

Gender Equality Plan 2021-2025

The aim of the Gender Equality Plan of Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences (*hereinafter – ViA*) is to ensure an integrated and targeted policy that promotes the implementation of equal rights and opportunities for both women and men at ViA.

The following documents have been taken into account:

- Latvian National Development Plan 2021-2027¹;
- EC Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025²;
- EU Council conclusions “Reducing the gender pay gap: key policies and actions”³;
- UN Women Strategy “The Empowerment of Women and girls with disabilities: towards full and effective participation and gender equality”⁴;
- Youth Leap into Gender Equality. UN Women’s youth and gender equality strategy: Empowered young women as partners in achieving gender equality⁵;
- Priority Gender Equality Action Plan 2014-2021⁶.

It is relatively easy to respect both gender and social diversity at ViA. Regarding selection of researchers, ViA will continue an active gender management policy. ViA supports Article 141 (3) of the European Commission Treaty, with a special focus on the protection of men and women workers, including parental rights and family life. The ViA management team will encourage men and women to participate in research projects, ensuring equal access and opportunities. Neither participants in research projects nor target audiences will be disaggregated by gender or social status. The principle of equality will be respected in all the events. Communication activities will be carried out regardless of the legal status of the audience, gender, income level, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, experience, etc.

The plan will be implemented in four phases, see Table 1.

Table 1. Timetable of implementation

No.	Title of activity	Description of activity	Deadline for implementation
1.	Phase of preparation	Data research and analysis	15 th November, 2021
2.	Phase of development	Creation of a communication plan that demonstrates how to consciously maintain and promote gender equality	31 st January, 2022
3.	Implementation phase	Activities of communication	31 st January, 2023
4.	Monitoring of implementation	Surveys, interviews, data research and analysis	31 st December, 2025

¹ NAP 2021-2027, available at: <https://www.pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/inline-files/NAP2027galaredakcija.pdf>

² A Union on Equality, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/LV/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0152>.

³ EU Council, 2019, available at: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10349-2019-INIT/lv/pdf>.

⁴ UNW 2018, available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2018/empowerment-of-women-and-girls-with-disabilities-en.pdf?la=en&vs=3504>

⁵ UNW 2017, available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/youth-leap-into-gender-equality.pdf?la=en&vs=5054>

⁶ UNESCO 2019, available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370905>.

In order to define the measures and performance indicators of the Plan, it has been primarily assessed whether their implementation and evaluation of the achieved results can be ensured over a five-year period while also taking into account the workload of ViA employees who will work on the implementation of the Plan. Through the Plan, it is intended to address only the most pressing challenges by choosing to reduce stereotypes and prejudices at work and in education.

The purpose of the plan and its activities envisage the observance of the principle of non-discrimination for men and women throughout the implementation of the plan. Regardless of gender, there will be equal opportunities for both men and women to participate in the activities of the Plan.

1. Phase of preparation

The preparation phase will be completed on November 15th, 2021, when the first-stage information and data on gender equality at ViA will be collected and summarized.

ViA strategy for the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men demonstrates that ViA employees are recruited and students are admitted for studies in accordance with gender-neutral policies. When announcing a vacancy, gender is not specified in the advertisement (it is also forbidden by the regulations of the Republic of Latvia). ViA ensures gender-neutral evaluation of applications. Remuneration of the staff depends on the level of responsibility and are determined in accordance with the Salary Regulations. ViA provides equal opportunities of employment for men and women in management positions as well in research and other sections.

When forming research teams, the principle of gender equality is considered as well. Workloads in projects are determined by the amount of work required in the project, not by gender.

The workload of the academic staff is determined depending on the amount of credit points required for the study course. Workloads in the administration are determined by position, not gender. Women are more likely to apply for administrative positions at ViA. Women of retirement age apply for positions such as caretakers, wardrobes, etc.

ViA parental leave is mostly used by women. Men actively use the 10-day leave granted to father due to the birth of a child. Both men and women use state-paid annual paid leave for caring for children (men are more likely to forget this but are happy to use the opportunity upon a reminder).

For summarized data on ViA staff and students, see Table 2 and 3.

