and have brought measurable benefits to participants, providing a valuable starting point for further support for women in science. However, these initiatives are still project-based and limited in scope, and there is a lack of consistent, systemic mechanisms for supporting women's careers at the university level. A significant gap remains in the lack of continued support at subsequent stages of the career path (e.g. postdoctoral studies, professorship). In addition, the monitoring of equality data is carried out in an unsystematic and scattered manner, which makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of the measures taken and to plan further interventions. In view of the above observations, it is necessary to take measures to strengthen and systematise support for women in science, including

- continuing and institutionalising existing initiatives (the University of Warsaw Doctoral Students Network, "Young Female Researchers") and extending them to subsequent stages of academic careers,
- the introduction of annual monitoring of data from a gender perspective (postdocs, promotions, grant leaders),
- standardisation of good practices in units – with a clear collection cycle and promotional support,
- educational activities to counteract unconscious barriers in assessment and recruitment processes,
- implementation of a comprehensive mentoring programme taking into account the specific nature of scientific disciplines in order to counteract entrenched gender divisions, particularly in STEM and social sciences, it is worth implementing mentoring programmes that promote diversity and support women in technical disciplines and men in social sciences and humanities.

Good practices:

The Joanna Schopenhauer Rector's Award - the award was established as part of the implementation of the University of Gdańsk and is one of the measures (measure 4.6) provided for in *the Plan for the implementation of gender equality policy at the University of Gdańsk for 2024-2028*. The award is granted annually at the University of Gdańsk to female academics who have obtained the title of professor in a given year. The aim of the award is to recognise the scientific achievements of women, strengthen their visibility in the academic community and promote equality in science. The initiative also has a symbolic dimension - honouring Joanna Schopenhauer, an outstanding Gdańsk native, serves as an inspiration for women pursuing academic careers. The award ceremony takes place during formal university events, which further emphasises the prestige of the award and promotes positive attitudes towards diversity and gender equality in science. (University of Gdańsk)

Training programme – a training programme developed for all employee groups, taking into account various aspects of gender equality and diversity. The measures taken include: preparing a set of training materials, preparing training programmes tailored to the needs of various groups within the academic community, and preparing training guides and instructions. (University of Łódź)

OBJECTIVE 3. Improving gender balance in the recruitment of employees and in doctoral schools

In order to improve gender balance in recruitment processes for teaching positions and in doctoral schools at the University of Warsaw, a number of normative and organisational measures have been taken. These measures aim to ensure equal access to academic career paths, eliminate bias, and promote transparency and objectivity in the evaluation of candidates. These measures are based on the following operational and regulatory documents:

- *Order No. 27 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw of 27 February 2025 on the detailed rules and procedures for conducting competitions for academic teaching positions at the University of Warsaw;*
- *Policy of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment at the University of Warsaw;*
- Scheme for recruitment to the position of academic teacher;
- *Resolution No. 17 of the Senate of the University of Warsaw of 20 January 2021 on the rules for recruitment to doctoral schools at the University of Warsaw;*
- Guide for heads of organisational units and committees appointed to conduct competitions for academic positions at the University of Warsaw, based on internal regulations of the University of Warsaw and the principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

Conclusions

The University of Warsaw has a regulatory system covering the recruitment processes for academic teaching positions and doctoral schools. The documents introduced create a solid framework for equal opportunities, the elimination of bias and transparency of actions. However, the effectiveness of these solutions depends on their consistent application, systematic supervision and links to educational activities. In order to strengthen the effects of the implemented regulations, it is recommended to:

- introducing regular monitoring of the participation of women and men at all stages of the recruitment process, taking into account the division into units and disciplines;
- mandatory training for members of recruitment and competition committees on gender equality, anti-discrimination and unconscious bias;
- regular evaluation of the impact of the adopted principles on recruitment results and employment structure;
- dissemination of good practices and examples of effective recruitment ensuring balanced gender representation across the academic community.

Good practices:

Training for people involved in promotional and outreach activities - organising a workshop on equality in communication for at least five employees involved in direct activities promoting enrolment at Wrocław University of Science and Technology (meetings in secondary schools, outreach lectures, etc.). (Wrocław University of Technology)

Equalising gender representation during recruitment to the Doctoral School (target group: students of the Doctoral School of the Poznań University of Economics) - actions taken: publication of recruitment announcements with transparent criteria and the use of gender-neutral language, conducting one campaign promoting the idea of gender equality every two years. (Poznań University of Economics)

OBJECTIVE 4. Facilitating the reconciliation of work and family life

Supporting employees of the University of Warsaw in combining their professional life with family responsibilities (WLB) was one of the objectives of the Plan for 2020-2024. Activities in this area focused on increasing the availability of tools supporting WLB, including flexible forms of work organisation, material benefits and initiatives integrating the families of members of the university community. It was assumed that effective support for WLB contributes not only to equal opportunities and counteracting exclusion, but also to the well-being of staff and the stability of teams. In 2020-2024, a number of organisational and institutional solutions were introduced, including:

- amendment of the periodic assessment form to allow for the inclusion of care responsibilities as circumstances affecting the achievement of professional goals;
- the introduction of the possibility of remote work in justified cases (*Order No. 115 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw of 30 August 2023 and the Agreement on remote work*);
- the introduction of the possibility of occasional remote performance of professional duties (a maximum of twenty-four days of remote work per calendar year) for academic teachers and non-academic staff (*Order No. 127 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw of 5 July 2023 on the rules for occasional remote work at the University of Warsaw*);
- launch of the "Employment Handbook" tab on the Human Resources Office website with comprehensive information on parenthood, benefits, leave and psychological support;
- Conducting a series of training courses for parents and carers of dependents (children, elderly people, people with disabilities), covering psychological, legal and institutional aspects.
- Adopting recommendations on business meeting hours at the University of Warsaw aimed at strengthening the balance between work and private and family life.
- Preparation of a compilation on the legal and practical aspects of work-life balance – international, national and university context.

In addition, two diagnostic studies were carried out:

- a university-wide qualitative (2022) and quantitative (2023) study entitled "Being a parent at the University of Warsaw", covering various groups of the University of Warsaw community, including unit managers, with the aim of providing an in-depth diagnosis of the experiences, barriers and care needs of employees, doctoral students and students who are parents.

The results of the survey (conducted before the introduction of occasional remote work and regular remote work at the University of Warsaw) revealed a clear need for flexible forms of work organisation, especially among parents of young children and those raising children with special needs. The survey participants expressed great interest in solutions supporting WLB, which is a positive sign and a starting point for the development of university care policies. At the same time, however, the awareness and availability of these tools are rated moderately positively. About half (46.9%) of the respondents had

experience with remote/hybrid work, and over 38% of respondents had not encountered flexible working hours or task-based work. The average rating of knowledge about available WLB tools was 2.63 on a scale of 1-5, which is moderately low. The survey also asked about solutions particularly desired by employees in the context of combining work and family life. The most frequently mentioned were:

- flexible working hours,
- the possibility of remote or hybrid work,
- expanded access to nurseries and kindergartens (close to the workplace/place of study) and/or subsidies.
- transparent rules for remote working, especially for people with young children,
- the possibility of training trips with children or taking family circumstances into account when planning trips,
- better information about rights – waiting for an up-to-date and practical guide (handbook).
- systemic support in time management and care organisation, e.g. through psychological and organisational counselling,
- adjustment of the teaching schedule to the parental situation (applies to academic teachers).

