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SPECIAL MEASURES FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT AND PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY AT THE EDUCONS UNIVERSITY

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Article 10 and Article 16 of the Law on Labor Equality ("Official Gazette of the RS", No. 52/2021), special measures for the realization and improvement of gender equality at Educons University, which form an integral part of the Work Plan and of development v (2020-2029) number: SN.55/22 at the session of the Senate of Educons University held on 05/25/2022.

Scientific research work is carried out at the University for the development of science and creativity, improvement of higher education activities, i.e. improvement of the quality of teaching, improvement of scientific youth, introduction of students to scientific research work, as well as creation of conditions for work and development of the University. Scientific research work at the University is achieved through: basic, applied and developmental research and training of staff for scientific research work, in accordance with the law governing scientific research activity. In order to ensure more favorable conditions for the involvement of teachers, associates, researchers, and students in scientific research projects, the University can establish various forms of cooperation with relevant ministries, universities, domestic and foreign scientific research organizations, companies, business associations and other organizations. Funds for basic, applied and development research carried out by the University for the needs of other users are acquired on the market through direct contracting. with service users

In view of achieving these goals, the Educons University shall recognize the contribution, personal characteristics, education, specialties and skills of all employees and strive to build an environment which allows the freedom of research and promotes mutual respect and recognition regardless of origin, gender, age, religious or ethnic origin, or any other form of identity of its employees. Gender equality is an important component of the establishment and sustainability of these values and equal opportunities policy guaranteed by the Educons University in all spheres of its activity.

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (Official Gazette of RS, 98/2006) shall guarantee, and as such, directly implement human and minority rights guaranteed by the generally accepted rules of international law, ratified international treaties and laws (Article 18, Par. 1. and 2).

The State shall guarantee the equality of women and men and develop equal opportunities policy (Article 15). Guarantees for inalienable human and minority rights in the Constitution have the purpose of preserving human dignity and exercising full freedom and equality of each individual in a just, open, and democratic society based on the principle of the rule of law (Article 19). All are equal before the Constitution and law (Article 21 Par. 1). Everyone shall have the right to equal legal protection, without discrimination (Article 21 Par. 2). All direct or indirect discrimination based on any grounds, particularly on race, sex, national origin, social origin, birth, religion, political or other opinion, property status, culture, language, age, mental or physical disability shall be prohibited (Article 21 Par. 3). Right to work shall be guaranteed in accordance with the law. Everyone shall have the right to choose his occupation freely. All work places shall be available to everyone under equal conditions. Everyone shall have the right to respect of his person at work, safe and healthy working conditions, necessary protection at work, limited working hours, daily and weekly interval for rest, paid annual holiday, fair remuneration for work done and legal protection in case of termination of working relations. No person may forgo these rights. Women, young and disabled persons shall be provided with special protection at work and special work conditions in accordance with the law (Article 60).

In addition to the Constitution, the National Legal Framework of the Plan is composed of the following rules and strategic documents:

1. Law on Gender Equality
2. Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination
3. Act to prevent discrimination against persons with disabilities
4. Law on Science and Research
5. Family Law
6. Labour Law
7. Personal Data Protection Law
8. National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.
- Women, Peace and Security in the Republic of Serbia
9. Strategy for Scientific and Technological Development of Serbia for the period 2021-2025 - "The Power of Knowledge"

The listed documents are in accordance with the priorities and goals defined in the Plan of the European Research Area (ERA) and the integration of the scientific research system of the Republic of Serbia in that area. Strategy for Scientific and Technological Development of Serbia for the period 2021-2025 - "The Power of Knowledge" specifically defines the goal related to gender equality, namely: "gender equality in management positions, development of policy for gender equality in research organizations".

Article 4 of the Law on Science and Research also defines as one of the basic principles of research work in Serbia the principle of "gender equality in science and research, as well as in decision-making bodies".

3. GLOSSARY

The meaning and definitions of certain expressions have been taken from the law of the Republic of Serbia and the related documents. The meaning and definitions of certain terms are stated in the Plan so as to initialize further implementation of these terms in the acts of the Educons University and their terminological use in the implementation of the Plan.

