

No. 02-1440/2
29.12.2025
Skopje



Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje

Gender Equality Plan

of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje

2026 – 2028

December 2025

Содржина

Introduction.....	3
National Context: The position and participation of women in Macedonian society	4
Vission and mission of the University.....	6
Key values /special ethical duties	9
Gender Equality in research and innovation as priority	9
Mapping of the conditions at UKIM - gender equality through data.....	11
Developing Gender Equality Plan of Ss. Cyril and Methodius Unviersity in Skopje	22
Gender Equality Plan, 2026–2028.....	23
(goals, activities, indicators, target groups, and implementation period).....	23

Introduction

Gender equality is a fundamental human right and a fundamental value of modern democratic societies, protected by the United Nations and one of the fundamental principles of the European Union. It refers to the equal value, dignity and opportunities for women and men in all spheres of social life – political, economic, social and cultural. Gender equality does not mean equalizing the gender, but recognizing and respecting the differences, as well as ensuring the conditions for each person to reach their full potential without restrictions based on gender.

Achieving gender equality requires elimination of stereotypes, discrimination and all forms of gender-based violence. This includes creating equal opportunities for access to education, employment, leadership positions, resources and services, as well as equal treatment in front of the law. Support measures, evidence-based policies and the active role of institutions, the civil sector and local communities are also an important part of this process. Gender equality contributes not only to a just society, but also to economic development, sustainability and social stability. Therefore, it represents a strategic goal and a common social obligation, the realization of which leads to a better quality, inclusive and equitable life for all citizens.

Republic of North Macedonia has 1 836 713 people and is striving to become EU member. According to the data from the State Statistical Office, the percentage distribution of women and men in the total population is almost equal (women – 50,4 %, men – 49,6 %).¹

Equality between women and men in the country is regulated through constitutional guarantees, special laws and a developed institutional framework. The Constitution establishes the equality of all citizens in front of the law and prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, establishing gender equality as a fundamental value of the constitutional order. This is complemented by the *Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men*, which promotes the principle of equal opportunities in the public and private sectors, introduces gender mainstreaming in all public policies and allows for the application of temporary special measures to achieve de facto equality.

The legal framework regulating gender equality is led by the **Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men**², and the Parliament of the Republic of North Macedonia, in accordance with the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, ensures the elimination of all forms of discrimination based on gender and the improvement of the social status of women, integrates the principle of equal opportunities

¹ <https://www.stat.gov.mk/PrikaziPublikacija.aspx?id=23&rbr=879>

² Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (Official Gazette No. 6/2012... 39/2025)

for women and men in legal initiatives, policies and programs, as well as organizes public debates and discussions on issues in the field of equal opportunities for women and men.

In 2011, Republic of North Macedonia has signed the Council of Europe's *Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women* (the Istanbul Convention) and ratified the Convention at the end of 2017. The second report on the measurement of the Gender Equality Index based on the methodology of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) was published (EIGE, 2017a). The Gender Equality Index in 2022 is 64.5 points out of a maximum of 100 and has progressed by 2.5 points compared to the last measurement in 2019. Compared to the EU member states, this time our country ranks in fourteenth position, between Italy (15) and Malta (13), and has progressed one position higher in the ranking compared to 2019, when it was ranked in fifteenth position. The country lags behind the EU average by 3.5 points and the best-ranked country in the EU – Sweden – by 19.4 points. Compared to the latest measurement of countries from the Western Balkans region that publish the index, the country has a higher score than all three countries – Albania (2020), Serbia (2021) and Montenegro (2019)³.

In 2021, a **Law on Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** was adopted – aligned with the requirements of the Istanbul Convention. With this, the state has made significant efforts to develop a policy framework for non-discrimination and the promotion of gender equality. The Assembly adopted a **Gender Equality Strategy for the period 2022-2027**⁴, which contains clearly stated and specific goals, expected results and indicators for monitoring and evaluation. The Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2027 is a fundamental strategic document of the state that establishes a comprehensive framework for further activities aimed at promoting gender equality and empowering women.

National Context: The position and participation of women in Macedonian society

The position of women in the Republic of North Macedonia is shaped by multifaceted economic, cultural, educational, institutional and political factors that systematically limit their equal participation in the public and private sectors. National and international indicators, as well as relevant research, point to the continued existence of gender inequality in the economy, education, political participation and corporate power. This context is crucial for understanding the role that academic institutions should play in promoting gender equality and creating inclusive policies.

The 2022 Gender Equality Index, developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality, positions the Republic of North Macedonia significantly below the EU average, indicating the need for strengthened institutional measures and a systemic approach. The most pronounced gender gaps are in the areas of: power

³ https://www.stat.gov.mk/PrikaziPublikacija_1.aspx?rbr=886

⁴ Gender Equality Strategy, 2022 – 2027 (Official Gazette No. 170/2022)

and participation in decision-making, economic independence, time allocation and knowledge, with segregation in STEM being particularly highlighted.

According to the latest report by the State Statistical Office, gender gaps are clearly visible despite women's higher formal education. Although women are the majority among university graduates, their participation in the total workforce remains significantly lower than that of men. The data also indicate that women are more often employed in lower-paid sectors and are less represented among management positions, which creates a persistent gap in wages and in the quality of jobs. These trends show that educational achievements do not automatically translate into economic autonomy and that structural barriers in the labor market continue to affect women's economic position.

In terms of economic participation, data from the State Statistical Office (2024) show that the economic activity rate of women (43.7%) and the employment rate (38.9%) are significantly lower compared to men (61.8% activity, 53.5% employment). According to the Youth Participation Index for 2024, 38.8% of young women are economically active, compared to 53.5% of young men. These data indicate that gender gaps start early and deepen with age.

Research on women and gender equality in the Republic of North Macedonia indicates that traditional gender roles, the unequal distribution of unpaid care, and the lack of support services significantly limit women's economic mobility, especially in rural areas and among certain ethnic communities, and that women continue to be underrepresented in senior management positions, mainly due to limited opportunities for advancement and the impact of family and domestic responsibilities on their careers.

In the economic power domain, the latest measurements by the European Institute for Gender Equality show a decline in the participation of women in the management, supervisory and director boards of the highest-listed companies. Organizational boards are among the top-ranked functional units expected to exercise power, mainly in making decisions related to (re)organization, strategy, personnel changes and budget allocation. The analysis of the Macedonian Stock Exchange from 2025 highlights that only 16.7% of women hold positions of CEO or chairperson of the governing body. Women are most often present in small and medium-sized companies, while the largest and most influential industrial sectors remain predominantly male. When their participation is below 30%, women are often perceived as "tokens", with limited influence and fragile legitimacy, which reduces their effective contribution to corporate decision-making. Furthermore, of the total number of employers in the Republic of North Macedonia in 2023, only 27.2% were women, while 78.5% of self-employed workers were men and 21.5% were women.

In the political sphere, despite the positive effect of the 40% quota in the Electoral Code, women remain underrepresented in the highest leadership and executive positions. In the 2024 parliamentary elections, women consist 37.5% of elected MPs. In the 2025 local elections, the gender gap is even more

pronounced. Of all candidates for mayor, 89.6% are men and only 10.4% are women, while 100% of young candidates for mayor (18-29 years old) are men. It can be noted that women are present on the Council candidate lists due to the quota, but not as list leaders, which reaffirms the existing vertical gap in political participation.

