

**Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine  
National University “Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic”**

**Gender Equality Plan  
of the National University “Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic”  
(2024–2028)**

**2024**

## 1. Introduction

1.1. The main objective of the Gender Equality Plan is to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in all areas of activity of the National University “Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic” — hereinafter referred to as the University — in particular in educational and research activities, governance, and career development.

The University seeks to create an inclusive environment that would enable all students and staff to fully realize their potential regardless of gender identity, and to help eliminate any forms of gender discrimination.

1.2. Gender equality means ensuring equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities, and access to resources for all participants in the educational process, research activities, and other staff, regardless of their gender identity. This includes equal access to education, career growth, managerial positions, etc., as well as ensuring equal pay and fair working conditions.

Women, men, and persons of other gender identities have equal opportunities to participate in the educational process, research activities, and University governance.

1.3. Gender equality is an important indicator of social justice and sustainable development of society.

Ensuring gender equality makes it possible to enhance the University’s competitiveness at the international level, since many international programmes and projects support institutions that implement progressive policies in the field of gender equality.

The National University “Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic” understands the importance of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for all members of its community and strives to become a model for other higher education institutions of Ukraine.

1.4. The Gender Equality Plan of the University is aligned with Ukraine’s national and international commitments to ensuring gender equality, in particular the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Decree of the President of Ukraine No. 722/2019 of 30.09.2019 “On the Sustainable Development Goals of Ukraine for the period up to 2030”, where gender equality is defined as one of the key goals.

Ukraine also supports the principle of equal rights and opportunities through participation in various international initiatives, in particular within the framework of the European Union and the Council of Europe, which makes the implementation of such plans mandatory for modern universities.

## **2. Strategic and Specific Goals for Ensuring Gender Equality in the University's Activities**

### 2.1. Strategic Goals

2.1.1. Raising the level of gender equality among academic and administrative staff by:

- supporting women in promotion to managerial and academic positions, including through mentoring programmes and professional development programmes;
- developing gender-sensitive indicators for assessing teaching and research activities that do not contain direct or indirect gender bias;
- creating a policy of equal access to work that promotes a parity representation of women and men in academic and administrative positions.

2.1.2. Ensuring gender equality among students in all educational programmes, in particular in technical and humanities specializations, where gender imbalance is often observed, by:

- creating conditions for increasing the number of women students in STEM fields and men students in humanities fields through active career guidance with due regard to the best student-centred mentoring and support practices for applicants;
- conducting awareness-raising campaigns that break down gender stereotypes regarding the choice of profession and encourage all students to choose specializations according to their own interests and abilities, rather than traditional gender roles.

2.1.3. Creating a safe and inclusive environment in order to ensure equal opportunities for the development of all students and staff of the University, regardless of their gender identity and other characteristics, as well as protecting against any form of discrimination, harassment, or violence by:

- implementing effective policies to prevent any discrimination, including gender-based and sexual harassment, in particular mechanisms for anonymous complaints and impartial investigation of incidents;
- establishing specialized psychological, legal, and emotional support services;
- ensuring access to resources, including support systems, trainings, etc., that promote the safety and well-being of all participants in the educational process.

## 2.2. Specific Goals and Initiatives

2.2.1. Creating equal conditions for women and men in access to grant programmes, international projects, and the publication of research outputs by:

- conducting training sessions on preparing applications for research and educational grants and organizing mentoring programmes for those submitting projects;
- creating conditions for equal access to participation in international conferences and projects, in particular by supporting academic mobility;
- developing internship and professional development programmes for women who seek to develop an academic career.

2.2.2. Ensuring gender equality in access to opportunities for combining work, study, and family responsibilities by:

- introducing flexible schedules and remote work options for academic staff and University employees who have family responsibilities;
- granting childcare leave both to women and men, without discrimination and while preserving career prospects;
- introducing children's rooms or childcare services at the University to help parents combine career and family responsibilities.

2.2.3. Raising awareness of the importance of gender equality among students and staff through educational programmes and awareness campaigns by:

- conducting regular trainings and seminars for staff and students on gender equality, combating stereotypes, and preventing discrimination;
- organizing academic conferences and roundtables on gender equality in higher education;
- running information campaigns at the University and in the media to popularize the ideas of gender equality and combating discrimination.

## 2.3. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- positive changes in attitudes toward gender equality based on surveys of University staff and students;
- improvement of the University's reputation as an institution with an inclusive and non-discriminatory environment;
- reduction/absence of complaints regarding discrimination or harassment.

#### 2.4. Engaging external partners to support gender equality through:

- cooperation with national and international organizations engaged in gender equality issues to exchange experience and implement initiatives;
- attracting sponsors to support educational programmes, internships, and grants for women.

### **3. Monitoring of the Current Situation**

Assessment of the current state of gender equality at the University is carried out throughout the year. It includes the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data reflecting the presence of gender imbalances in various aspects of the University's activities. The monitoring methodology is important because it shows where inequality exists, as well as which current practices may promote or hinder the achievement of gender equality.

3.1. To assess the extent to which the University complies with the principles of gender equality, a gender audit is conducted. It also helps identify what needs to be done to improve the situation.

The audit is carried out as a quantitative analysis of the representation of women and men in various positions among academic staff and in University governance bodies, as well as among students by the following indicators:

- ratio of women and men among higher education students by fields of study and educational programmes — bachelor's, master's, and PhD levels;
- gender composition of academic staff — assistants, lecturers, associate professors, professors — by knowledge areas;
- ratio of men and women in managerial positions — deans, heads of departments, heads of other University structural units.