In addition to flexible forms of employment, the survey participants also pointed to the importance of financial and organisational support. Day camps, subsidies for nurseries and kindergartens, and sports cards for children are examples of measures that can have a real impact on improving the quality of life of university employees' families. However, the data indicate that the use of some of these forms of support is low. The responses of people raising children with special needs and single parents deserve particular attention. Although some of them took advantage of available solutions, such as remote work or flexible working hours, they were also much more likely than other participants in the study to point to the mismatch between what the university offered and their individual life situations. These are groups at increased risk of exclusion from institutional forms of support, requiring more flexible, personalised and accessible tools to help them combine work and care responsibilities.

Conclusions

An analysis of the results of the "Being a Parent at the University of Warsaw" survey shows that the University of Warsaw has a solid foundation for the further development of a modern and effective WLB support policy. Many tools and solutions have already been introduced, both at the formal and practical levels. Although not all of them are yet widely known and used, their presence is met with genuine interest and positive reception among university employees. This indicates a clear expectation that these tools should be more accessible, more flexible and more widely communicated.

The main challenge for the next stage is not so much the creation of new tools as the consistent strengthening, dissemination and standardisation of available forms of support across the entire university. It is also crucial to adapt them to diverse life situations, especially for groups at risk of exclusion, such as single parents or carers of children with special needs. An important element of this change should be to strengthen the community dimension of the University as a work environment that is friendly to families, carers of dependents and diversity. Achieving this goal requires not only central policy, but also the active involvement of unit managers, local leaders and members of the University of Warsaw community themselves. Equality in balancing work and family life must be seen as a shared value and implemented not only in strategic documents but also in everyday organisational practice. Based on the data collected, areas requiring further development have been identified:

- Disseminating knowledge about available tools – raising awareness and improving communication about available solutions supporting WLB;
- Ensuring equal access to support – eliminating differences between organisational units in the implementation and use of tools
- Adapting solutions to diverse needs – taking into account the specific situation of single parents and carers of dependents;
- Developing and formalising flexible forms of work – including the promotion of remote work, task-based work and flexible working hours;
- Monitoring WLB needs and the implementation of available solutions.

Good practices:

Support for people who have been away from work for a long time, assessing their needs after returning to work - the initiative aims to support people who are absent from work for long periods (e.g. due to parenthood) in maintaining contact with professional life and facilitating their return to work through training and mentoring activities between colleagues/active mentoring/training and support/needs assessment. (Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences)

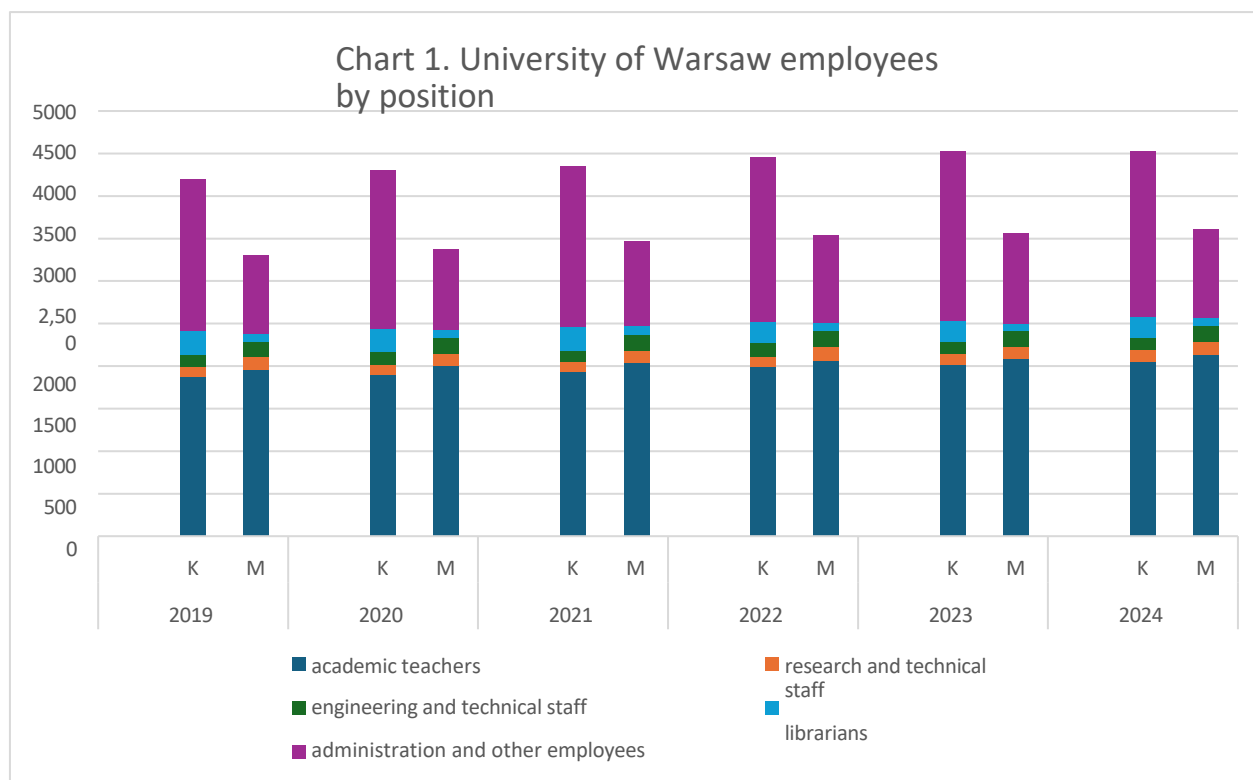
Adapting the university space to the needs of parents with small children and people with disabilities - as part of the initiative, rooms and toilets for parents with small children and toilets for people with disabilities are being created and equipped in every publicly accessible university building, ramps and publicly accessible lifts are being built for people in wheelchairs or with prams, and a supervised playroom for children is being organised near the Main Building and the University Library. (University of Rzeszów)

Objective 5. To increase balanced gender representation in: chairing faculty and university committees, management staff, expert and review teams, and chairing scientific and popularisation events.

One of the objectives of the Plan was to increase gender balance in leadership and expert roles at the University of Warsaw, including in university and faculty committees, review panels, management staff, and scientific and popularisation events. This objective responds to the need to overcome entrenched inequalities in access to visible and prestigious roles, as well as to strengthen the presence of women in decision-making areas. Its implementation is an important step in building a more inclusive and representative academic culture, in which gender diversity translates into fairer management of knowledge and university structures.

Structure of UW employees

Academic teachers constitute the largest group of UW employees in each analysed category and year (Chart 1). Both women and men are represented in this group in comparable numbers, with a slightly higher proportion of women observed since 2019.