Data from the State Statistical Office show that women significantly dominate with higher education. In 2023, they participated with 64.9% of the total number of first-cycle graduates. Although at first glance, education data indicates an increased presence of women among graduates, detailed analysis by UNDP reveals a significant gender structural gap in STEM. More specifically, upon enrollment, only 21% of women choose STEM programs, significantly less than 37% of men. In 2019, of those who graduated in STEM, even 64% are women, which suggests a moderately high success rate in completing their studies. However, at the same time, the situation is different when it comes to careers in STEM. The presence of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics professions remains much lower, and numerous barriers (stereotypes, limited practices, insufficient support in family responsibilities) limit their professional and career opportunities. This indicates that although education represents an important potential, the transition from education to career needs to be addressed by measures in the Gender Equality Plan, especially for STEM study programs.

The persistent gender gaps in economic participation, corporate and political leadership, and representation in STEM highlight the need for a systemic and intersectoral approach. The Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, as a leading educational and research institution that creates and transfers knowledge and prepares future professionals and leaders in all spheres of society, has a significant role in addressing and reducing these gender gaps, by developing policies, practices and an environment that actively promotes gender equality.

Vission and mission of the University⁵

The Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje was established in 1949, making it the oldest, and today the highest-ranked higher education institution in the country, which produces highly qualified personnel for the needs of the labor market, develops sciences and arts, promotes inclusiveness and greater international involvement, affirms and promotes relations of ethics, equality and freedom of opinion within the University, thus influencing the processes in the Macedonian society.

⁵ Strategic Plan of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Univeristy in Skopje, 2024 – 2029 (University Gazette No. 686/2024)

As an institution of national importance, today the University consists of 23 faculties, 5 scientific institutes, 4 public scientific institutions – associate members, 1 associate member – another higher education institution and 7 associate members – other organizations. The activities of the University are prescribed by the Law on Higher Education and the Statute of the University.

The vision of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje is to strengthen its leadership position in the higher education in the Republic of North Macedonia, as well as to constantly improve its position at the international level.

The Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje is the oldest and most renowned higher education and scientific research institution in the country. As such, it is and will remain fully dedicated to building and strengthening the social, intellectual, scientific, socio-economic, artistic and cultural capacity of the country, as well as to the permanent improvement of the international position and recognition of the University and the country worldwide. UKIM achieves this commitment through:

- comprehensive offer and implementation of high-quality curricula at all levels of study and maintaining high quality of teaching, with full dedication to working with students to create professionals that have applicable knowledge and skills, who will respond to the needs of the economy and other needs of the wider community;
- generating new knowledge and creative results through a wide range of scientific, research and creative endeavors, thus contributing to the current and long-term needs of the community;
- creating effective human resources and capacities for raising the level of culture, art, sports, health, nurturing true human values, folklore and traditions and their comprehensive integration into an accelerated process of social and economic development of the country and its international affirmation;
- involvement in national, regional and international programs and initiatives and cooperation with higher education and other related institutions from foreign countries;
- emphasizing social responsibility, sustainability and green initiatives in curricula and research.

As the oldest university in the Republic of North Macedonia, the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje is the foundation and main pillar of the educational system, scientific work and cultural development of the country. The University is responsible for nurturing, preserving and promoting all aspects of the national identity and its full affirmation in the process of the country's accession to the European Union and becoming part of the wider family of European nations.

The University develops and continuously improves its curricula, with the aim of creating highly educated and professional personnel in all areas of natural sciences, engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, agricultural and veterinary sciences, social sciences and humanities and the arts, all in accordance with the highest international standards. Through its educational activities, the University

strives to meet the demand of highly qualified profiles in all segments of both the private and public sector, continually adjusting its operation to the dynamic changes in this area.

The University invests constant efforts in the nurturing and advancement of the critical thought, acting as a society's corrector, **contributing to the development of human rights and freedoms**, and leading the processes of modernization and progression in all spheres of social life.

The University continuously advances its efforts to ensure **gender equality** as an integral part of academic values and institutional policies. As the oldest and largest university in the country, the University recognizes gender equality as a prerequisite for quality education, equal opportunities for students and employees, and the development of an inclusive academic community.

Within the framework of its strategic documents and internal acts, the University is committed to creating an academic environment that encourages equal access to education, professional development, employment and advancement, regardless of gender. The University applies policies that promote non-discrimination, encourages the balanced representation of women and men in teaching, scientific and management structures and provides mechanisms for support and reporting irregularities related to gender-based inequality.

Of particular importance are the efforts to develop a culture of respect, academic ethics and sensitivity to gender aspects in teaching, research and public policies. The University actively cooperates with relevant institutions, domestic and international organizations and initiatives that work to promote gender equality, thereby strengthening its own role as a socially responsible and modern higher education institution. Through these efforts, the University confirms its commitment to creating an equitable, supportive and inclusive academic environment in which all students and employees have the opportunity to progress and fully develop their potential.

Articles 16-21 of the Statute of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje already regulate and guarantee the **Equality, Non-discrimination and Inclusiveness** where the protection from discrimination and guarantees for equal opportunities for women and men at the University have been envisaged. In the Strategic Plan of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje 2024-2029, one of the key values of the University is the commitment: *Equal opportunities for all, through respect for the principle of quality and the commitment to excellence.*

Improving gender equality can be achieved both at the national and institutional level, by ensuring appropriate activities and by involving all actors. Establishing equal opportunities for women and men in education and science, within the University, is a prerequisite for the future positioning of its students in all spheres of their social life. The implementation of equal opportunities at different levels, such as networking and mobility of students and teaching staff, as well as enabling equal participation in various research and innovation projects, contributes to improving the quality of educational and scientific work. Equal gender

equity in research and teaching and equality in scientific and research careers, leadership and participation in all bodies are most important for creating a better and higher quality working environment, generally in all aspects of the functioning of the University.

Key values /special ethical duties

The *Code of Ethics* describes the special ethical duties of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje and its main goal is to preserve the dignity of the profession, preserve the dignity, reputation and integrity of the person, as well as preserve the reputation and integrity of the University and its units.

The *Article 9* of the Code of Ethics envisages the **Principle of Equality and Justice** and bans any kind of discrimination, abuse, harassment and exploitation.

The members of the University community should be provided with **equal** conditions for fulfilment of the professional obligations, expression of their intellectual abilities and progressing.

Article 13 specifies the Discrimination, that is, **it is forbidden any kind of direct or indirect discrimination** based on race, skin colour, origin, nationality and ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, belonging to a certain group, language, citizenship, social origin, education, religion or religious belief, political belief, other belief, disability, age, marital status, property status, health status, social status or any other basis stipulated in a Law or ratified international agreement.

The only criteria for valuation and promotion are expertise, ability and professional merits, as well as the ability and results in performing tasks and other activities.

Article 16, in the part for *Professional duties in teaching*, envisages the equal opportunities for advancement of knowledge that **guarantees equal progress to all students**.

Article 26 envisages that any form of direct or indirect discrimination in the process of assessment of conditions for professional advancement and in the process of the advancement itself is considered disallowed.

The University shall provide **equal membership** to all members of the University community.

Gender Equality in research and innovation as priority

The Gender Equality in research and innovation has been defined as a **priority** of the *European Research Area (ERA)*. Additionally, the *Horizon Europe Framework Programme 2021-2027* requests the Gender Equality Plans as an eligibility criterion, for the Higher Education Institutions, among others, for applying and receiving research funding within this Programme.

Based on a common understanding of the importance of supporting and promoting gender balance, the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje has declared to **support equal opportunities for women and men** in research and innovation on student, academic and staff level at the whole University. Additionally, the University has committed to support **equal balance in leadership and decision-making positions** and strives to **secure non-discrimination and bans gender-based violence**. Striving to pertain the **European values and principles** in all activities undertaken by the University and as a participating Higher Education Institution in **Horizon Europe Framework Programme**, the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje has already developed **Gender Equality Plan (2022-2025)** and develops **Gender Equality Plan 2026-2028**.