3.2. Identification of gender issues in access to education is carried out through:

- checking for significant differences in access to various specialities among students of different gender identities;
- assessing the existence of significant differences in students' academic performance by gender identity across fields of study / specialities;
- identifying the causes of the detected differences.

3.3. Identification of gender issues in career development is carried out through:

- checking for significant differences in access to various positions among employees of different gender identities;
- analysis of equality of opportunities for women and men among academic staff and administration regarding career advancement and attainment of higher positions;
- analysis of the participation of women and men in professional development programmes, research internships, and international grants, in particular with regard to access to programmes, funding opportunities, and support from the University administration;
- analysis of cases of discrimination on the basis of gender identity, in particular in the context of fields of knowledge, availability of encouragement, stereotypes, or insufficient resources and support.

#### 3.4. Analysis of Gender Stereotypes and Barriers:

- determining whether stereotypes regarding the role of men and women in teaching and work exist within the University, in particular in certain fields or specialities;
- identifying obstacles faced by academic staff of different gender identities in career advancement, in particular incompatibility of work schedules with family responsibilities and lack of support;
- analysis of women’s and men’s participation in research and publications; assessment of equal opportunities for conducting research and publishing their results in leading scientific journals/publishers, participation in conferences, and obtaining grants.

#### 3.5. Assessment of the University’s Current Policy and Practices:

- assessing the impact of existing University policies on gender equality, in particular policies on recruitment and staff work, career advancement, support for women’s and men’s family responsibilities, flexible work schedules, remote work, social leave, etc.;
- analysing the effectiveness of measures implemented at the University to prevent gender-based discrimination, in particular sexual harassment — mechanisms for reporting such cases, protection measures, etc.

#### 3.6. Results and Conclusions:

- summarising the results of the gender audit and analysis;

- identifying areas at the University where gender equality requires improvement;
- outlining key challenges and barriers to achieving gender equality.

## **4. Measures and Initiatives**

### 4.1. Educational Programmes and Awareness-Raising Activities

4.1.1. Trainings and seminars on gender equality aimed at raising awareness of gender equality among staff and students:

- organizing trainings for lecturers, academic staff, and University employees on gender equality, prevention of discrimination, and combating gender stereotypes;
- conducting seminars for students aimed at understanding gender roles and popularizing the ideas of gender equality;
- inviting experts on gender issues to deliver lectures and workshops that will consider examples of successful implementation of gender equality in other educational institutions and at the national level.

4.1.2. Information campaigns aimed at promoting the principles of gender equality within the University community:

- placing information posters, banners, and materials at the University that clearly present the basic principles of gender equality and popularize the importance of equal opportunities for all;
- using the University’s social media to disseminate information on gender equality issues, women’s achievements in science, and gender stereotypes;
- holding inclusion weeks, during which events will be organized to raise awareness and engage students in discussing important issues of inclusiveness, including gender equality.

### 4.2. Career Development and Mentoring Programmes

4.2.1. Mentoring programmes for women aimed at supporting them on the path of career growth, in particular in technical fields and natural sciences:

- creating mentoring programmes in which more experienced women will help young lecturers and researchers develop professional skills and plan their career path;

- supporting women’s participation in international research projects and mobility programmes by organizing trainings on writing grant proposals and internships;

- involving successful women scholars from other universities, including foreign institutions, to share experience and provide advice to women employees of the University.

#### 4.2.2. Ensuring equal access to professional development opportunities:

- organizing professional development programmes for lecturers and researchers, with an emphasis on supporting women in technical fields;

- conducting leadership trainings for women;

- supporting the participation of women in international scientific conferences, organizing business trips for participation in research and educational events and internships.

### 4.3. Working Conditions

#### 4.3.1. Support for women and men who combine career development with family responsibilities:

- introducing a flexible working schedule policy that enables University employees to combine work with raising children or other family responsibilities;

- introducing remote and home-based work for employees, where possible in view of functional duties;

- ensuring childcare leave for any parent, while preserving the opportunity to return to their position after the leave without loss of career prospects.

#### 4.3.2. Creating favourable conditions for employees who have children:

- creating children’s rooms or organizing childcare services on the University premises for employees;

- organizing support for young mothers and fathers, including consultations on child upbringing and combining family responsibilities with work.

### 4.4. Policy on Prevention of Discrimination and Violence and Support for Affected Persons

#### 4.4.1. Ensuring protection of all members of the University community from discrimination, bullying, and gender-based violence:

- implementing a clear policy to combat discrimination, bullying, and violence, including sexual harassment;

- establishing mechanisms for submitting complaints, including anonymously, and ensuring the prompt and fair consideration of complaints;
- providing legal and psychological assistance to victims of gender-based discrimination or violence.

4.4.2. Providing comprehensive support to persons affected by gender-based violence or discrimination:

- providing victims of gender-based discrimination with legal assistance;
- ensuring the provision of assistance by practical psychologists to everyone who has experienced any form of discrimination or violence at the University;
- providing informational support to affected persons, including the development of instructions for submitting complaints and an algorithm of actions in cases of discrimination.

#### 4.5. Monitoring

4.5.1. Assessing the effectiveness of implemented measures and adjusting the strategy as needed:

- establishing a working group to monitor the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan, which will regularly assess the results achieved;
- conducting annual surveys of University staff and students regarding their level of satisfaction with the state of gender equality;
- publishing annual reports on the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan and the results achieved.

4.5.2. Adjusting the Gender Equality Plan in accordance with changes and the needs of the University:

- conducting regular analysis of the results obtained and adjusting measures that prove insufficiently effective;
- engaging external experts to assess the effectiveness of measures and provide recommendations for their improvement.