

# Gender Equality in Academia and Research

## Croatia

### PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN RESEARCH

#### Legal framework

Despite the fact that significant positive changes in gender equality have been made in Croatia in the last 15 years, these changes were primarily made in the field of adopting legislative changes and developing central key structures for gender equality. Until October 2015, no national laws promoting gender equality in research have been put in place.

#### Policy framework

The National Policy for Gender Equality (2011-2015) was a fundamental strategic document aiming to eliminate discrimination of women and promote gender equality. It contains seven key areas of action and obliges the state to include a gender dimension in all areas of policies. One of the mentioned areas refers to “improving the application of a gender-sensitive approach in education and training”. More specifically, measure 3.3.1 calls on education providers to establish measures to increase the participation of the students’ underrepresented sex.

The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports adopted an [Action Plan on Science and Society](#) in 2012. The plan promotes the idea of socially responsible science in 4 areas, one of which is “endorsing/achieving gender equality in science”. In line with this idea, the plan also includes an activity aimed at “balancing gender ratios in research organisations, especially on managerial positions (minimum 1/3 of women in high national decision making bodies such as national councils, regional councils, field committees, and scientific and political bodies)”.

#### Other stimulatory initiatives

The Croatian Commission for UNESCO and L’Oréal Adria are awarding four scholarships (4,000.00 Euro) to young female scientists on a yearly basis. The first edition of "For Women in Science" took place in Croatia in 2007.

The Centre for Women's Studies established the Award for the Best Student Papers in Women's and Gender Issues in 2008. The competition is meant to support future professionals interested in topics related to women's and gender issues and to encourage the implementation of gender-sensitive policies in higher education. It is open to all students of undergraduate and graduate studies in Croatia.

### **Key actors**

The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports adopted an Action Plan on Science and Society is in charge of implementing research policies, including those fostering gender equality in this particular area.

## **INITIATIVES FOR GENDER EQUALITY BY RESEARCH PERFORMING ORGANISATIONS**

Until October 2015, gender equality plans promoted by universities and research organisations have not been set up in Croatia.

Apart from ad-hoc gender-sensitive or gender-specific courses which have been organised in several universities, other instruments, tools, approaches or initiatives which have not been implemented on a systematic basis or within a strategic framework have not been developed yet. Nonetheless, the adoption of the European Charter for Researchers by 16 universities and public institutes can be considered an initial step towards progressing gender equality in research. On the basis of this charter, some institutes and universities developed action plans and human resources strategies, which include some of gender equality measures. For instance, the Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar developed a Human Resources Strategy (2012-2015) which includes three measures promoting non-discrimination, gender balance at all levels of staff, and better working conditions. The University of Zadar also developed an Action Plan for Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (2011-2015). This Action plan includes a gender equality measure (measure 27), which includes two activities: 27.1. continue to raise awareness about gender-balanced representation among employees, employers and funding providers through round tables, research, and workshops; and 27.2 stimulate part-time employment aimed at reconciling family and professional obligations, if needed.

## **RELEVANT EXAMPLES OF PRACTICES**

### **Promoting gender equality**

In 2010, the University of Zadar adopted the Action Plan for Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (2011-2015) based on the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers and in line with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code. The development of the Action Plan was preceded by an internal analysis of human resources measures for researchers. The analysis started in April 2010, after the University signed the Declaration to join the European Charter for Researchers and the Code for Recruitment of Researchers.

The Action Plan includes a gender equality measure (measure 27), which consists of two activities: 1) continue to raise awareness about gender-balanced representation among employees, employers and fund providers; and 2) encouraging part-time employment aimed at reconciling family and professional obligations, if needed. The action plan also defines those responsible for implementing the activities (the Office of the University Head and the Office for Science), and that the activities should be assessed through continuous reports and an annual evaluation. The activity aimed at encouraging part-time employment was harmonised with legislative changes which occurred in the meantime. Raising awareness about gender-balanced representation is a continuous activity.