The Gender Equality Plan of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje will be published and visible on the University web page (www.ukim.edu.mk), and will be disseminated and accessible at academic and student level.

With regards to the persistent bonds for establishing mechanisms and good practices for creating equal opportunities for women and men, the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje has defined the following objectives and commitments to:

- Promotion of gender equality by setting up **goals and measures** and follow their consistent implementation at all levels;
- Implement **short-term and long-term activities** in order to integrate **gender dimension** in research and teaching;
- **Conduct training** for staff, **improve capacities** in order to be more competitive in the process of applying for EU funding, for research and innovation and promoting gender equality as a priority;
- **Raise awareness** among students, staff and academia on gender equality;
- **Enable** full access on information, facilities, mobility and networking of all its researchers, personnel and students of all genders;
- Set up **cooperation frameworks for joint activities** at faculty and university level on promoting equal opportunities between women and men;
- Create policies for gender-balanced teams and gender-balanced representation, wherever expertise allows it;
- Ensure **synergy and good working environment** on leadership level and decision-making positions provisioning gender balance and stimulate gender equality in scientific careers.

All this will help to achieve the **goal** that derives from the developing of the Gender Equality Plan, that is: *to improve the positioning of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje for achieving gender balance among students, academic and administrative staff, and other stakeholders and provide equal opportunities regardless the gender thus contributing to the quality and relevance of research and innovation.*

In order to achieve this goal, the University dedicates its **own resources** and uses **knowledge** and **experience** already gained from lessons-learned, and has **envisaged capacity building** by training the staff and raise awareness on gender equality. This will be applicable at all levels and dedicated to all stakeholders involved in the educational system of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, from:

- **Students** as main target group, then
- Teaching academic and associate staff (scientific and research), hereinafter referred to as **Academic staff**, and
- Professional and administrative staff and auxiliary and technical personnel, hereinafter referred to as **Administrative staff**.

The Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje during all these processes monitors and applies: its *Statute, the Strategic and Action Plan and the Code of Ethics*, and the **national legislation**: *Law on Higher Education*⁶, *Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men*⁷ and *Strategy on Gender Equality*⁸. Bringing the necessary European dimension, the University will follow all principles and values referred in the main European declarations and conventions and the values set up in the core documents and strategies within the European Research Area for promoting and supporting the gender equality in research and innovation.

The Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje (UKIM) will follow the **main European strategic documents concerning Gender Equality** during the preparation and implementation of this Gender Equality Plan: *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2026 – 2030*⁹; *European Commission: Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans*¹⁰; *European Institute for Gender Equality: Gender Equality in Academia and research, GEAR tool*¹¹.

Mapping of the conditions at UKIM - gender equality through data

In the process of defining the objectives and activities of UKIM's second Gender Equality Plan for 2026–2028, an obligatory element is the analysis of the data available to the University. The foundation for creating this plan was the data and insights from the UKIM's human resources research strategy, as well as data from the University Computer Center. This section includes data presented

⁶ Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette No. 82/18... 124/25),

⁷ Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (Official Gazette No. 6/2012... 39/2025)

⁸ *Strategy on Gender Equality, 2022 – 2027* (Official Gazette No. 170/2022)

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14611-Gender-Equality-Strategy-2026-2030_en

¹⁰ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffc06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa/5ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-232129669>

¹¹ <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear>

from a gender perspective related to: students and their representation, administrative staff and their management, participation in University bodies, participation in research activities, social security of academic staff, working conditions and discrimination in the workplace.

Students¹²

From the perspective of the number of students enrolled in all cycles of studies from the academic year 2021/2022 to 2025/2026 at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, a certain decline in the numbers is observed each year for the first and second cycle studies. The number of enrolled students remains constant in the integrated first and second-cycle studies. Considering this time period of five years, the number of students increases each year only in the third cycle of studies. Cumulatively, the total number of students enrolled in the winter semester in the academic year 2021/2022 is 29.186, while in the same semester in the academic year 2025/2026, this number was 26.547.

Regarding gender representation by cycles, the attached chart shows that in the first cycle of studies there are more female students than male students. In this cycle of studies, in general, the ratio is 1.6:1 in favor of female students.

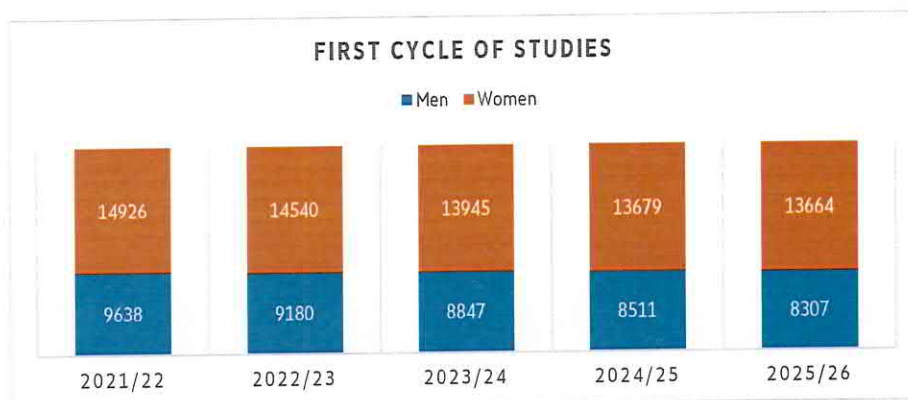


Chart1 1: Enrolled students in the first cycle of studies (winter semester), 2021 – 2025

Female students are most represented in integrated first and second cycle studies. In these studies, the ratio ranges from 3.4 to 3.8 female students per one male student. The dominance of female students exists in all faculties that organize such studies (Faculty of Architecture, Faculty of Dentistry, Faculty of Pharmacy and Faculty of Veterinary Medicine).

¹² Data on the number of students was obtained from the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje.

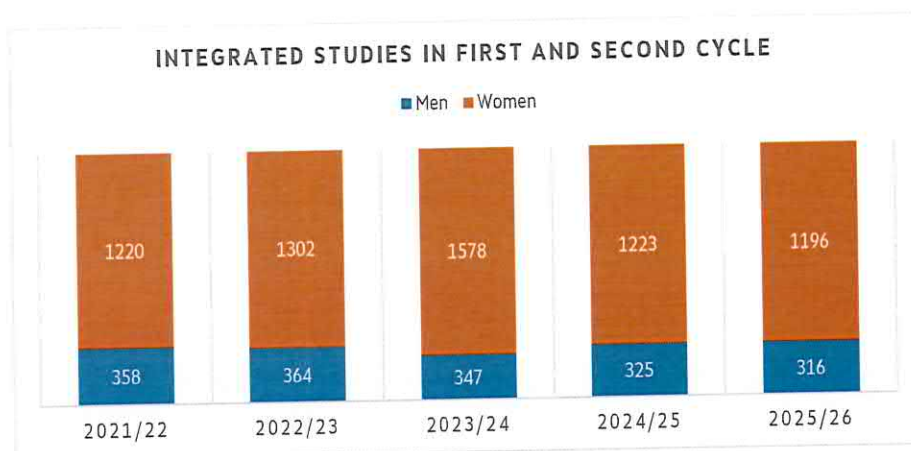


Chart 2: Enrolled students in integrated studies (winter semester), 2021 – 2025

In terms of the second cycle of studies, there is also a higher presence of female students than male students. The ratio varies from 1.3 to 1.9 in favor of female students. In terms of the gender of students, the most balanced presence is in the third cycle of studies. Here, the ratio of female students ranges from 0.9 to 1.3.