1. **Hate speech** is any form of expression intended to denigrate an individual or a group based on race, skin colour, ethnicity or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and other characteristics. The term hate language, used as a synonym, is primarily associated with the expression of intolerance in the media, while hate speech is associated with public appearances through other, formal or informal channels of communication. Hate speech is any prohibited speech, gesture, behavior, writing or portrayal that incites violence or prejudice against an individual or a group, or belittles and intimidates an individual or a group. Hate speech covers any form of expression that intimidates, insults or harasses individuals or groups, or statements that call for violence, hatred, or discrimination against an individual or group.
2. **Equal opportunity** imply equal realization of rights and freedoms of women and men, their equal treatment and equal participation in political, economic, cultural and other areas of social life and in all stages of planning, preparation, decision-making, and equal use of their results, without gender restrictions and gender discrimination.
3. **Violence against women** means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life;
4. **Vulnerable social groups** are women residing in rural areas, victims of violence, or persons or groups who are in an unequal position due to social origin, ethnicity, financial status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, mental and /or physical disability, residence in an underdeveloped area, or for any other reason or property;
5. **Gender discrimination** is instructing the manner of discriminatory actions and incitement to discrimination on the basis of sex or gender;

6. **Sex** represents a biological characteristic on the basis of which humans are defined as female or male;
7. **Gender** represents socially determined roles, opportunities, behaviors, activities and attributes which are considered appropriate by a society on the grounds of gender, including the established ideas of male and female relationships and roles.
8. **Gender analysis** is an assessment of impact on women and men of each planned activity, including legislation, measures, activities, public policies and programs, and gender equality in all areas and at all levels;
9. **Gender dimension** is an integration of sex- and gender-based analyses and research;
10. **Gender perspective** refers to the consideration of gender or sex differences - different interests, needs and priorities of women and men - and inclusion of the differences in all stages of planning, preparation, adoption and implementation of public policies, regulations, measures and activities;
11. **Gender equality** implies equal participation of all persons, regardless of gender, in all areas of social and private life, equal position, equal opportunity to exercise their rights and equal benefit from the results achieved, pursuant to the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia and generally accepted international treaties and laws. Gender equality is the concept that all human beings have the freedom to develop personal abilities and make choices without restrictions imposed by the gender roles, wherein different behaviors, desires and needs of women and men are equally considered, valued and supported;
12. **Gender stereotypes** are traditionally rooted ideas according to which women and men are arbitrarily assigned female and male characteristics and roles that determine and limit their opportunities and position in a society;
13. **Gender-based violence** is any form of physical, sexual, psychological, financial or social violence committed against a person or groups based on sex or gender, as well as threats of such acts, regardless of whether they occur in public or private life, as well as any form of violence that affects persons of a certain gender to a greater extent;
14. **Gender responsive budgeting** is budgeting i.e. financial planning mindful of the concept of gender equality, which implies gender-based budget analysis, gender perspective in all budgeting stages and restructuring of revenues and expenditures with an aim of gender equality improvement;
15. **Gender-sensitive language** is the language that promotes equality between women and men which, for the purpose of establishing gender equality, influences the consciousness of language users and encourages the change of opinions, attitudes and behaviour through the language used in private and professional life;
16. **Sexual harassment** is any unwelcome verbal, non-verbal or physical act of a sexual nature violating personal dignity, especially when it creates fear, hostility, intimidation, hostile or offensive environment;

17. Sexual blackmail (sexual extortion) is any behavior aimed at coercing another person to engage in sexual contact, or any sexually explicit conduct in which a person communicates a threat to harm the reputation of another in case of refusal to engage in such contact.
18. **Gender mainstreaming (gender perspective)** is when the principle of gender equality is included in all stages of planning, decision-making, implementation and accompanying activities, i.e. the strategy of gender equality promotion through day-to-day activities, as opposed to an approach where gender equality is addressed as an isolated issue through projects that mainly include women;
19. **Harassment** is any unwelcome behavior aimed at or resulting in violation of dignity of a person or group on the grounds of sex or gender, especially if it incites fear or creates a hostile, intimidating, humiliating or offensive environment;
20. **Gender balance** exists when inclusion one sex in relation to another is 4Q-50%, while a significantly unbalanced ratio exists when inclusion of one sex falls below 40%, unless such ratio is prescribed by law;
21. **Gender mainstreaming** is a means to achieve and promote gender equality through the incorporation of a gender perspective into all policies, plans and practices.

4. GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Gender discrimination is any unjustified, open or covert discrimination, disadvantageous treatment or omission (exclusion, restriction or giving priority) of persons or groups of persons, their family members or close circle, on sex or gender grounds in political or educational areas, media, economy, employment, occupation, self-employment, consumer protection (goods and services), health insurance and protection, social security and protection, marital and family relations, safety, ecology, culture sports, recreation, promotion, and other aspects of social life.

Direct discrimination based on sex or gender exists when a person or a group are placed or could be placed in a disadvantageous position by any act, action or omission on grounds of gender.

Indirect discrimination on the grounds of sex or gender exists when apparently neutral provisions, criteria or practices affect or could affect a person or a group in less favourable ways than other people in a comparable situation, and where such treatment cannot be objectively and reasonably justified.

Discrimination on the grounds of sex or gender exists when a person or a group is treated or could be treated less favorably than others, solely or mainly because they have sought or intend to seek protection against discrimination on gender grounds, or because they have offered or intend to offer evidence of discriminatory treatment.

Discrimination on the grounds of sex or gender includes harassment, discriminatory treatment, threats, sexual harassment and sexual blackmail, gender-based hate speech, violence based on gender, sex or reassignment, violence against women, unequal treatment based on pregnancy, maternity leave, childcare leave, paternity leave (parenthood), adoption, foster care, guardianship and incitement to discrimination, as well as any unfavorable treatment that a person receives for refusing or suffering such behavior.

Discrimination because of one or more personal characteristics occurs in a separable (multiple discrimination) or in an inseparable manner (intersectional discrimination).

Measures for protection of maternity and paternity (parenthood), adoption, foster care, guardianship,

or protection of employees of different sexes, in accordance with the regulations governing labor relations and safety at work, or special measures introduced in order to achieve full gender equality, protection and progress of persons or groups of persons in an unequal position, are not considered discrimination based on sex or gender.

Special measures adopted to eliminate and prevent gender-based inequality and provide equal opportunity for women and men are not considered discrimination based on sex or gender.

S. THE MAIN PRINCIPLES

Improvement of gender equality at the Educons University must result from the adoption of the concepts of gender equality by all Educons University employees according to the decision of the Educons University management aimed at raising awareness and giving education in this and the related areas.

In the process of achieving and promoting gender equality, the Educons University will establish cooperation with all relevant domestic and international partners from the institutional, public, private and non-governmental sectors in order to exchange information, give examples of good practice and continue education in this area, as well as giving contribution to the projects which promote gender equality.

Realization of the plan requires the use of current management infrastructure and relocation of the available budget, so that the measures are implemented as an integral part of business activities, rather than through isolated activities too narrow in scope which mainly concern women.

Through the promotion of gender equality, the Educons University operates in a sustainable manner. All tangible and intangible assets and resources invested for achieving gender equality are returned through work in an environment which respects gender equality. Dedicated, highly motivated women and men equally contribute to successful work of the Educons University. As a reliable and reputable employer, the Educons University attracts the best researchers.

6. THE MAIN AIM

Special measures for the achievement and promotion of gender equality (hereinafter referred to as: Plan) are aimed at achieving gender equality and confirming the Educons University's commitment to the promotion of gender equality at all levels and areas of its operation.

SPECIFIC AIMS

The main aim of the Plan contains four components of specific aims:

1. Establishment of a gender equal working environment

Idea: Establishment of an inclusive environment in which both sexes are valued for their unique professional and personal contributions. The future lies in cooperation between equally represented sexes at all levels, in order to overcome challenges.

Description of measures: The idea is first promoted by raising awareness and education of all employees about the importance of gender equality. Then, according to the implemented measures, the established gender-equal working environment is nurtured and improved by continuous education of employees. The gender-equal environment is established at all levels and areas, and promoted through all available channels of external communication.

2. Reshaping policies and QMS documents

Idea: Documents prescribing equal presence, status and roles of both sexes is an essential aspect for the achievement of de facto gender equality in business, decision-making and governance.

