

Gender equality report



Monitoring progress towards gender equality in the University of Beira Interior

University of Beira Interior (UBI) was the first university in Portugal to set up a gender equality plan as early as 2011. The pioneer work of UBI in this field is well-known in the country. A thorough initial assessment (2010-2011) of the gender equality state-of-play of the university preceded the development of the gender equality plan. UBI's plan established as a measure the elaboration of sex-disaggregated statistics about teaching and non-teaching staff, and students.

Since 2012, Gender Equality Reports have been prepared on an annual basis to monitor the progress towards gender equality in the university. These reports are publicly accessible and build on the initial assessment carried out early in the process of setting up UBI's gender equality plan. The analysis provided in the reports considers the gender balance in terms of disciplines taught and on decision-making and leadership positions, the gender pay gap, the use of measures to reconcile professional and personal life (like flexible working hours), a gender analysis of the utilisation of leaves, and information about the number of students disaggregated by sex and faculty.

The first gender equality plan in a Portuguese university

Despite the fact that in Portugal there are no legal or policy provisions requiring universities and research institutions to have gender equality plans, University da Beira Interior (UBI, Covilhã) set up a plan in 2011 through the then structural funds framework programme^[1]. More specifically, there was a particular intervention typology funding Plans for Equality (intervention typology 7.2)^[2]. UBI was funded twice under this intervention typology for the project UBIgual ('Iguar' in Portuguese means 'equal').

The first edition of the project was approved in 2009 and aimed essentially at carrying out an initial assessment of the state-of-play concerning the integration of gender equality in the organisation and its practices, as well as setting up a gender equality plan. A few activities of the plan were implemented, mostly those concerning awareness-raising actions.

The second edition of UBIgual ensured the financial resources to implement the gender equality plan from 2011 to 2013. Although the funding ended in 2013, the plan continues to be implemented by its Commission for Gender Equality. No financial resources have been made available to support the implementation of the plan.

Understanding the gender equality state-of-play in the university to target specific problems

One of the objectives of UBI's gender equality plan was to deepen the knowledge about the social and institutional dynamics that influence the reproduction of inequalities between women and men at university level. To this end, a thorough initial baseline assessment (*Diagnóstico Organizacional da Igualdade de Género na UBI*) was conducted between March 2010 and January 2011 to establish a solid ground for advancing gender equality policies and actions in the university. The assessment was done in three phases:

- 1 | Communication and promotion of UBIgual to obtain the support and involvement of the top management, as well as to inform the university's community about the project.
- 2 | Collection and analysis of quantitative data (April to August 2010).
- 3 | Collection and analysis of qualitative information (September 2010 to January 2011).

This initial assessment included a diachronic analysis between 2005 and 2009 in order to assess the evolution towards promoting gender equality in the institution during this period. An analytical framework model was devised based on an exhaustive literature review about gender equality, along with the sociological study of the organisation.

Eight dimensions and respective indicators for each dimension, of distinct relevance levels, were defined to allow detecting gender inequalities and discrimination in UBI, as well as to assist in the establishment of priorities, objectives and concrete actions of the gender equality plan. The dimensions considered were: 1) the organisational structure of UBI, 2) policies and measures, 3) communication, 4) organisational culture, 5) non-teaching staff, 6) teaching staff, 7) research & development in UBI, and 8) students.

The approach followed comprised quantitative and qualitative methodologies including:

- A statistical analysis using descriptive and bivariate techniques. The data referred to 2005 and 2009 and was available through different university databases.
- A documentary analysis of institutional documents.
- Two questionnaires:
 - One targeting students and aimed at assessing their knowledge about gender and perceptions about gender inequalities, evaluate attitudes in relation to gender equality, understanding social representations about household tasks and how these are reproduced within the family. The questionnaire was applied during classes.
 - One targeting teaching staff and aimed at assessing hostile and benevolent sexism. These concepts were adapted from the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory of Glick & Fiske (1996). Teachers were invited to respond voluntarily to the

questionnaire.

- Interviews with top leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, researchers, and decision-makers. Different indicators were used for non-teaching staff, and for teaching and research staff. The interviews were audio-recorded and integrally transcribed. A content analysis was then performed.

The results of the initial assessment were presented following the eight dimension earlier identified. The assessment includes concluding remarks about the university's gender equality state-of-play.

Annual Gender Equality Reports

UBI's gender equality plan defined seven intervention areas, of which the first focussed on gender equality policies. The objective of this intervention area was to integrate gender equality in management and governance actions in order to promote and ensure all staff's commitment. One of the activities/measures established was the elaboration of sex-disaggregated statistics about teaching and non-teaching staff, and students (activity no. 2). The annual Gender Equality Report was one of the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms foreseen to verify the completion of activity no. 2.