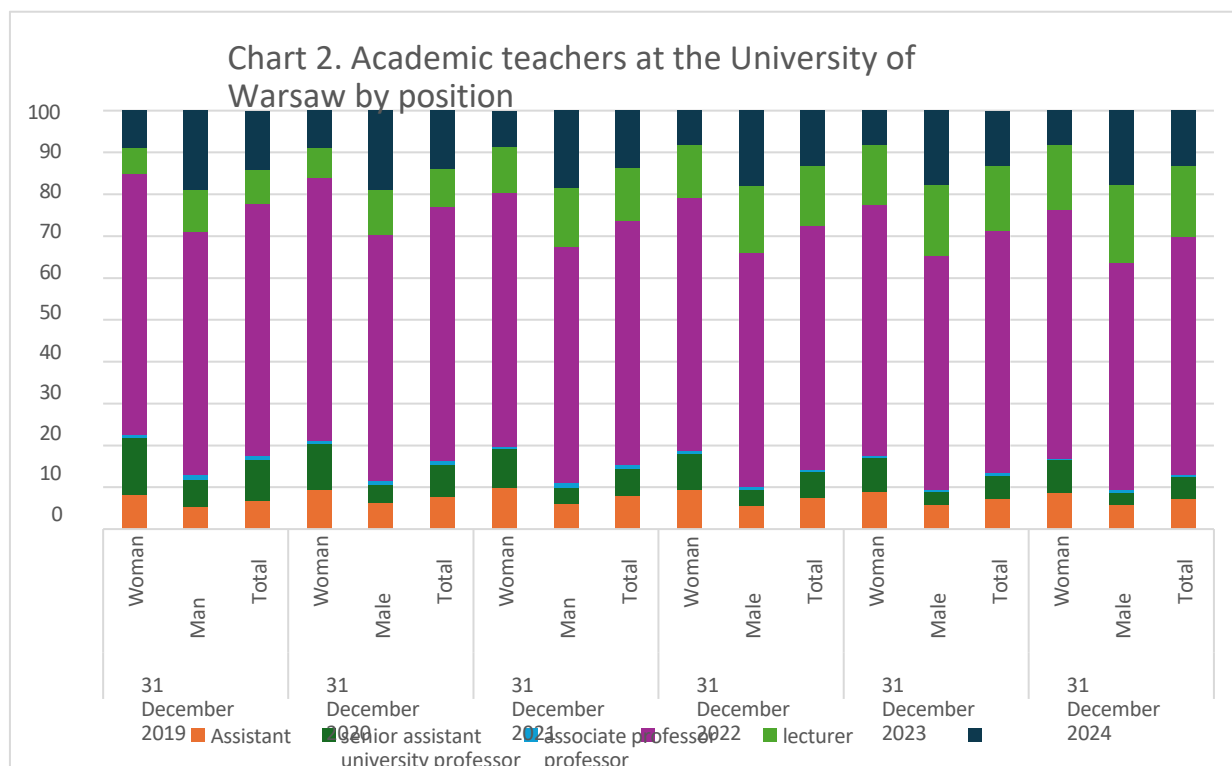


The second largest category is administrative and other staff (non-academic staff). In this group, there is a clear predominance of women in all the years analysed. Between 2019 and 2024, the number of women in this group is growing, reaching its highest level among all occupational and gender categories in 2024. The number of men in the same group remains relatively stable.

The groups of research and technical staff, engineering and technical staff, and librarians are characterised by significantly lower numbers. No significant changes or large differences between the sexes were observed in these categories. However, it should be noted that women dominate among librarians, which is consistent with the general trends in this profession.

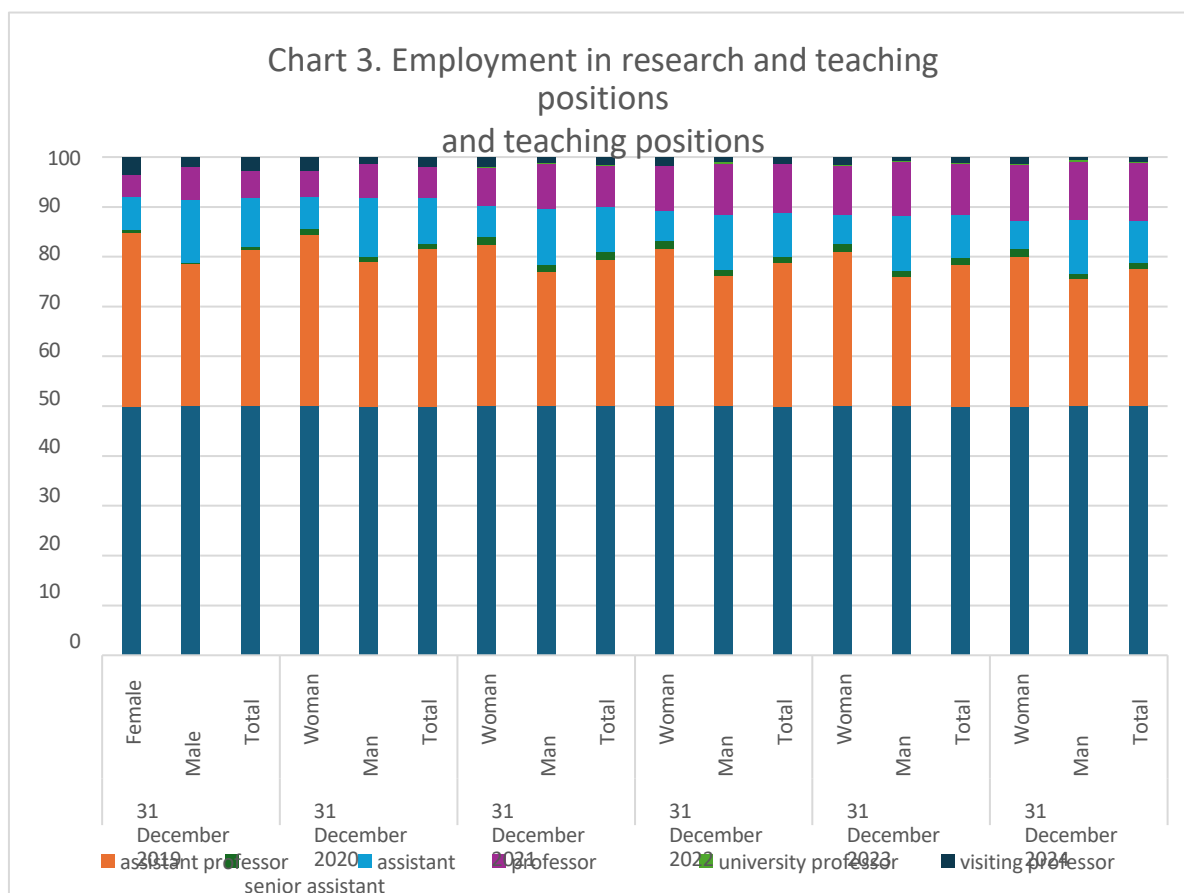
Structure of academic staff employed at the University of Warsaw

Between 2019 and 2024, the structure of academic employment at the University of Warsaw remained relatively stable, with a slight increase in the total number of employees from 3,804 to 4,105 (Figure 2). The proportion of women remained at around 48-49%, suggesting a similar gender balance in the overall population of academic staff. However, a more detailed analysis reveals significant differences in the representation of women at different career levels.

