INSTITUTIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY

2022-2025

The *Institutional Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality* was submitted to the Senate of the University of Thessaly by the **Gender Equality Committee**, and it was unanimously approved at Senate meeting no. 275/22-7-2022 of the University of Thessaly.

Gender Equality Committee of the University of Thessaly

July 2022

The Institutional Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality of the University of Thessaly for the years 2022-2025 was developed under the responsibility of the Gender Equality Committee of the University of Thessaly. The members of the Gender Equality Committee are:

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Introduction

This Institutional Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality (hereinafter IAPGE) for the University of Thessaly proposes a set of actions aimed at:

- combating all forms of gender-based and other social discrimination and exclusion based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, social class, race, ethnicity and disability in education, research, employment and senior management in higher education,
- promoting gender equality, equal access and equal opportunities regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, social class, race, ethnicity and disability in education, research, employment and senior management in higher education,
- strengthening a culture of inclusion and raising awareness on issues related to various social discriminations and divisions based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, social class, race, ethnicity and disability within the university community,
- enhancing scientific research and education on issues of gender, social discrimination and exclusion and human rights,
- promoting the ongoing democratization of higher education and scientific research.

The IAPGE of the University of Thessaly was drafted by a team of three researchers specializing in Gender Studies, social and cultural theory, human rights and critical legal studies, spatial theories and social change, in collaboration with and under the supervision of the University of Thessaly's Gender Equality Committee. Among other priorities, this IAPGE aims to implement European and national guidelines and legal obligations, as well as to align with the standards set by the Horizon Europe program, the new framework for Research and Innovation (2021–2027) of the Council of Europe, so that research conducted within and/or supported by the University of Thessaly meets the relevant standards for research and innovation.

In **Chapter I**, **Critical Epistemologies and Institutional Interventions**, the conceptual and institutional frameworks of this IAPGE are presented and discussed. The conceptual framework analyzes a series of terms fundamental to this IAPGE, with references to the academic fields of Gender Studies, philosophy, and social and cultural theory. The institutional framework addresses gender and LGBTQ+ equality, as well as other forms of combating social inequalities at international, European, and national levels, with particular emphasis on the Horizon Europe program (2021–2027).

In **Chapter II, Gender and Equality at the University of Thessaly**, the focus is on the University of Thessaly. Using qualitative and quantitative research methods, an attempt is made to map the

current situation concerning issues of equality and democratic awareness. The existing structures and initiatives of the University aimed at equal treatment and inclusion are presented, the gender distribution of human resources is recorded, and an indicative overview of Gender Studies at the University of Thessaly is provided (a brief historical review and depiction of the current situation).

In **Chapter III, Proposed Actions**, the principles and conditions that we consider critical for equal participation in the life of the university community are initially presented, laying the foundation for the design of the actions proposed in this IAPGE. Subsequently, a series of actions is proposed to promote gender equality and combat various social discriminations and exclusions at the University of Thessaly, over the three-year horizon 2022–2025.

Finally, in the **Epilogue: Long-Term Actions**, a visionary academic strategy is presented for a more equitable and democratic university, based on recent developments in Gender Studies and awareness-raising on social inclusion issues at the University of Thessaly.

Chapter I. Critical Epistemologies and Institutional Interventions

The development of substantive and effective policies for the promotion of equality first requires an understanding of the conditions that lead to phenomena of gender inequality and other forms of social discrimination and violence. In this context, it is essential to clarify the concepts of gender, equality, intersectionality and the democratic university, drawing on contemporary international literature in the academic fields of Gender Studies, philosophy and social and cultural theory. These specific terms emerge from and are intertwined with fields of collective claims and horizons of democratic action, which are shaped and transformed according to the social, political, cultural and historical context.

At the same time, a series of institutional interventions have opened up the possibility of combating gender-based and other forms of social discrimination and exclusion. Specifically, the institutional framework for gender and LGBTQ+ equality, as well as for addressing other forms of social discrimination, is presented. This framework is developed in three parts: the presentation of the international and European institutional framework, the depiction of the national framework, and a reference to the European Horizon Europe program (2021–2027).

A. Conceptual Framework
Gender
Tracing the historical trajectory of feminist theory and practice in the Western world, it is

observed that the demands formulated from the late 19th century up to approximately the 1960s concerned "women."[1] These demands related to a series of rights to which women traditionally did not have access within patriarchal social systems, such as the right to vote, property ownership, education and paid work. In the academic sphere, and in direct connection with the political stakes of the era, Women's Studies emerged in the 1960s as an interdisciplinary field drawing on the social and human sciences, aiming, among other things, to restore the visibility of women in official history and to highlight their contribution to the production of scientific knowledge.