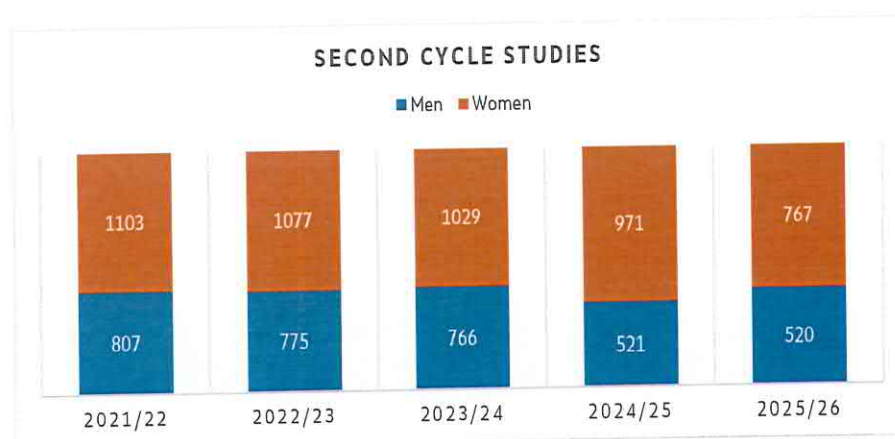


Chart 3: Enrolled students in the second cycle of studies (winter semester), 2021 – 2025

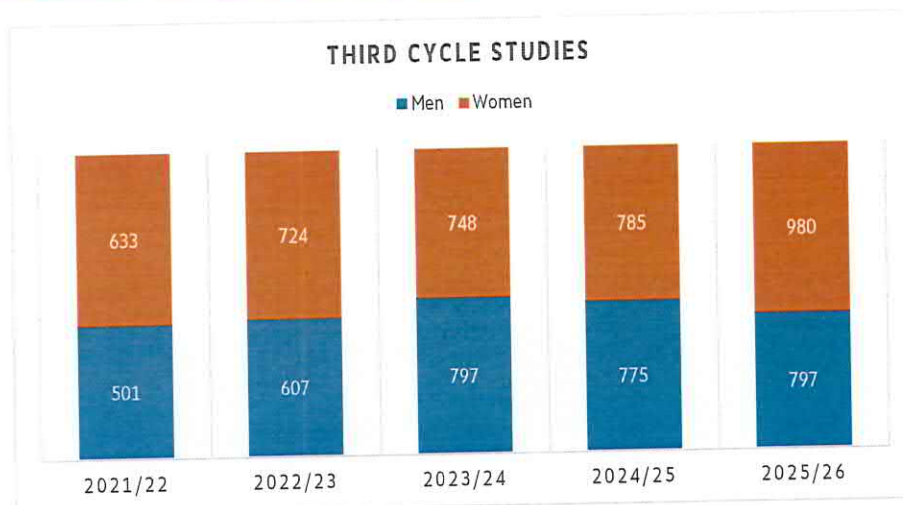


Chart 4: Enrolled students in the third cycle of studies (winter semester), 2021 – 2025

Regarding the scholarships awarded by UKIM, from the attached table, it can be noted that female students have significantly higher success rates compared to all scholarships and all periods of analysis covered.

		Women	Men
Scholarships by „Atanas Bliznakoff“ Foundation	2004 – 2021	48	27
	2021 – 2022	97	38
	2023 – 2024	46	12
	2024 – 2025	29	11
	2025 – 2026	31	12
Scholarships by „Petar Stamatof“ Foundation	2007 – 2017	22	12
Scholarships by „Konstantin Stojanov“ Foundation	2021	4	0
	2023	14	4
	Total	291	116

Table 1: Student scholarship recipients

In addition to the fact that the number of female students is larger, as well as their activity during their studies, 8 male and 2 female students have been elected to the position of student president from 2004 to the present.

Administrative staff

The gender composition in the administration indicates a large imbalance, so out of a total of 722 employees, 193 are men (26.7%) and 529 are women (73.3%) (Ratio of women 2.7:1 men).

To the position of Secretary of the University and its units, from 2005 to the present, 36 women and 17 men have been elected (ratio of women 2.1:1 men).

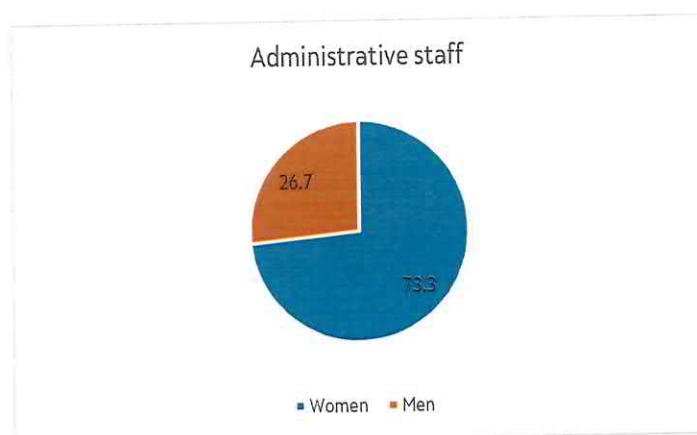


Chart 5: Administrative staff

Academic staff¹³

Currently, a total of 2,088 teaching, scientific and associate staff work at the University, of which 955 are men (45.7%) and 1,133 are women (54.3%).

Representation and Governance

When discussing gender representation in the University bodies, it is imperative to consider the composition of the University Senate as the highest representative body, responsible for policy-making and oversight. According to the data presented for the initial compositions of the Senate since 2008 (excluding fluctuations), positive developments are observed in terms of gender representation.

¹³ Academic staff

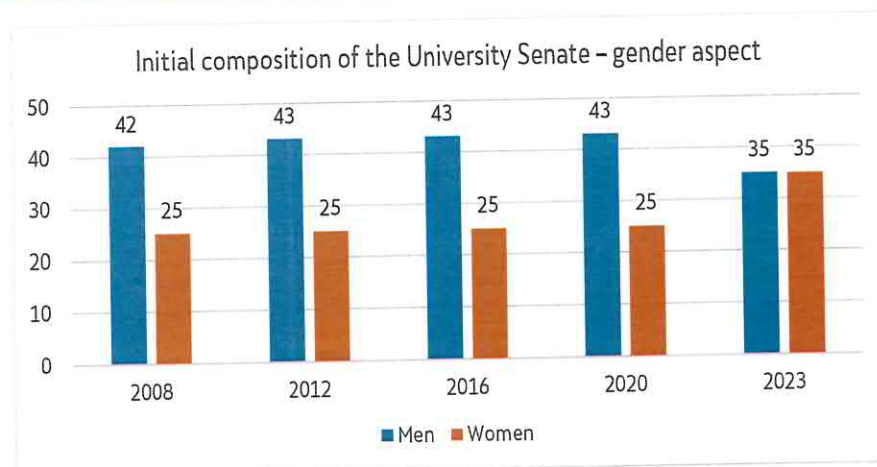


Chart 6: Composition of the University Senate

In terms of gender representation of the highest management positions at the level of the University unit, the composition is as follows: out of a total of 28 units (faculties and institutes), 22 are led by men (deans/directors), and only 6 by women (deans/directors). A greater balance is observed in relation to the positions of vice-dean/deputy director, where out of a total of 67 positions, 36 are led by women, and 31 by men.