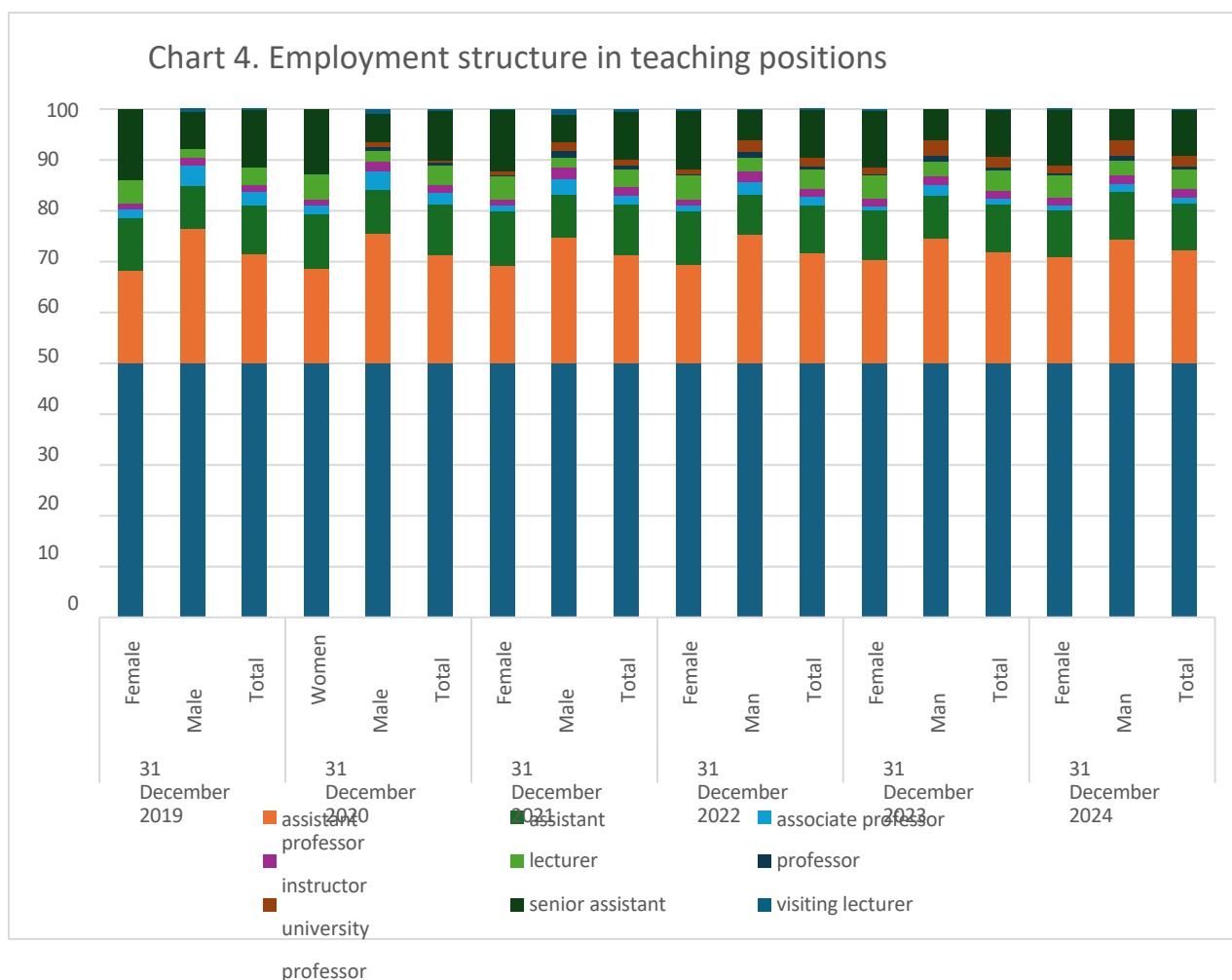


Women predominate in lower positions, such as assistant or senior assistant, and are almost equally represented among associate professors. However, the higher up the hierarchy, the more their share decreases significantly. Their number is growing among university professors, but women still account for only about 31% of full professors (166 women compared to 374 men in 2024). These data indicate the need for further action to support the advancement of women in science, especially to the highest positions. It is necessary to continue policies that promote equal opportunities, including mentoring, transparent promotion procedures and career development support systems.

The structure of academic employment at the University of Warsaw in 2019–2024 shows clear differences between the three basic groups of employees: research and teaching (Chart 3), teaching (Chart 4) and research (Chart 5).

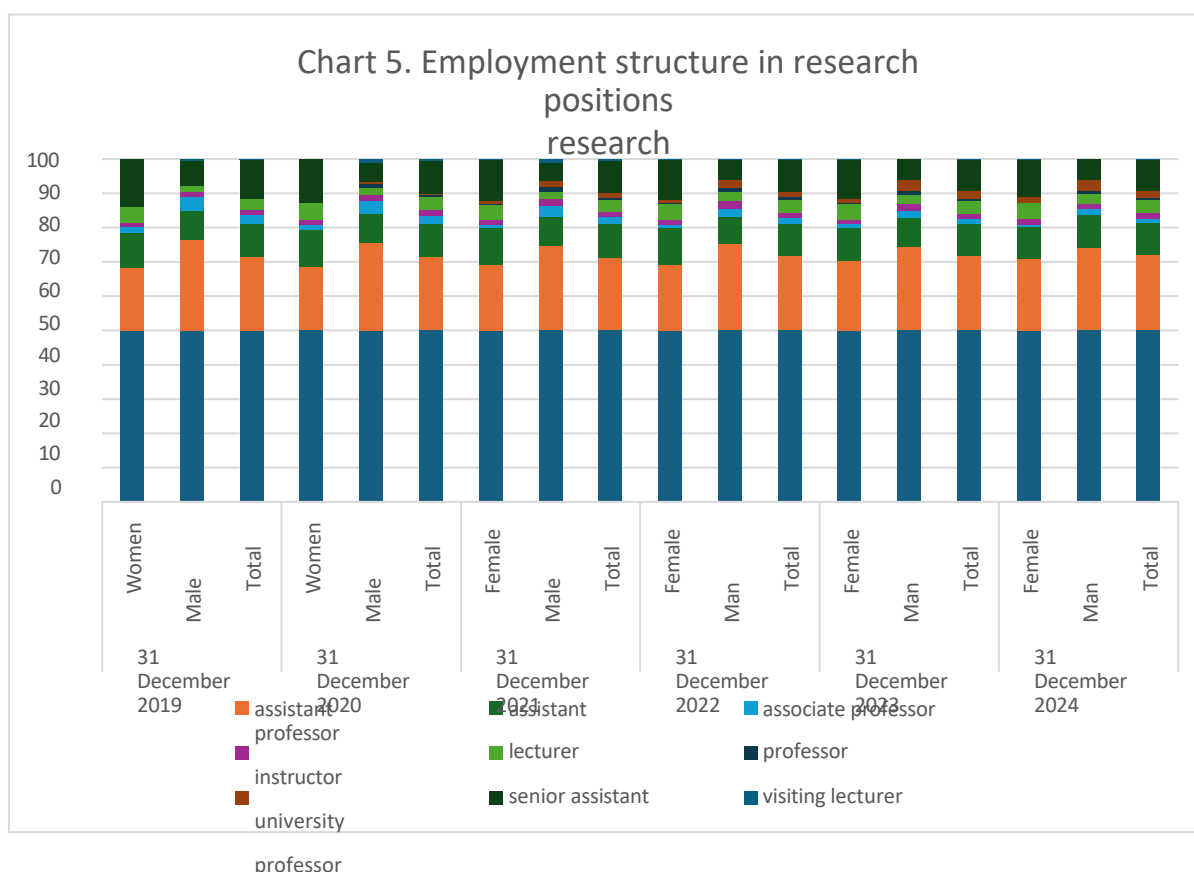


These differences concern both numbers and gender distribution, and their analysis reveals established patterns that can serve as a starting point for designing further equality policy measures. Research and teaching staff remain the most numerous group. Their number increased from 2,575 in 2019 to 2,849 in 2024, with a relatively stable proportion of women and men. Women account for about 46% of this group, which makes it relatively balanced in terms of gender. However, looking at the internal structure, it can be seen that men still dominate the highest positions, such as professor, despite the growing number of women in the positions of university professor or assistant professor.