Table 2. Data on ViA staff in the context of gender equality (data as of October 1st, 2021)

	Female %	Male %
ViA staff	70,3	29,7
Academic and scientific personnel	60,3	39,7
<i>including PhD holders</i>	56,8	43,2
Academic and scientific positions in total	58,5	41,5
<i>incl.:</i>		
<i>Professors</i>	66,7	33,3
<i>Associated professors</i>	37,5	62,5
<i>Assistants to professors</i>	63,6	36,4
<i>Lecturers</i>	72,7	27,3
<i>Leading researchers</i>	45,5	54,5
<i>Researchers</i>	60	40
<i>Scientific assistants</i>	50	50
ViA management		
<i>Rector</i>	0	100
<i>Vice rectors</i>	66,7	33,3
<i>Deans</i>	50	50
<i>Directors of institutes</i>	100	0

Administration and economic staff	81,7	18,3
<i>incl. directors / deputies / program directors of study fields</i>	60	40
<i>Leaders of structural units/heads of departments</i>	85,7	14,3
Guest lecturers	47,4	52,6
<i>incl. foreigners</i>	58,8	41,2
Left ViA in 2021	45,5	54,5
ViA Union of students		
<i>President of the board</i>	100	0
<i>Leaders of study fields</i>	66,7	33,3
Senate	66,7	33,3
Constitution	60	40

Table 3. Data on ViA students in the context of gender equality (as of March 30th, 2021)

	<i>Female %</i>	<i>Male %</i>
Current students	49,5	50,5
Graduates (2002-2021)	65	35
Ex-matriculated without a degree (2002.-2021.)	46,3	53,7
Current students	Sievietes	Vīrieši
First level programs	16,7	83,3
Baccalaureate level	49,7	50,3
Master level	67,6	32,4
Doctoral level	50	50

2. Phase of development

The development phase of the plan is planned to be completed on December 31, 2021. It will be developed in the form of a description with a timetable for the events, see Table 4.

Table 4. Activities of the plan with the time schedule

Topic	Activities	Result	Responsible departments	Time period
1. Reducing stereotypes about professions suitable for women and men	1.1. The gender equality ambassadors' visit to schools: participation of both sexes, emphasis on gender equality opportunities in studies; breaking stereotypes	Increasing number of students: male students studying at the SZF and women students studying at the IF increases by 5%	Department of Marketing	2022- 2023

	about study programs			
	1.2. Job advertisements for administrative and academic positions shall indicate both sexes	Gender ratio in administrative and academic positions will be equalized by 3%	Lawyer / HR	2022-2023
	1.3. Campaign in social networks and other activities on breaking stereotypes in professions, using the stories of the ViA graduates' experience	Increasing number of students: male students studying at the SZF and women students studying at the IF increases by 5%	Department of Marketing	2022-2023
2. Reducing stereotypes about men and women in different sectors of science	A social networking campaign breaking stereotypes about science and genders. Based on researchers from HESPI and SSII	The percentage of gender in ViA research institutes will equalize Data as of 15.10.2021 From elected research staff SSII: 12 men / 8 women HESPI: 10 men / 20 women	Department of Marketing and directors of the institutes	2022-2023
3. Male students' attraction to ViA studies	Experience stories on social networks and other channels (masters and graduates, male students)	The number of male master students increased by 10%	Department of Marketing in a collaboration with directors of the study directions	2022-2023
4. Gender balance in the elected institutions	Revision of the ViA regulations introducing gender quotas	Gender ratio does not exceed 20%	Lawyer / HR	2023
5. Strengthening the gender balance of academic staff with a PhD	To encourage men to study and graduate from doctoral studies	Gender ratio does not exceed 20%	ViA management	2024

3. Implementation phase

During this phase of the plan, communication and implementation of activities are planned in accordance with the activities reflected in Table 4 which will be improved by the end of the development period. The implementation phase is expected to be completed on 31st January 2025.

4. Monitoring of implementation

In the last stage of the plan, surveys, interviews, data research and analysis are planned. The deadline for compiling data and conclusions is 31st December 2025.

Persons responsible for the final report on the implementation of the plan: scientific project manager and event organizer.

Developed by:
Ieva Gintere
Agrita Šomase
Ilgvars Ābols