Through processes occurring both in theoretical reflection and political movements, the 1980s witnessed a discursive shift from women to gender. This shift questions the universality of the categories man/woman, decouples their differences from biology and links them to historical and cultural contexts, while also delving into differences within the categories, that is, differences among "women" – and also among "men." The distinction between biological and social gender, introduced by sociologist Ann Oakley in her 1972 work *Sex, Gender and Society*, represents a milestone in feminist theory and practice. According to this distinction, biological sex concerns genetic and anatomical characteristics, whereas social gender is shaped by historical and cultural contexts, producing gender identities as well as modes of coexistence and social organization. Institutions such as the family, education, work, and the state function as sites for learning and consolidating social gender, which encompasses gendered roles, expectations and stereotypes.

In Gender Studies, a landmark is Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, articulated in 1990, according to which gender is performed through a series of acts, gestures and postures that are repeated over time. These repetitive performances render behaviors and perceptions associated with gender as natural and given, eventually acquiring the force of social norms (Butler, 1990/2009).

Alongside these critical shifts and breakthroughs, within the emerging Gender Studies and the feminist movement, it became evident that gender must be studied together with other aspects of the socially situated self, such as sexuality, race, social class, ethnicity, and ability, among others, in order to understand how various gendered subjects experience different forms of oppression and exclusion. This initiated a series of processes toward a more intersectional feminism. Specifically, regarding sexuality as a category intertwined with the concept of gender

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[1] For the writing of this section, a key reference is the scholarly work *Feminist Theory and Cultural Critique*, edited by Athina Athanasiou (2006), and in particular the introductory text by Athina Athanasiou, "Introduction: Gender, Power, and Subjectivity after the 'Second Wave'."

and producing new identities as well as new exclusions, the concept of heteronormativity (Warner, 1991) describes the regulatory dimensions of dominant understandings of sexuality, which extend beyond issues of attraction and desire. Drawing on Adrienne Rich's concept of compulsory heterosexuality (1980), heteronormativity refers to the belief that heterosexuality is the only acceptable option, that sexuality is necessarily reproductive and that it is inextricably linked to the gender binary of man/woman. In contrast to these entrenched social prescriptions, LGBTQ+ movements and corresponding theories emphasize gender identity, expression and characteristics as they intersect with other aspects of subjects' identities, while advocating for rights related to diverse forms of relationality and kinship.

Equality

In her text titled "Deconstructing the 'Equality or Difference' Dilemma, or, the Usefulness of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism" (1988/2006), historian Joan W. Scott argues that equality and difference are not opposing, mutually exclusive terms; rather, difference—or rather, differences—constitute "the very meaning of the idea of equality itself" (Scott, 1988/2006, p. 159). Drawing on poststructuralist thought that first developed in philosophy and using a gender discrimination court case in employment as an example, she analyzes how the construction of such binaries shapes our thinking and actions. Specifically, regarding gender difference, dominant discourse, which insists that "women" and "men" differ by nature, seeks to limit the horizon of feminist action. It implies that we must either deny the existence of differences or, if we acknowledge them, abandon the idea of equality. However, as Scott emphasizes, the opposite of equality is not difference, but "inequality, or the lack of equivalence" (ibid., p. 158), since equality as a horizon for claims is grounded precisely in the existence of differences, which arise in relation to the social, cultural, and historical context. For a feminist overcoming of this artificial dilemma between equality and difference, Scott proposes two gestures:

The first consists of a systematic critique of the functions of the categorical divergence lies in the disclosure of the exclusions and incorporations which it effects – the hierarchies which it constructs – as well as in the denial of absolute truth, to which it ultimately refers. Such denial, however, must not be carried out in the name of an equality founded upon similarity or identity, but, on the contrary, in the name of an equality grounded in differences – differences which complicate, disrupt, and render indeterminate the meaning of any established binary opposition (and this constitutes the second gesture). (ibid., p. 162).

Within the framework of the present Gender Equality Plan (GEP), gender equality is construed as equal access, equal rights, equal opportunities, equal representation and the elimination of

violence and various forms of social discrimination, and it operates as a horizon of inclusion. By adopting the gestures proposed by Scott, we maintain that difference, diversity, and coexistence constitute issues that remain perpetually open within the horizon of the ongoing democratization of the public University and that the promotion of gender equality is a task to be pursued through intersectionality—attentive to the evolving needs of its community and consistently seeking ways to ensure that no individual is left behind.