The highest position of rector, since the establishment of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje (1949) until today, has been held by only two women out of a total of 24 individuals elected to this role. The first female Rector was Prof. Dr. Radmila Kiprijanova, elected for the mandate period 1995/1996 – 1997/1998, and the second female Rector is Prof. Dr. Biljana Angelova, who has held this position from 2023/2024 to present. The distribution of Vice-Rector positions from 2012 to date indicates a general existence of gender balance.

Vice-Rectors composition	Elected:	Women	Men
	2012 – 2016	1	3
	2016 – 2020	2	2
	2020 – 2023	3	1
	2023 – 2026	2	2

Table 2: Gender representation in the position of Vice-Rector

Scientific Research Activity

From the perspective of Erasmus+ mobility applications over the past four years, greater activity can be observed among women compared to men.

2021/2022		2022/2023		2023/2024		2024/2025	
Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
25	64	16	56	27	48	18	57

Table 3: Gender representation of participants who applied for Erasmus+ mobility, 2021-2025

Regarding applications for international research projects from the application platform which includes programs such as Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, Erasmus+, CREA, UPMC, Single Market, SOCPL, LIFE, and other programs, data from the past four years show activity from both genders, with slightly higher activity from men.

2022		2023		2024		2025	
Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
31	26	23	30	58	33	81	73

Table 4: Applications for international research projects

Regarding the Scientist of the Year Award, 4 women and 10 men applied for it in 2023, while 6 women and 7 men applied in 2024.

Social security

UKIM teaching staff feels highly socially secure, without a significant gender gap. The majority of respondents (55%), as well as a majority of men (53%) and women (57%), fully agree that their job position is stable. Similarly, over 44% of respondents – i.e. 41% of men and 47% of women – express complete agreement regarding satisfaction with their own personal or family socio-economic security (see Chart 7). Women in the sample show slightly higher full agreement on both questions, as well as a minimally higher average score, which for both genders exceeds 4 on the five-point scale.

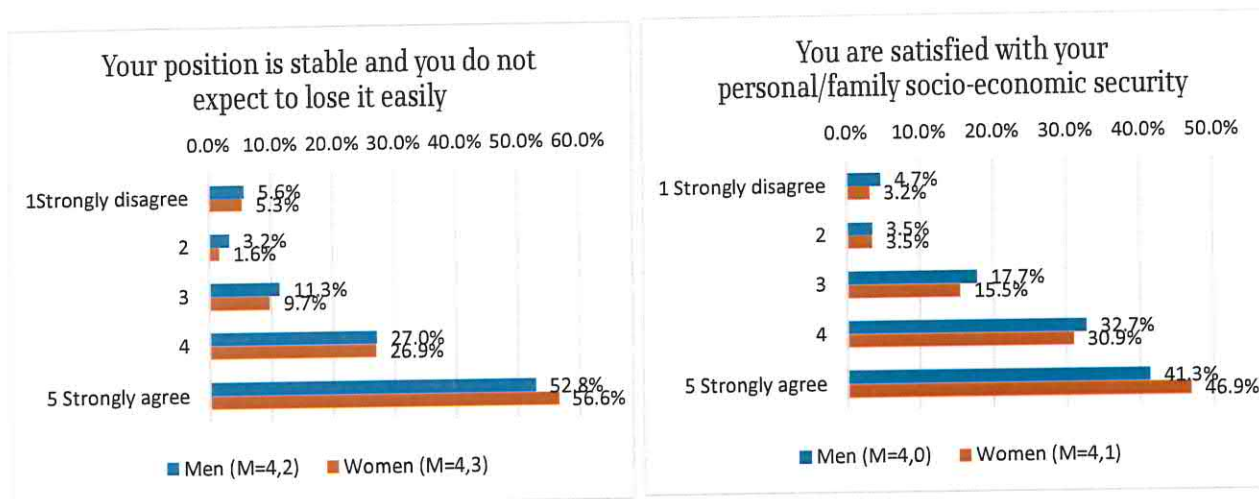


Chart 7: Socioeconomic security among UKIM employees, by gender

Similarly, academic staff as a whole are mostly satisfied with their salary and the social benefits they receive as employees of UKIM, without a clearly visible gender gap, meaning with similar levels of agreement (see Chart 8). Nearly half of men (45.5%) and women (46%) fully agree that they are satisfied with their salary, with average values of 3.9 on a five-point scale for both groups. Satisfaction with social benefits is also at a similar level: expressed through average values, which are 3.9 for men and 3.8 for women.

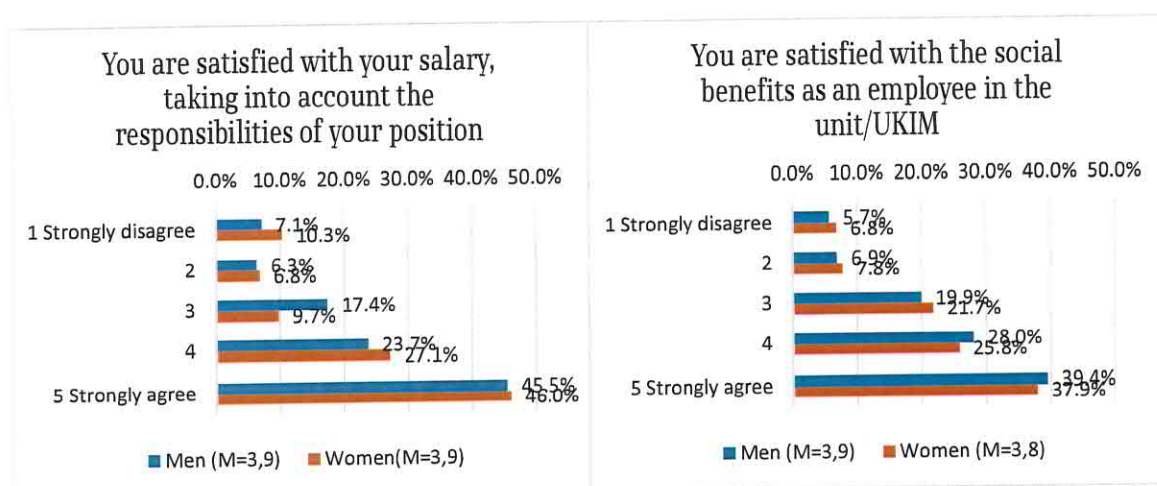


Chart 8: Satisfaction with salary and social benefits as UKIM employees, by gender

Working conditions

Men, slightly more than women, assess the working conditions more positively, although the differences are not large (see chart 9). 44% of men, compared to 36% of women, have reported that they always feel safe at work. Women more often choose the middle categories of the scale (the third and fourth levels), and the difference in average values is minimal: 4.0 versus 3.9 on the five-level scale. Similarly, men also express a greater sense of security when conducting research activities (45% versus 41% always felt safe), which, expressed in average values, again amounts to 4.0 versus 3.9.

In addition, women agree slightly less likely than men that their workplace allows them to balance their professional and private obligations, while at the same time they more often express a feeling of being overloaded at work (see Chart 10). Thus, 41% of women, compared to 46.5% of men, fully agree that the workplace enables a balance between professional and private obligations, which expressed through the average values, amounts to 3.8 versus 4.0. The gap with the second question is somewhat more pronounced: 38% of women (average 3.9) and 30% of men (average 3.5) fully agree that they feel overloaded with obligations.