Description of measures: Measures for achievement and improvement of gender equality, gender dimension and gender differentiated language are incorporated into all existing general acts of the Educons University,

from business policies to records. Gender mainstreaming becomes an integral part of all existing and future acts of the Educons University.

3. Career support for equal opportunity purposes

Idea: Continuous professional development of Educons University employees without gender restrictions relies on the development of career support practices. Career support includes the provision of information, training and counseling aimed at advancement, empowerment and equal participation of employees in all areas of work, with special focus on responsibility at management positions and the support to reconciling working hours with personal and/or family life.

Description of measures: Mentorship programs for junior researchers employed at the Educons University help launch their scientific careers through continual professional support. Mentoring as a form of support is introduced in the middle of an employee's career with an aim of equal opportunity establishment. Career support measures are also aimed at harmonization of working hours and private /family life (e.g. work from home).

4. Gender responsive budgeting

Idea: Gender equality is significantly improved through introduction of a gender perspective in the budgeting process, from planning to implementation, in all spheres of Educons University operations. Budgeting is the most important instrument of business policy and a signal of good governance, as it clearly reflects business priorities. Funds allocated for gender equality program are not sufficient to eliminate gender inequality completely. Therefore, instead of using scarce additional funds for the promotion of gender equality, we are focused on re-allocation and redistribution of available funds, thereby making the entire budget an instrument for improving work quality, eliminating inequality and creating a fair working environment for all Educons University employees.

Description of measures: Introduction of gender responsive budgeting, i.e. financial planning based on inclusion of gender analysis and gender perspective in budgeting, restructuring revenues and expenditures with an aim of gender equality improvement.

7. BRIEF ASSESSMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY AT THE EDUCONS UNIVERSITY

7.1. Analysis of the current situation and the reasons for the plan

Total number of employees based on gender, dated 25. may 2022

Male	46
Famale	66
Total number of employees with permanent placement/ fixed term contract	112

Data on changes:

Gender structure changes in the previous calendar year		
	25 May 2021	25 May 2022
Total number of employees with permanent placement/ fixed- term contract	118	112

Male	49	46
Female	69	66

Gender structure changes in management staff positions pursuant to the employment IAct of the employer		
	25 May 2021	25 May 2022
Management	- male:1 - female: 2	- male:1 - female:2
Staff	- male:48 - female:67	- male:45 - female:64

Employee gender structure based on education

Education	Female	Male	Total
VIII	38	33	71
VII	15	4	19
VI	8	2	10
IV	4	7	11
I	1	/	1

Employee gender according to academic rank

Academic rank	Female	Male	Total
Full professor	8	11	19
Associate professor	9	8	17
Assistant	23	14	37
Teaching assistant	6	4	10
Junior Teaching assistant	3	/	3
Total	49	37	86

Employee gender structure according to salary

According to the Employment Act of the Educons University and the Rulebook on the Internal Organization and Systematization at the Educons University, equal net full-time salary is provided for the same job position regardless of an employee gender.

Considering the above, the Educons University has achieved a balanced gender ratio of its employees and continues to strive for gender equality improvement.

7.2. Plan realization

The achievement of goals included in the gender equality establishment plan relies on the support from all the Educons University employees. The Educons University management and employees are responsible for the establishment of gender equality.

Plan implementation will be coordinated by the Gender Equality Committee appointed by the director, composed of Educons University employees as representatives of the key sectors: legal, financial, QMS and research. The Gender Equality Committee will supervise the implementation of special measures and prepare reports on the realization of the Plan, which will be submitted to the director of the Educons University.

Internal auditor of the Educons University will have direct supervision over the implementation of the Plan.

7.3. Plan initialization

The plan of special measures for the realization and improvement of gender equality shall be put into force on the day of its adoption by the Educons University and its publication on the Educons University website <https://educons.edu.rs>

The Educons University shall submit to the Ministry responsible for human rights a notification about the website where the Plan was published within 15 days from the day of its adoption.

The Plan specifies a short-term period for the implementation of initial activities planned for 2021/2022, and the long-term period for the activities planned for 2022-2025.