A completely different picture emerges in the teaching group. Here, women constitute the majority – in 2024, they account for approximately 61% of employment. This predominance is particularly evident in positions such as assistant, senior assistant, lecturer and instructor. At the same time, women are much less likely to be promoted to professorial positions in this group – university professor and teaching professor positions remain mainly filled by men, even though their overall share in this group is lower. This shows that although women are numerous in teaching, their access to prestigious roles remains limited.

The research group, the smallest of all, is characterised by a clear predominance of men – approximately 56% in 2024. Although the number of women in this group increased during the period analysed (from 191 to 248), their share in the highest employment categories, such as professor or visiting researcher, remains low. Men dominate especially in positions related to independent research functions, which may indicate existing barriers to women's access to *strictly* research-oriented paths or independent scientific projects. A comparison of these three groups reveals a complex picture of gender equality in academic employment. The most balanced group is the research and teaching group, but even there, promotion structures remain highly differentiated.

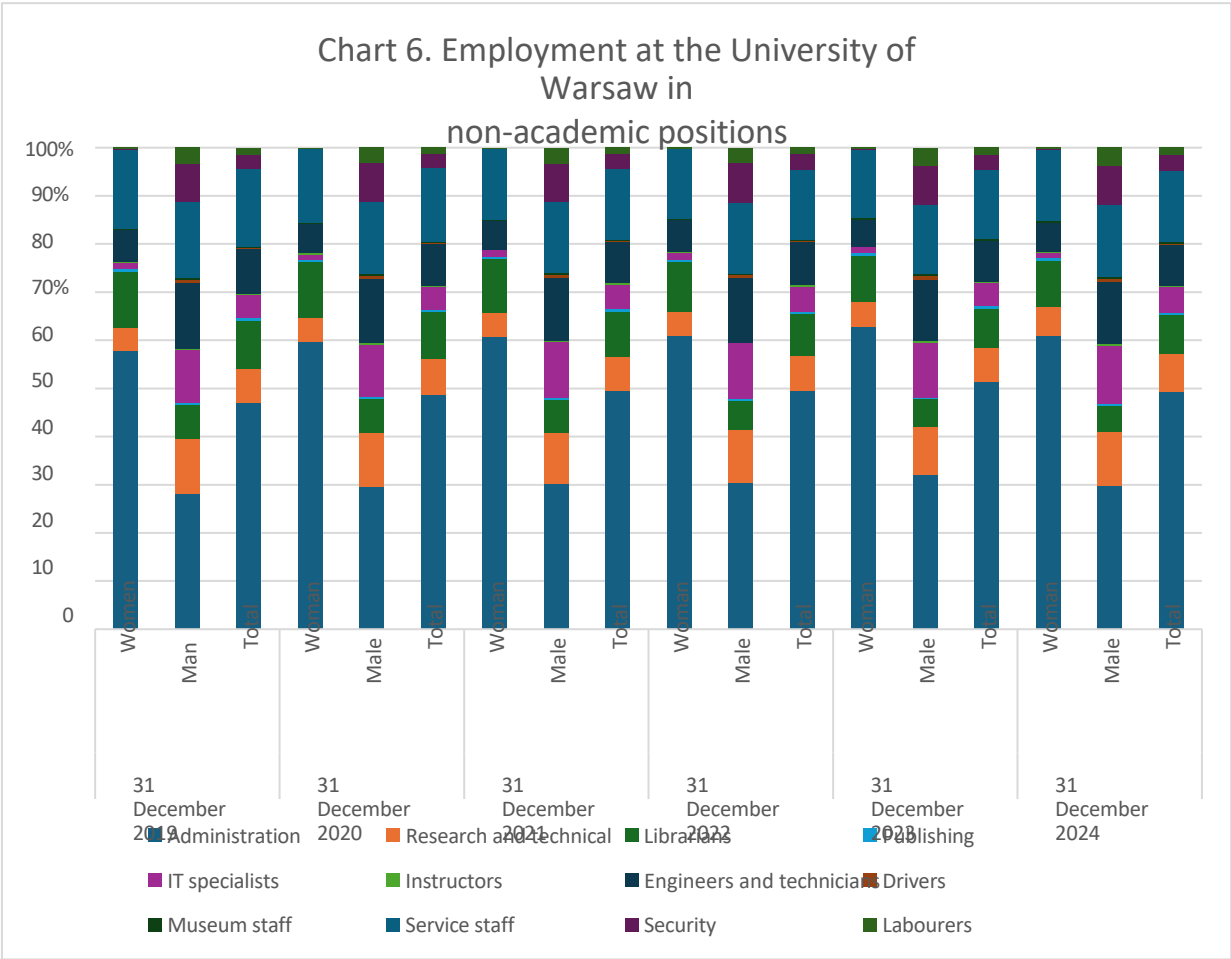


The teaching group is feminised, but women are less likely to be promoted. The research group, on the other hand, is most dominated by men, especially in the higher categories. From an equality policy perspective, these data clearly indicate the need for further monitoring and action to support the advancement of women in science and to encourage men to take on teaching roles.

Employment structure at the University of Warsaw in non-academic positions

Between 2019 and 2024, the employment structure in non-academic positions at the University of Warsaw shows clear gender differences (Chart 6). Women dominate the entire group in terms of numbers, accounting for approximately 65% of employees. They have the greatest advantage in administration (over 77% in 2024), among librarians, service staff and publishing staff. Men, on the other hand, predominate in technical and physical professions – they are almost entirely dominant in security, IT, engineering and technical professions, among drivers and manual workers. These data confirm entrenched occupational divisions and gender stereotypes. From the perspective of equality policy, it is worth considering measures to promote greater gender diversity in these groups.

In the analysed period 2019-2024, the University of Warsaw showed relative stability in employment, with a simultaneous increase in the share of women in most occupational groups, especially among academic teachers and administrative staff. Although the overall level of gender representation in academic employment is similar, significant inequalities are still evident at higher career levels, with women less likely to hold professorial and managerial positions.



Professional groups also differ in terms of gender structure: teaching is feminised, research is dominated by men, and research and teaching is the most balanced, although there are also barriers to women's advancement. Similar differences can be seen among non-academic staff. These data confirm the need to continue efforts to promote gender equality, especially in decision-making, expert and prestigious roles.

Participation of women and men in decision-making bodies

Composition of the rector's council

The University of Warsaw Rector's Council consists of the rector and vice-rectors appointed to specific areas of university management. During the terms analysed, the number of members of the council varied: from five people in 2016–2020, to four people in 2020–2024, to six people planned for 2024–2028. In the 2016-2020 term, women accounted for 40% of the rector's council (2 out of 5 people), which can be considered a relatively balanced participation. In the next term (2020-2024), their number decreased to one person in four, which translated into a 25% share. In the 2024-2028 term, one woman holds the position of vice-rector.