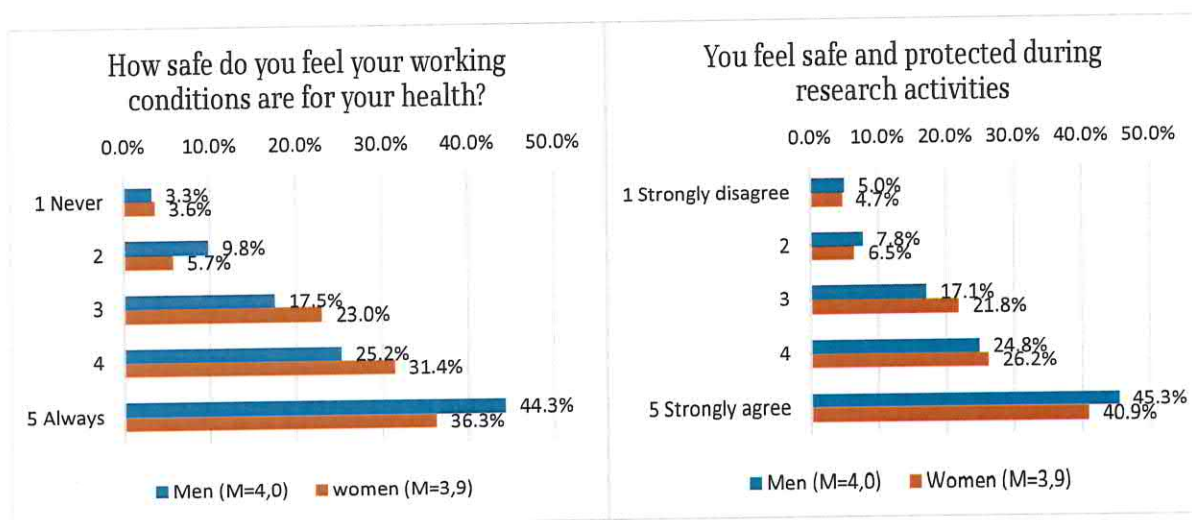


Chart 9: Safety at Work, by Gender

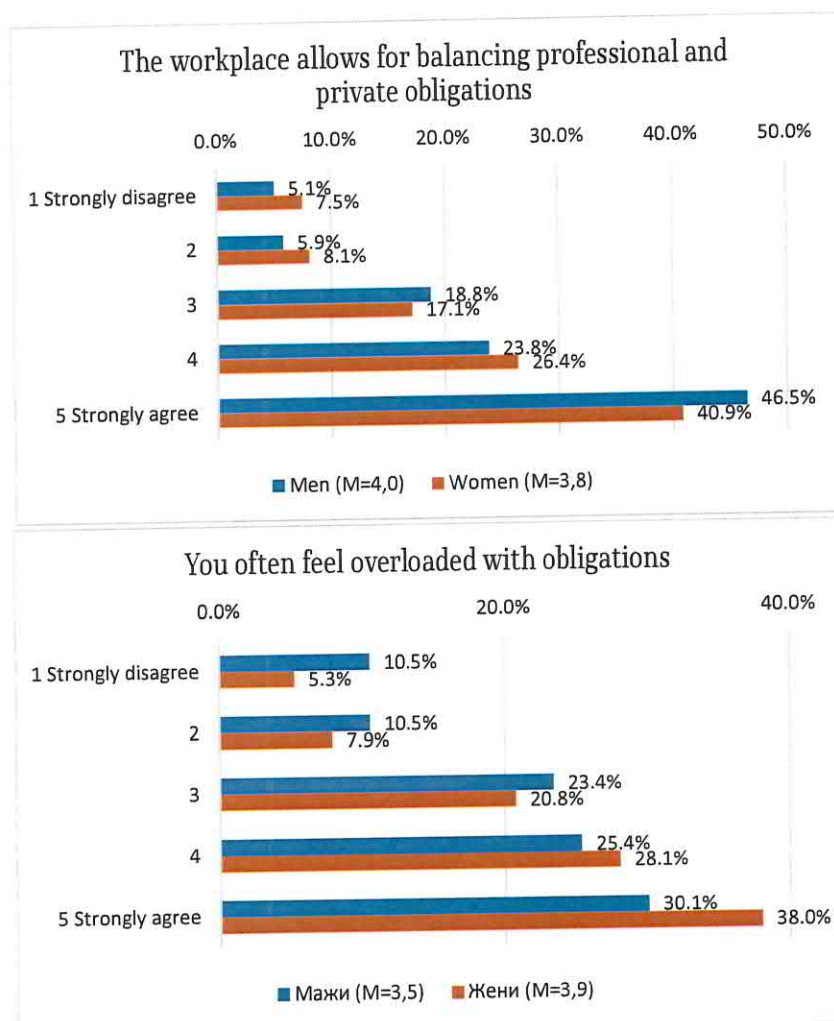


Chart 10: Balance between professional and private obligations and work overload, by gender

Workplace discrimination

Women perceive workplace discrimination to a greater extent, but also more often have a personal experience with discrimination (see chart 11). Although the majority of respondents – members of the academic staff of UKIM – strongly disagree that discrimination on any kind is present, and the vast majority did not report personal experiences with discrimination, negative experiences are still higher among women. Over 9% of women, compared to less than 6% of men, completely agree that discrimination is present (which, expressed as an average, is 2.0 versus 1.8 on a five-point scale). In addition, almost 12% of women, compared to slightly over 5% of men, reported having experienced discrimination within the framework of their work at UKIM.

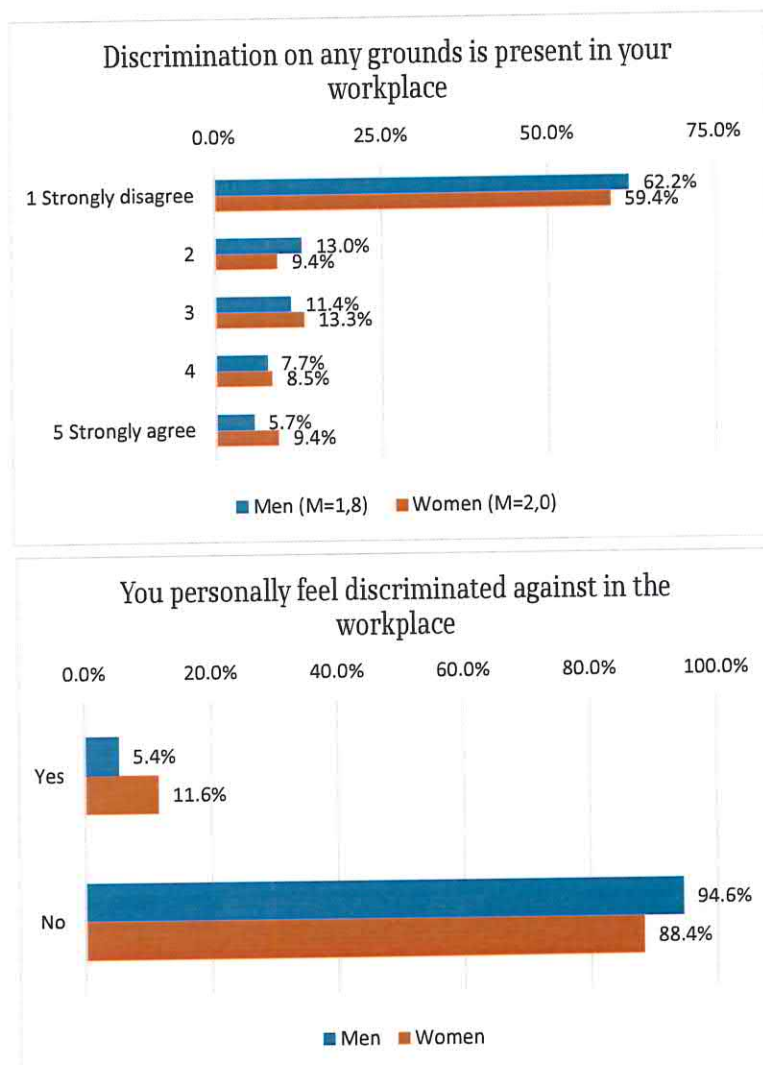


Chart 11: Perceptions and experiences with discrimination, by gender

Women, compared to men, are less likely to agree that recruitment and promotion processes ensure equal treatment of both genders, although the differences are moderate yet noticeable (see Chart 12). Namely, although a large majority of respondents believe that men and women are treated equally during recruitment and promotion, this agreement among women is somewhat lower – expressed as an average, 4.5 versus 4.7 on a five-point scale. The situation is similar with regard to the assessment that recruitment and promotion committees should have a gender balance: fewer women fully agree with this statement, and their average score is slightly lower than that of men.