Four reports were compiled so far on an annual basis: 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015. These reports build on the initial assessment described above, which was undertaken before developing the gender equality plan. All reports can be accessed online. Every time a new report is drafted, it is advertised by the public relations department. The purpose is to encourage debate within UBI's community through the university's website and social networks.

The same methodological approach was followed to develop the four reports. This includes secondary data sources, namely the university's databases, UBI's social balance report, and the report of the Training-Interaction Centre of UBI's Business Structures. The same sources, dimensions and indicators were used in the three most recent reports. The dimensions analysed are 1) the organisational structure of teaching and non-teaching staff, and 2) the students.

The indicators for each dimension are listed below. The sources of information for each indicator are laid out in the reports.

Organisational structure of teaching and non-teaching staff

Students

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of women and men by age • No. of women and men by level of education • No. of female and male foreign workers by nationality • No. of women and men by professional group • No. of female and male faculty presidents • No. of female and male department presidents • Salary of women and men by remuneration intervals • No. of women and men by type of contract • No. of women and men by schedule modality • No. of extraordinary hours by women and men according to the type of services provided • No. of absence days by women and men according to the absence motive • Change of the effectives situation according to the motive • Career progression • No. of women and men recruited and returned • No. of women and men contracted as teachers • No. of women and men contracted as non-teaching staff • Training received by women and men 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of students by sex • No. of students by studies and by sex • No. of students registered in the first cycle (equivalent to bachelor degree) by faculty and by sex • No. of students registered in the second cycle (equivalent to master degree) by faculty and by sex • No. of students registered in the third cycle (equivalent to PhD degree) by faculty and by sex
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Monitoring progress towards gender equality

The objective of the annual reports is to inform the academic community about the current situation of the university in relation gender equality. The comparative analysis between the most recent data and the results from previous exercises (including the initial assessment and the other gender equality reports) allows understanding the progress and/or retrocession in relation to gender equality. In addition, this analysis allows making recommendations to improve the institutionalisation process of promoting gender equality in UBI.

Challenges experienced

Whereas funding was available to carry out the initial assessment and the 2012 and 2013 annual gender equality reports, the 2014 and 2015 reports did not have any financial support. During the implementation of the project UB Igual (2009-2011 and 2011-2013), a full-time researcher was working at the Commission for Gender Equality. The role of this researcher was extremely important to set up, implement, monitor and evaluate the gender equality plan, including the collection and analysis of data for producing the annual gender equality reports.

Currently, the Commission for Gender Equality is composed of three professors. As indicated by the Coordinator of the Commission for Gender Equality, it is difficult to respond both to the demands of professorship and research roles in the institutions and to the continuous work required for implementing and monitoring a gender equality plan (including the annual gender equality report). Therefore, the activities of such plan (such as the timely preparation of the gender equality reports) are relegated to a second (or lower) priority level.

Learning from this practice

Progress towards gender equality in UBI has been monitored through annual gender equality reports prepared by the university's Commission for Gender Equality since 2012. The gender equality plan developed by UBI sets the obligation to undertake this monitoring exercise. Therefore, the monitoring practice is embedded in the university's gender equality plan.

The reports are good for learning how to think and act properly as they departed from a thorough analysis about the university's state-of-play in relation to gender equality, which has been monitored ever since. The effective achievements towards gender equality in UBI, as well as backlashes, can be identified and acted upon based on the information provided in the annual gender equality reports. The reports provide relevant evidence which can be used to trigger actions at different levels in the institution.

This monitoring procedure can be potentially transferable as long as sex-disaggregated data are available for all dimensions and respective indicators. The dimensions and indicators can be adapted to the reality of each university or research institution, and depending on the objectives set for such monitoring exercise.

[\[1\]](#) National Strategic Reference Framework (QREN), 2007-2013, was the structural funds framework programme that was institutionalised in Portugal to regulate the application of EU's economic and social cohesion policies. The operational structuring of QREN was systematised through three Thematic Operational Programmes and five Regional Operational Programmes for continental Portugal and for the two Autonomous Regions (i.e. Madeira and Azores).

[\[2\]](#) One of the three thematic operational programmes of QREN was the Human Potential Thematic Operational Programme (POPH). It was structured around 10 priority axes, of which one tackled Gender Equality (Axle 7). Axle 7 was composed of seven intervention typologies, of which one focussed on funding Plans for Equality (intervention typology 7.2).

Contacts/Further Information

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Further information

[Website of UB Igual](#)



[Initial assessment report \(Diagnóstico Organizacional da Igualdade de Género na UBI\)](#)



[Gender Equality Plan](#)



[Gender Equality Reports \(2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015\) \(filter by 'Relatório de Igualdade de Género'\)](#)



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TOOL: Support services, Self-regulation