University Council

The composition of the University Council of the University of Warsaw in subsequent terms (2019-2028) shows a systematic decline in the number of women: from 3 in the 2019-2020 term, to 2 in 2021-2024, to no women at all in the 2025-2028 term. At the same time, the number of men has increased from 4 to 5, and the chairperson in all terms has been a man.

Senate and Senate committees

In the 2020–2024 term, the Senate of the University of Warsaw consisted of 38 men and 25 women, while in the 2024–2028 term, the number of women and men was equal – 33 of each gender. In both terms, the chair is held by a man. The Senate of the University of Warsaw, in accordance with the University Statutes (§38 section 1 point 2), consists of representatives of various groups of the academic community: professors, other academic teachers, non-academic staff, students and doctoral students. In the 2020-2024 term, the Senate had 62 members, including 37 men and 25 women. In the 2024-2028 term, the number of members increased to 66, and the number of women and men became equal – 33 of each gender.

Among the representatives of professors and university professors elected in the faculties for the 2020-2024 term, there were 15 men and 9 women, while in the following term there were 15 men and 10 women. In the case of professors elected by the University Electoral College, the composition increased from 8 (5 men and 3 women) to 9 people (5 men and 4 women). There was a clear change in the proportion of other academic teachers elected by the University Electoral College: in the 2020-2024 term, there were 7 men and 6 women, while in the 2024-2028 term, there were 4 men and 10 women.

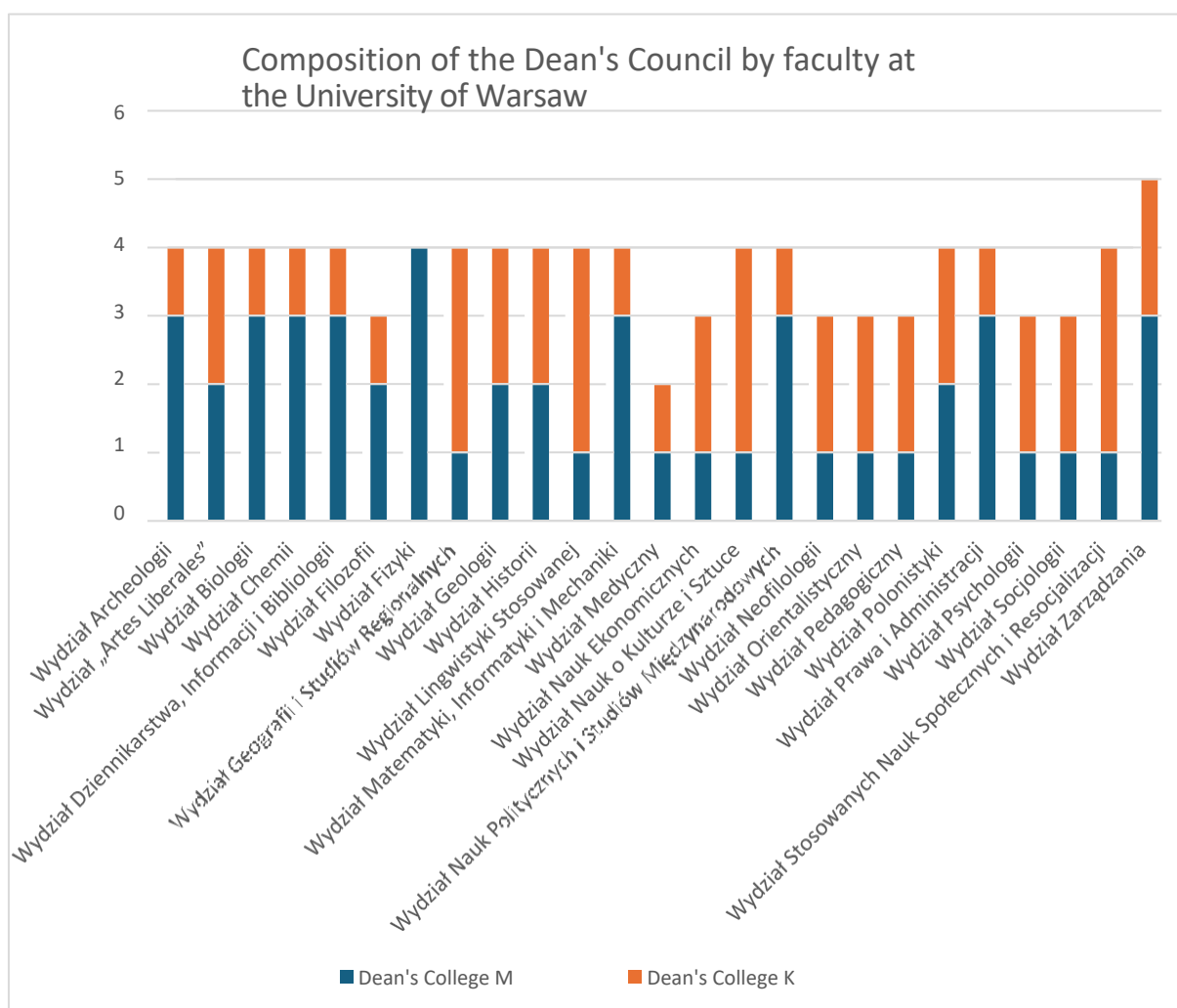
In the group of representatives of non-academic staff, the number of members remained unchanged (4 persons), but their gender composition changed: from 3 men and 1 woman (2020-2024) to 1 man and 3 women (2024-2028). Among students in the 2020-2024 term, there were an equal number of women and men (6 and 6, respectively), while in the following term there were 7 men and 6 women. The representative of doctoral students in both terms was a man.

The data indicate that in the 2024-2028 term, the number of women in the Senate increased and reached parity with the number of men. The greatest changes in gender proportions occurred among other academic teachers and administrative staff. In the other groups, the gender composition was relatively stable, with changes mainly affecting individual positions.

When comparing the composition of the University of Warsaw Senate Committees from a gender perspective in two terms (2020–2024 and 2024–2028), we observe an increase in the number of women. In the 2020-2024 term, a total of 104 people sat on the committees, including 46 women (44%) and 58 men (56%). They were chaired by 3 men and 4 women. In the 2024-2028 term, the number of committee members increased to 123, of whom 69 were women (56%) and 54 were men (44%). In turn, 5 women and 2 men hold the chairmanship. Between the terms of office, there has been a shift towards greater representation of women, both among members and chairpersons of committees.

Composition of the dean's colleagues

The composition of the University of Warsaw's dean's councils usually consists of 3 to 5 people, which is in line with the standard organisational structure. An analysis of the composition of the dean's councils in 2024 from the perspective of gender and faculty affiliation reveals clear and systemic differences. In faculties representing the exact and natural sciences, such as physics, mathematics, chemistry, geology, biology and geography, dean's councils are dominated by men. In some units, women are not represented at all, while in others their participation is symbolic. This result is consistent with the general tendency for men to concentrate in the so-called STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) fields, reflecting typical trends in the natural and technical sciences. In contrast, in departments such as pedagogy, psychology, education sciences, and partly sociology and Artes Liberales, women constitute the majority of dean's councils. This coincides with the trend of feminisation in these disciplines. Only in some faculties is there a relative gender balance in the composition of the dean's college (Faculty of Law and Administration, Faculty of Political Science and International Studies, Faculty of Polish Studies).