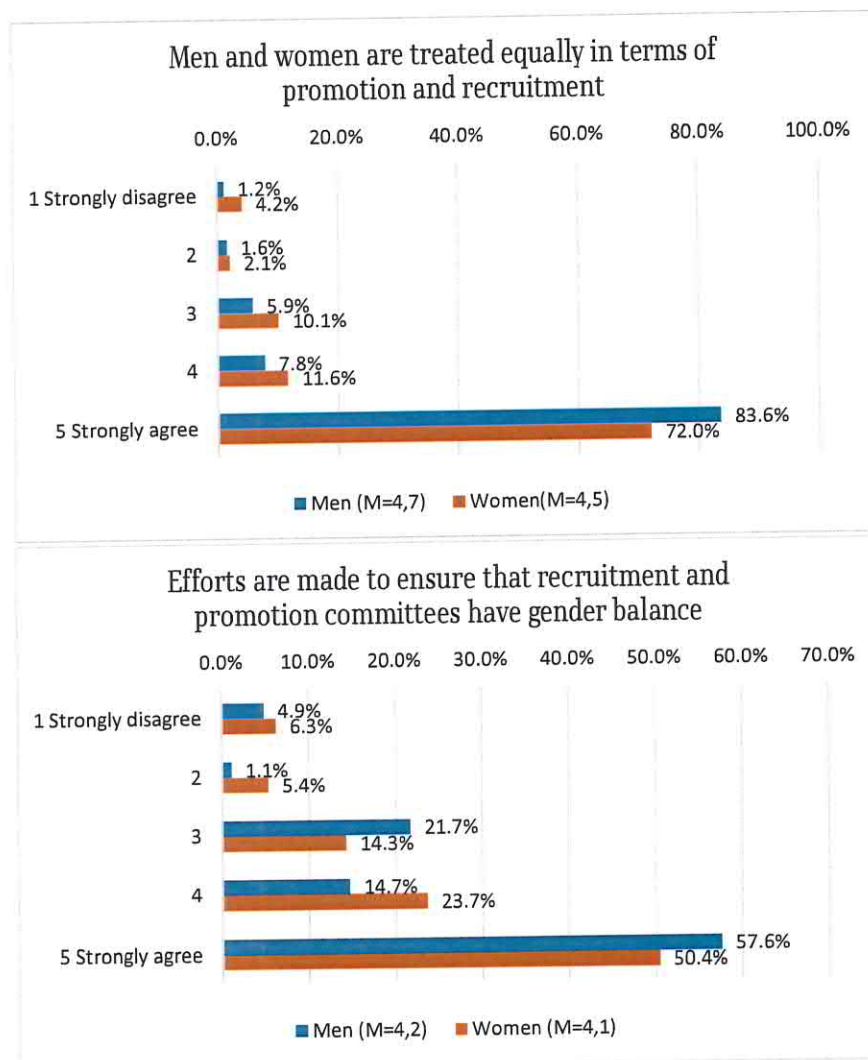


Chart 12: Perceptions of gender equality in recruitment and promotion processes, by gender

Developing Gender Equality Plan of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje

The Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje (UKIM) has started to develop and implement a Gender Equality Plan by setting-up a **Team** composed of members with prior experience in data collection and work related to gender equality issues and the implementation of international projects. The team consists of participants from higher levels (researchers) and administrative staff from the Central,

Professional and Administrative office - Rectorate, and students may be included as needed. The responsibilities of the team for developing and implementing the Gender Equality Plan include **strategic planning, coordination, and monitoring of measures**.

The team responsible for developing and implementing the Gender Equality Plan has clearly defined responsibilities that ensure effective implementation of measures and monitoring of progress, such as: **Development of the Plan** – preparing the structure and content of the Gender Equality Plan and aligning it with national and European standards and regulations; **Data collection and analysis** – gathering statistical data on gender representation (students, teaching staff, non-teaching staff) and conducting risk analysis and identifying areas requiring intervention; **Implementation of measures** – coordinating activities outlined in the Plan and involving relevant units and students; **Monitoring and reporting** – tracking progress in implementing measures, **preparing periodic reports, and providing recommendations for improvement**.

The Gender Equality Plan of UKIM, 2022-2025, is based on the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, and equal access to resources and opportunities for all students and employees. Numerous activities related to gender issues were carried out, such as the implementation of 24 research and applied projects, 156 research and papers published in national and international journals, and 83 organized events (conferences, workshops, and debates). The activities of the Gender Equality Plan for 2026-2028 will contribute to ensuring continuity in **raising awareness** among employees and students about the importance of equality, **increasing the representation of women** in certain structures and bodies, and **creating conditions for a balance between professional and private life**.

Gender Equality Plan, 2026-2028 **(goals, activities, indicators, target groups, and implementation period)**

The integration of human rights and gender equality is an essential prerequisite for the development of every social area. Women, men and young people must be equally involved in all processes, because respect for diversity directly improves the quality of society and strengthens its democratic foundation. All existing knowledge indicates that gender equality and respect for diversity have a direct impact on the quality of the society being built and in which these processes that have a deep social meaning take place. This, in particular, refers to the education sector as an activity that is intertwined with the creation and transfer of knowledge, upbringing and the transfer of social values, but also processes of development and innovation in scientific fields. This year, the EU Gender Equality Report 2025 is being published, but the new directive, the Roadmap for Women's Rights 2025 and the Annex - Declaration on the Principles of a Gender Equal Society, which aim to build on the previous

document, "A Community of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy, 2020 - 2025", are also being promoted, and this represents progress in this area.

In the programs for the development of higher education in the European area, for mobility and networking, for student exchange and for funded scientific research, many standards and rules for gender-balanced education and scientific activity are already embedded. The gender aspect is a mandatory part of applications for scientific research, development and innovation projects, as well as many other programs funded by the European Union. The examples and practices in the European countries are numerous and diverse. The countries are at different levels of development. Yet all have advanced and ambitious plans for respecting and implementing policies and mechanisms for gender equality.

The Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje (hereinafter referred to as UKIM) follows these trends, which has motivated the creation the second three-year Gender Equality Plan, which thematically addresses the university's positions and ambitions. It is gratifying that UKIM has a good starting point for gender equality and representation, but, nevertheless, this plan has designed several goals and activities, and through the process of their implementation it is expected to achieve improvement in some areas. This Gender Equality Plan is built around 5 key themes: Development of a culture of gender equality, Improving opportunities for equality in higher education, Gender dimension in scientific activity and research agenda, Improving work-life balance and Protection from sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

Goal 1: Development of a culture of gender equality

With regard to developing a culture within the overall organisational context related to gender equality issues, guidance is provided by the European education sphere through documents such as the Roadmap for Women's Rights (March 2025)¹⁴, the Declaration of Principles (also from March 2025)¹⁵, the gender equality documents in research and innovation¹⁶, and various analyses of the situation across the European area. In this context, UKIM will focus on:

¹⁴ https://commission.europa.eu/news-and-media/news/eu-roadmap-womens-rights-renewed-push-gender-equality-2025-03-07_en

¹⁵ https://commission.europa.eu/document/7d965089-e332-473a-88a9-e246f214e3bf_en

¹⁶ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-research-and-innovation/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en

- advancing gender-equality policies and supporting their representation at all levels of the University;
- organising seminars, workshops, debates, and cultural events that promote gender equality through the sharing of positive practices (including the organisation and promotion of a “Gender Equality Week”);
- promoting legal provisions and sharing good practices in the implementation of gender-equality standards;
- creating a platform for sharing data and information related to the implementation of gender equality.

Activity	Target group	Period of implementation	Responsible persons	Indicator
1.1. Introduction to UKIM's gender-equality policies, aimed at newly appointed academic and administrative staff, as well as students, with the goal of raising awareness and integrating the gender perspective into everyday practices	New academic and administrative staff	First 3 months after employment	HR, UKIMs' units	Number of newly employed staff who have completed the induction
1.2. Provision of gender-equality materials and protection mechanisms through integrated QR code	Students	2027 – 2028	University services, Students' Assembly	Number of disseminated information
1.3. Organisation of a “Gender Equality Week” dedicated to promoting gender equality through panel discussions, workshops, cultural events, campaigns, and interactive activities	Students, academic and administrative staff	2028	GE Team, University's services	Number of activities
1.4. Strengthening cooperation with the real sector to improve the academic and social environment for students through inclusive practices, accessible spaces, gender-sensitive services, and the promotion of a culture of equality	Students	Continuously	GE Team, Students' Assembly	Number of campaigns/workshops/services provided in cooperation with the real sector

1.5. Monitoring normative acts and providing recommendations aimed at achieving substantive gender equality	Students, academic and administrative staff	Continuously	GE Team	Number of analysed documents and recommendations provided
---	---	--------------	---------	---

Goal 2: Improving Opportunities for Equality in Higher Education

UKIM continues to support and advance processes related to gender equality. In the upcoming period, UKIM will focus on:

- analysing the situation at the level of the University and its units as a starting point for improving processes;
- establishing a system for continuous monitoring of gender representation among all stakeholders at UKIM;
- developing recommendations for gender-balanced teams and gender-balanced representation wherever expertise allows;
- analysing the causes of gender imbalance among students and providing support to address them.

Activity	Target group	Period of implementation	Responsible persons	Indicator
2.1. Support for student initiatives aimed at inclusiveness, gender equality, and the improvement of student life	Students	2027 – 2028	Rector, Vice-Rectors, Students' Assembly	Prepared and implemented initiatives
2.2. Systematic monitoring of the gender representation of enrolled students across scientific areas/fields and conducting research to identify the reasons behind students' choice of area/field	Students	2026 – 2028	Administrative services of UKIM and its units; GE Team	Statistical data obtained Mechanism developed for regular monitoring of gender representation

				across scientific areas
2.3. Developing recommendations for gender-balanced teams and gender-balanced representation wherever expertise allows	Students, academic and administrative staff	2026	GE Team	Recommendations developed

Goal 3: Gender Dimension in Scientific Activity and the Research Agenda

UKIM is continuously developing as an institution that applies the principles and standards of democratic governance. Regular practices for data collection and analysis are being established, as well as the use of data to improve policies and processes. In this context, regular research will be conducted related to:

- monitoring the situation regarding gender representation by the Gender Equality Team;
- improving policies for gender-balanced science and participation in international projects;
- disseminating information to support the preparation of applications for European and international projects with an embedded gender dimension, as required under Horizon Europe;
- conducting research to gain deeper insights into the state of gender equality and to identify the underlying causes;
- involving students at all levels, particularly in scientific research, to encourage the adoption of gender-balanced practices;
- applying research techniques for monitoring progress;
- sharing scientific findings and gender-sensitive analyses with public authorities (as a basis for evidence-based policymaking);
- preparing an annual report by the Gender Equality Team.

Activity	Target group	Period of implementation	Responsible persons	Indicator
3.1. Advancing policies for gender-balanced science through active participation in international projects and the integration of the	Academic staff	2026 – 2028	Project Office at UKIM	Number of international projects with integrated

gender perspective into research initiatives				gender perspective
3.2. Systematic collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data on research teams and leadership applicants for international projects and mobility programmes	Academic staff	2026 – 2028	International Relations Office and Project Office at UKIM	Preparation of analyses
3.3. Dissemination of information to support the preparation of applications for European and international projects with an embedded gender dimension, as required under Horizon Europe	Academic staff	2026	Project Office at UKIM	Information prepared and disseminated
3.4. Sharing scientific findings and gender-sensitive analyses with central and local authorities through inter-institutional cooperation, in order to support the development of evidence-based policies and practices	Academic staff Other institutions and stakeholders	2027 – 2028	Academic staff working in areas related to gender issues	Number of initiatives with other institutions
3.5. Preparation of annual report	Students, academic and administrative staff	2026 – 2028	GE Team	Report prepared

Goal 4: Improving Work-Life Balance

In the inclusive and academic environment of UKIM, an atmosphere of high motivation and excellent cooperation among all individuals who work and study at the University is continuously supported. In this regard, UKIM will focus on:

- improving working conditions and increasing opportunities for balancing work and private life;
- aligning parenting and work-related leave with the responsibilities employees have related to childcare and children's education;
- giving priority to women when representing UKIM in state bodies responsible for developing laws and policies in the field of labour relations.

Activity	Target group	Period of implementation	Responsible persons	Indicator
4.1. Measuring the satisfaction of administrative and support staff with the opportunities for balancing work and private life	Administrative staff	2028	GE Team	Data Analyses
4.2. Exploring the possibility of remote work to support balancing work responsibilities and parenting	Academic staff, Administrative staff	2027	Secretaries	Number of units that have implemented the policy

Goal 5: Protection from Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Violence

UKIM is committed to ensuring a functional academic environment in which teaching, research, and communication activities can take place without disruption. In this regard, UKIM will focus on:

- prevention of and support in cases of gender-based violence;
- improving procedures for reporting sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and discrimination;
- monitoring the implementation of mechanisms for effective processing of reports;
- systematic sharing of information and reporting procedures;
- identifying gender-based biases;
- annual coordination between the Gender Equality Team, student organisations, and the Student Ombudsman to exchange information and monitor the situation.

Activity	Target group	Period of implementation	Responsible persons	Indicator
5.1. Ensuring synergy between the authorised person for receiving corruption reports, the UKIM Ethics Committee, and the Student Ombudsperson in order to monitor the implementation of mechanisms for effective processing of reports	Students, Academic and Administrative staff	2026 – 2028	GE Team	Number of follow-up reviewed reports
5.2. Research aimed at collecting more information on all forms of harassment at UKIM	Students	2026	GE Team, Students' Assembly	Status report

5.3. Coordination between the Gender Equality Team, student organisations, and the Student Ombudsperson, with an established mechanism for monitoring procedures related to gender equality	GE Team, student organisations, and the Student Ombudsman	2027 – 2028	GE Team	Meetings held
---	---	-------------	---------	---------------

The Gender Equality Plan was adopted by the University Senate of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje at its 26th session, held on 29 December 2025.

Place: Skopje

Date: 29 December 2025

President of the University Senate

Prof. Dragi Dimitrievski, PhD

