

# Gender Equality in Academia and Research

## Cyprus

### PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN RESEARCH

#### Legal framework

Until October 2015, no laws or regulations have been put in place in Cyprus that expressly provide for the promotion of gender equality in research.

#### Policy framework

The most recent policy document dealing with gender mainstreaming in education and research is the Strategic Planning for the Equality of Men and Women 2014-2017 in Education. This strategy was developed by the Pedagogical Institute and identifies several targets. Under Target III, action 13 Education Institutions (including Universities and Research institutions) are encouraged to create Gender Equality Plans. According to the Pedagogical Institutions' Strategic Plan, the gender equality plans created by the Universities and Research institutions may include the following:

- Legal Framework on gender issues
- Policies of the Education Institution on subjects like equal opportunities, inclusion, harassment, bullying etc.

The aims of the Education Institution on the specific matter:

- Encouragement of women to apply for academic posts
- Research on gender equality issues
- Participation of women on decision-making
- Leaves, pay, education and development
- Children care for students who are parents
- The Cyprus Higher and Tertiary Education administration is responsible for the implementation of the above measure.

## **Other stimulatory initiatives**

Until October 2015, no stimulatory initiatives specifically dedicated to mainstreaming gender in research have been put in place.

## **Key actors**

The Pedagogical Institute's mission is to consult the Ministry of Education and Culture in matters concerning continuous education and development of teachers in all education levels and research. Amongst other activities, the Pedagogical Institute develops and conducts educational research, assessment studies and writes and publishes books of educational interest. Within this framework, the Pedagogical institute has developed a strategy for gender mainstreaming in education, through the development of gender equality plans, as well as through teaching about gender equality and providing gender training to educators in all stages of education.

The Department of Higher and Tertiary Education (DAAE) aims at the creation of the appropriate conditions for the provision of tertiary education and training in academic and professional programmes of studies to the larger possible number of people. Amongst its responsibilities, the Department of Higher and Tertiary Education is responsible for monitoring the creation of gender equality plans in educational and research institutions.

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

The University of Cyprus established the UNESCO Chair on Gender Equality and Empowerment in 2009. Research is being conducted and gender mainstreaming activities are being organised until this day. The network of partners includes institutions, academics, governmental organisations and civil society organisations in Europe, the Balkans and Middle East. The Chair's aim is to contribute to North-South and South-South collaboration, regardless of geographical locations, for the promotion of a creative dialogue and mainstream anticipation of problems and negative attitudes in the socio-economic, educational, and political sphere. From this point of view, the partnership seeks to diagnose the real needs of each region and to act as a creative think tank that supports the development of local poles for the elimination of the theory praxis divide in gender equality and empowerment.

The Cyprus University of Technology developed a Gender Equality Plan for 2014-2020, under a Rector's Council's decision. The plan concerns all departments and the administration of the University. The working group includes members of the academic and administrative staff, as well as students. The gender equality plan was launched in April 2014 at a dedicated event 'Gender Equality: Vision 2020'. There is no specific funding available for this plan. The following actions were promoted and targeted at students, academic and administrative staff:

- Creation of Special Committees.
- Seminars, trainings, workshops.
- Training for promoting expertise on gender equality.
- Procedures to combat sexual harassment and discrimination.
- Use of gender neutral language.
- Collection and use of sex-disaggregated data
- Review and assessment of actions.

The Committee for Gender Equality at the Cyprus Technology University has proposed the following actions:

- Guidance for the development of expertise and personal development of women.
- Quotas on higher positions, committees and key positions at the University.
- Flexible working hours, the creation of a childcare facility and offering the possibility of working from home to promote the reconciliation of family and working life.

The Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics has recently announced the plan to carry out gender equality initiatives.

## **RELEVANT EXAMPLES OF PRACTICES**

### **Research Centre for Gender Studies of the University of Cyprus**

The Research Centre for Gender Studies is as an Interdisciplinary research centre under the aegis of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education and the Faculty of Humanities. The Research Centre aims to conduct research, intervene and produce new knowledge. Therefore, it undertakes research activities in relation to gender equality with special emphasis on issues related to the rights and participation of both women and men in all aspects of human activity, scientific, economic, political, social and cultural. At the same time, it supports the exposure of male and female students of the University Cyprus in the social, political and ideological issues with which the experience of the gendered subject is interwoven. The Centre also collaborates closely with the interdisciplinary, interdepartmental programmes in Gender Studies offered by the University of Cyprus, as well as with the [UNESCO Chair in Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment](#) at the University of Cyprus.

### **Postgraduate Programme in Gender Studies at the University of Cyprus**

The Postgraduate Programme in Gender Studies is a degree which aims at the critical study of and research in gender issues and at the promotion of gender studies. The University of Cyprus is running this postgraduate degree in Gender Studies, available on a master's (MA) and doctoral (PhD) level, since 2012. The programme responds to the need for gender expertise and the education of professionals who will work to incorporate gender mainstreaming in all areas of life.

The programme is offered by the University of Cyprus and is coordinated by the UNESCO Chair in Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and the Centre for Gender Studies of the University of Cyprus. Accommodating graduates from all scholarly backgrounds, the degree gives students the opportunity to critically engage with the wide range of themes, resources, methodologies and analytical approaches that constitute gender studies, and apply these to a diverse number of sectors and fields.