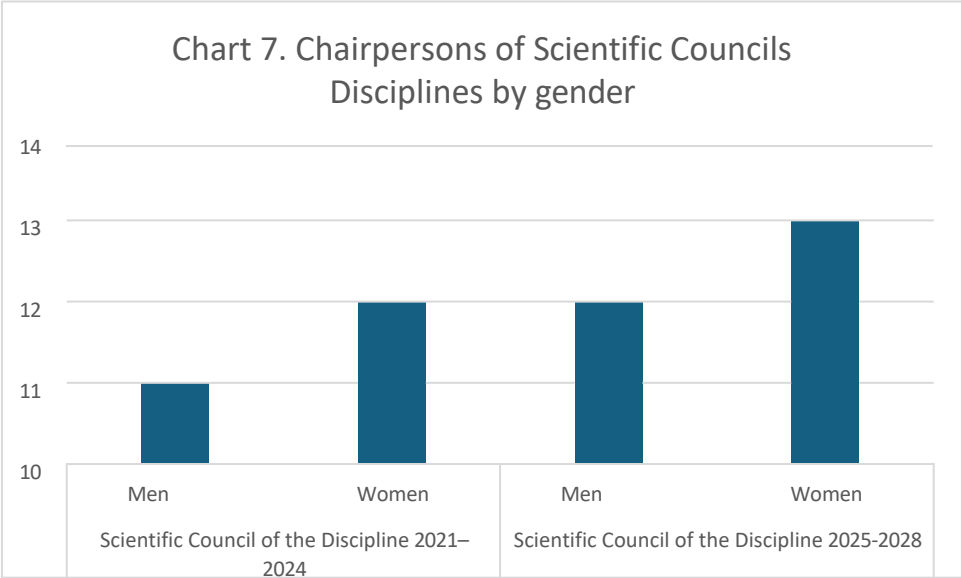


As a space for creating knowledge and shaping attitudes, the university has the potential to support changes towards greater equality. Data on the composition of the dean's councils at the University of Warsaw in 2024 indicate that the gender distribution in management teams still largely reflects traditional divisions between disciplines. Strengthening diversity in management teams – both by increasing the participation of women in the sciences and men in the social sciences – can be supported by a well-thought-out professional development policy. Activities such as mentoring and strengthening a culture of openness can be elements that support this process.

Scientific Councils Disciplines

The composition of the chairs of the Scientific Councils of Disciplines at the University of Warsaw in the last two terms indicates a gradual increase in the participation of women in leadership roles. In the 2021-2024 term, women held 12 chair positions and men 11. In the following

term of office 2025-2028, the number of women increased to 13 and men to 12. This trend indicates the growing presence of women in decision-making structures, which is a positive sign in the context of implementing equality policy.



Conclusions

The University of Warsaw is taking systematic steps to increase gender equality in leadership, expert and decision-making roles. Analysis of data from recent years shows that although progress is visible, especially in terms of the increasing number of women on committees, councils and boards, there are still areas that require support and development. Consistent implementation of the Plan's objectives contributes to breaking down structural and cultural barriers, but a full transformation of the organisational culture requires further coordinated action.

Strengths:

- Increased representation of women in decision-making structures: there has been a noticeable gradual increase in the proportion of women in leadership roles, including in Disciplinary Scientific Councils and Senate committees. In some bodies, such as the University of Warsaw Senate, gender parity has been achieved, which should be considered a significant achievement of the university's equality policy.
- Strong female presence in teaching and administration: Professional groups related to teaching and administrative positions are characterised by a significant predominance of women, which indicates

their active participation in the functioning of the university. This also provides a potential basis for the development of career paths for women towards managerial and expert positions.

- A diverse employment structure conducive to balance: The most gender-balanced group remains research and teaching staff, which creates good conditions for further promoting equality in access to prestigious academic and organisational roles.

Areas requiring support and further action:

- Uneven representation of women at the highest levels of academic careers: despite the overall gender balance among academic teachers, women are still significantly less likely to hold professorial positions, especially full professorships. This points to the need to develop measures to support the advancement of women, such as mentoring, transparent career paths and institutional support.

- Low participation of women in STEM faculty leadership structures: Dean's councils in science and natural science departments are largely dominated by men. This phenomenon reflects broader trends in STEM fields and requires targeted measures to support women in these areas, including information campaigns and mentoring. Similarly, men should be supported in fields dominated by women.

- Decline in the representation of women on the University Council and the Rector's College: a declining participation of women in the most important university management bodies - the University Council and the Rector's College - has been identified. Maintaining gender balance at the highest levels of management needs to be given priority in future strategic actions.

- The need for continuous monitoring and integration of equality policy into human resource management: Gender equality should be treated not only as an element of social policy, but also as a component of institutional development strategy. Regular data analysis, evaluation of results and implementation of recommendations should be standard practice in human resource management.

Good practices

The "No women, no panel" principle – a measure included in the Gender Equality Plan of the University of Gdańsk, aimed at counteracting discussion panels consisting exclusively of male speakers. The principle obliges organisers of conferences, debates and scientific events

held at the University of Gdańsk to ensure the participation of women as speakers or moderators. This solution enhances the visibility of women in the academic sphere, promotes diversity of perspectives and contributes to the development of equality standards in the organisation of scientific events. (University of Gdańsk)

Promotion of education in fields socially associated with one gender – an initiative implemented at the Faculty of Biology of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, aimed at minimising gender disparities among students. Promotional activities are undertaken to popularise education in fields socially defined as "feminine" among the underrepresented gender, taking into account in particular the exclusion of gender stereotypes in specific professions from the above-mentioned activities (e.g. graphic materials promoting fields of study include images of women and men, descriptive materials promoting studies refer to both genders, etc.). (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

Summary and recommendations

The gender equality plan for the University of Warsaw and the equality action plan for 2020-2023 was an ambitious and multidimensional document which, in the years 2020-2024, provided a framework for actions promoting equality, diversity and anti-discrimination. It was guided by the following objectives:

- **OBJECTIVE 1.** Raising awareness of the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity.
- **OBJECTIVE 2.** Supporting the development of women's academic careers.
- **OBJECTIVE 3.** To increase gender balance in the recruitment of employees and in doctoral schools.
- **OBJECTIVE 4.** Facilitating the reconciliation of work and family life.
- **OBJECTIVE 5.** Increasing balanced gender representation in: chairing faculty and university committees, management staff, expert and review panels, and chairing scientific and popularisation events.

The scope of implementation of each of these objectives has been analysed in this study, both quantitatively and qualitatively, taking into account the available data and observed practices (details are provided in *Appendix 1. Gender Equality Plan for the University of Warsaw*)

2020-2024 - *objectives, actions, indicators, status* and earlier parts of the report). It should be noted that due to the strategic and general nature of the Plan, some of its elements have not been equipped with detailed tools for measuring progress, which has limited the possibility of a full and unambiguous assessment of the implementation of all objectives. From an evaluation perspective, this is a natural challenge for this type of document, especially in the initial period of its implementation. However, the collected data and observations allow us to see clear directions for action and changes that demonstrate the university's commitment to achieving the Plan's objectives. Despite these limitations, the collected data and qualitative analysis indicate that in many areas, a number of initiatives consistent with the Plan's objectives have been launched and implemented.