7.4. Measures

The Educons University is under an obligation to initiate structural changes for the purpose of gender equality establishment at all levels and areas of its work and research, including the objectives and measures set out in Table 1.

Table 1. Gender equality aims and measures

Specific aims	Measures	Responsible persons	Measurable indicators	Timeframe *
1. Establishment of gender equal working environment	1.1 Appointment of members of Gender Equality Committee	Management	Decision on the Appointment of Gender Equality Committee	ST: Decision issued LT: Decision revisions
	1.2 Education on Gender Equality	Gender Equality Committee	Number of trainings and materials	ST: 4 trainings LT: 3 trainings a year
	1.3 Education on Gender Equality	All employees	Number of trainings and materials	ST: 2 trainings LT: 1 + trainings a year
	1.4 Introduction of a gender perspective in the channels of internal communication in everyday work (additionally intranet portal Nauka)	All employees, Research Affairs, Marketing Affairs	Number of texts/reports/articles	ST: 3 texts IT: 3+ texts a year
	1.5 Introduction of a gender perspective in the channels of external communication (internet portal, appearances in the media and at public events, brochures and promotional material of the Educons University)	Research Affairs, Marketing Affairs	Number of texts/reports/articles, media and public speeches	ST: 2 reports, 2 speeches IT: 2+ reports, 2+ speeches
2. Reshaping policies and QMS documents	2.1 Review and consolidate all existing anti-discrimination policies and related documents of the Educons University	Legal and General Affairs	list of documents with an analysis of actual gender perspective	ST: List and analysis
	2.2 Educating employees about their rights and obligations within existing anti-discrimination policies	Legal and General Affairs	Distribution of information through the channels of internal communication	ST: Information distributed to all employees
	2.3 Inclusion of gender mainstreaming (gender perspective) in the Educons University's QMS documents	Legal and General Affairs	Number of revised documents	ST: All key documents IT: All key Educons University documents according to the revised Plan
3. 1 Defining key career indicators (number of authored papers, duration of		Gender Equality Committee	list of indicators with the developed	ST: list of indicators LT: annually revised list

specializations abroad, composition of scientific teams,etc.) and methodologies for their monitoring	methodology	
3. Career support for equal opportunity purposes		
3.2 Collection and analysis of key career development indicators with the introduced gender dimension	Gender Equality Committee and the relevant Educons University services	LT: continual monitoring, annual final analysis (report)
3.3 Personal and professional support through mentoring with a focus on empowering and motivating Educons University researchers to apply for management positions and take on additional responsibilities	Appointed mentors {internal education provided by Gender Equality Committee)	ST: through initial career mentoring LT: through mid-career mentoring
3.4 Amendments to the work regulations approving work from home in special family or other circumstances and granting additional days off for multi-day business trips	Management, Legal and General Affairs	ST: 2 measures LT: additional measures recommended according to Plan revision
4.1 Appointment of employees responsible for responsive budgeting	Management	ST: Appointment of employees
4.2 Education in responsive budgeting	Gender Equality Committee and appointed employees	ST: 3 trainings LT: 1 trainings per year
4.3 Defining indicators of gender responsive budgeting and methodology	Gender Equality Committee and the	ST: list of indicators LT: annually revised list
4.4 Collecting and analysis of gender responsive budgeting data	The appointed employee	LT: continual monitoring, annual final analysis
4.5 Gender responsive budgeting implementation	Management according to the	ST: 1 measure LT: 2+ measures

8. Plan publication and promotion

The plan of special measures for achieving and improving gender equality was adopted at the Senate of the University of Educons, held on 05/25/2022.

The Plan will be published on the Educons University website www.educons.edu.rs upon adoption by the Senate.

9. Plan implementation

Data on the implementation of the Plan of special measures for gender equality establishment and improvement are an integral part of the annual Report on the implementation of the Work and Development Plan of the Educons University adopted by the Senate.

Annual report on the implementation of the Plan will be published on the University website www.educons.edu.rs. The Educons University shall submit to the Ministry in charge of human rights a notification about the website where the Report on the implementation of the Plan is published within 30 days from the day of its adoption.

RECTOR PROF. DR. ALEKSANDAR ANDREJEVIĆ