The University of Warsaw has implemented many valuable initiatives, including educational activities, expanded institutional structures and mechanisms for responding to undesirable behaviour, and launched dedicated programmes for women at the beginning of their academic careers. Many of these activities were project-based, which highlights the need to embed them permanently in the university's structures. Positive changes are also visible in the structure of gender representation, the functioning of equality mechanisms, increased awareness, and the professionalisation of anti-discrimination activities. The introduction of effective gender equality measures at the University of Warsaw in 2020-2024 has certainly contributed to the creation of a more inclusive academic environment.

The assessment of the degree to which the objectives set out in the Plan have been achieved should therefore be treated as **an assessment of the direction and quality of the actions taken**, rather than as a precise accounting of quantitative results. The evaluation also identified certain shortcomings: the lack of regular analyses of equality data, the limited scale of some actions, insufficient support at subsequent stages of women's careers, and the need to embed actions more firmly in the organisational culture and to increase the involvement of the academic community. Another conclusion of the evaluation is the need to further develop monitoring tools and clearly assign actions to objectives so that the next edition of the Plan can be evaluated more effectively and progress towards equality can be better measured and made more transparent.

In summary, the evaluation shows clear progress in many areas, but also reveals the need for further systematisation, continuation and development of equality policy. The recommendations

The recommendations are divided into five main areas, corresponding to the logic of a systemic approach to equality policy. Namely:

1. Institutionalisation and sustainability of actions

Objective: To strengthen the stability and consistency of equality policy across the entire university

- Increasing the involvement of departments (*e.g. incorporating equality measures into the strategic plans of individual units*)
- Strengthening the staff of the Equality Team (*expanding the team, e.g. in terms of specialisation - counteracting sexual harassment, coordinating equality policy with representatives from various levels, including faculties and research units*);
- Ensuring the continuation of programmes supporting women at an early stage of their careers (*permanent funding and development of the UW Doctoral Student Network and the "Young Female Researchers" programme, promotion of the initiative throughout the UW*);
- Extending support to subsequent stages of the career path (*mentoring and development groups for women with postdoctoral degrees, e.g. "Leaders in Science"*).
- Ensuring stable and long-term financial backing and institutional framework for the effective and systematic implementation of equality policy.

2. Monitoring and analysis of equality data

Objective: Data-driven decision-making and monitoring of the effectiveness of actions

- Implementation of systematic, integrated data reporting broken down by gender, age, career stage (*data on employment, promotions, grants, doctoral and postdoctoral studies, composition of bodies*), etc. *and habilitation procedures, composition of bodies*);
- Standardisation of data collection on reports of discrimination and mobbing (*common system for reporting and analysing the impact of formal and informal proceedings; Ombudsman; committees*);
- Conducting regular surveys (*e.g. survey on experiences of unequal treatment among staff, students and doctoral students every 5 years, surveys on specific groups at risk of exclusion*).

3. Education and organisational culture

Objective: Shaping attitudes and building a culture of respect and inclusion that promotes equality and diversity

- Extension of mandatory training in equality and anti-discrimination (e.g. *regular training for management, recruitment committees, doctoral students and equality officers, new employees and students starting their studies*);
- Promoting equality awareness among students and doctoral students (*e-courses or webinars, podcasts*);
- Strengthening information activities and social campaigns (*annual equality campaign involving students, graphics on campus, podcasts, educational films, increasing the visibility of the benefits of implementing the Plan; cooperation with the University of Warsaw Foundation*);
- Promoting good practices (*award system for faculties for good practices*);
- Involvement of student and doctoral student councils in the creation and implementation of activities (e.g. *as partners in information campaigns*).

4. Structural coherence and availability of support

Objective: To facilitate navigation through the support system and increase the transparency of procedures

- Develop a clear map of procedures and contact points (*continuous updating of the website plus a step-by-step description of what to do in case of discrimination, mobbing, ethical problems*);
- Strengthening support for equality officers in departments (*training, forum for exchange of practices, inter-departmental supervision*);
- Increasing the visibility of the equality structure in the university's internal communication (*tab, regular newsletters, integration with the USOS platform and welcome emails*).

5. Representation of women in decision-making bodies and structures

Objective: Strengthening the presence of women in prestigious, visible and decision-making positions

- Monitoring and publishing data on gender representation in university bodies (*rector's and dean's councils, senate committees, university council*);
- Introduction of equality targets in nominations and elections (*recommendation to take into account the principle of % representation of one gender when appointing committees*);

- Encouraging participation in committees through mentoring and leadership training (*leadership programme for women, training cycles*).

Recommendations for GEP 2025-2029

1. It is worth reviewing the existing goals and supplementing them with new areas (e.g. the perspective of gender mainstreaming in teaching and research). It is recommended to analyse the existing goals in terms of their consistency, relevance and completeness, taking into account:
 - ✓ the changing needs of the University of Warsaw community,
 - ✓ new equality priorities (e.g. combating digital exclusion, inclusive teaching, support for people with disabilities, neurodiverse persons, support for the LGBTQ+ community),
 - ✓ recommendations resulting from evaluations (e.g. expanding activities for postdocs/habilitation candidates, WLB also in terms of men as carers, e.g. promoting paternity leave, strengthening the monitoring and reporting system).
2. Each objective included in the GEP 2025-2029 should be operationalised through clearly defined and specific actions. This means that each objective should be assigned a set of actions that will directly contribute to its achievement, along with the definition of the target group, deadline, responsible entities and performance indicators. This structure not only facilitates progress monitoring, but also ensures transparency and the possibility of a realistic assessment of the effectiveness of the equality policy being implemented.
3. It is worth assigning specific implementation parameters to each action: target group, deadline, responsible units and a measurable indicator (number of people trained, number of documents, number of programme participants, number of events, number of meetings, measurable increase in "something", etc.).
4. Each indicator should be operationalised (measurable, realistic and embedded in specific actions). It will be crucial to apply the SMART principle, according to which goals should be: S - Specific, M - Measurable, A - Achievable, R - Relevant, T - Time-bound:

- ✓ S (Specific) - unambiguous and understandable (e.g. not a vague "increase equality", but specifically: "increase the number of training courses on unconscious bias in recruitment"),
- ✓ M (Measurable) - measurable, with an assigned indicator (e.g. number of people trained),
- ✓ A (Achievable) - achievable in the conditions of the university,
- ✓ R (Relevant) - related to the needs of the University of Warsaw community and the university's objectives,
- ✓ T (Time-bound) – specified in time (e.g. by the end of the 2026/27 academic year).

Example of a SMART action: "Conducting a minimum of 5 training sessions per year on combating discrimination for the management staff of all UW units by the end of 2027."

5. The target value of the indicator should be specified (it can also be refined in the course of further work). Example:

- ✓ Action 1.1 (e.g. "Conducting regular workshops for management staff on anti-discriminatory recruitment"),
 - ✓ Target group (e.g. deans, members of recruitment committees),
 - ✓ Deadline (e.g. 2026-2027),
 - ✓ Responsible units (e.g. Equality Team, Departments),
 - ✓ Implementation indicator (e.g. number of people trained - 100).
6. It is worth separating the levels of activities: central and departmental.
- ✓ systemic measures (at university level – e.g. policies, procedures, university-wide training),
 - ✓ and operational measures (at the unit level – e.g. initiatives by faculty equality officers).

Example: central measures – ‘launching an incident reporting platform’; local measures – ‘organising equality workshops in at least 10 units per year’.

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