Intersectionality

The concept of intersectionality[2], rendered in Greek primarily as "διαθεματικότητα," was first articulated within the framework of Critical Race Theory and Black feminism by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. It constitutes a theoretical paradigm which "describes and refers to the multiple, interdependent and interconnected systems of hierarchy, oppression and privilege through which social subjects are constituted" (Zavos, 2021, p. 57). Specifically, according to the intersectional approach, the discriminations experienced by social and gendered subjects do not operate in an additive manner, nor are they ranked in terms of severity, but instead generate complex inequalities.

The case upon which Crenshaw relied in formulating the concept of intersectionality in her article *"Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics"* (1989) concerned the intersection of gender, race and class in the field of employment. Specifically, it referred to the 1976 complaint lodged by five Black women against the company General Motors, who were excluded both from positions designated for white women and from positions designated for Black men. As a result, these women were subjected to multiple forms of discrimination, which the law failed to recognize—treating them either exclusively as women or exclusively as Black subjects—and ultimately dismissed their complaint. Other axes of oppression that may be considered within an intersectional perspective, beyond gender, race and class, include sexuality, disability, ethnicity/national origin, age and religion, among others[3].

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[2] The term *intersectionality*, as employed in the present document, must not be confused with the notion of intersectionality as identified in pedagogical theory, where it denotes a practice of designing pedagogical activities and structuring curricula. It is further to be distinguished from the notion of *cross-sectorality*, which constitutes an alternative rendering of "intersectionality" in Greek. Within the present GEP, *cross-sectorality* is used solely for the purpose of referring to inter-sectoral policies (see Priority Axis 4 of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021–2025, p. 21).

[3] Parallel to the problematic of intersectionality, the emergence of the field of Disability Studies during the same period has opened new perspectives for the analysis and critical reflection of embodied subjectivity. See, indicatively, Snyder and Mitchell, *"Refiguring the Body: Disability Studies and the Resistance to Embodiment"*, in the collective volume *Biosocialities: Perspectives in the Anthropology of Health*, edited by Athina Athanasiou (2011).

Within the framework of the present GEP, intersectionality constitutes, on the one hand, a conceptual tool through which forms of inequality and phenomena of exclusion and discrimination are analyzed, and, on the other hand, a methodological horizon (Carastathis, 2016), insofar as it reminds us that subjects possess multiple, non-static identities which must be taken into consideration for the substantive and effective promotion of equality.

Democratic University

In her article *"The Vocation of the Public University"* (2018), political theorist Wendy Brown argues that the inclusion of "outsiders" by the public university constitutes a decisive objective, indicative of the effort of continuous democratization which must govern it as a guiding principle. According to Brown, in order for the public university to be democratic, it must be "adept at and committed to educating and including those who have historically been excluded on the basis of social origin, class, religion, race, gender, sexuality or embodiment" (Brown, 2018, p. 55). Through this function, the public university is able to offer "redress of historical exclusions and inequalities, the incorporation of principles such as substantive meritocracy and the production of diverse and polyphonic knowledge." Within this vision, it may become a "mechanism" for advancing social equality and democratization, insofar as it critically confronts masculine, white, heteronormative definitions of excellence and provides equal opportunities and cultivation to all persons (ibid., p. 56).

Moreover, in order to safeguard and reinforce one of its fundamental principles, namely constitutionally protected academic freedom (Article 16 of the Constitution), the public university must continuously strengthen and remain vigilant regarding its democratic functioning. Within this context, feminist and queer critical theory, as well as critical race theory, have persistently emphasized the necessity for a university that is independent, self-governing and capable of autonomously shaping its curricula and the orientation of its research. The public university, in its ongoing democratization, must invest, through both human and material resources, not only in its democratic functioning—understood as governance guided by democratic principles—but also in curricula and research that advance an inclusive vision of equal opportunities and of an open and accessible university as a space for education, labor and co-creation (Butler, 2018). In this way, it is positioned to become itself a laboratory its continuous democratization.

Moreover, as a critical institutional actor, the public university has the duty to resist promptly, concretely and effectively the alarmingly increasing trend of questioning the necessity of measures promoting gender equality and policies protecting the rights of women and LGBTQ+ individuals.

The so-called anti-gender movement[4], which appears to consolidate sexist, homophobic and transphobic discourse into a reactionary political mobilization, systematically undermines the humanities and social sciences to the extent that they study and highlight issues such as inequality, discrimination, racist violence and social exclusion. In the name of defending a "natural gender order" and the "natural" family, Gender Studies and the concept of social gender have been particularly targeted for delegitimization, framed by supporters of the anti-gender movement as part of the so-called "dangerous gender ideology." In this context and given that the anti-gender movement specifically targets both protective policies promoting equality and Gender Studies, as well as the humanities and social sciences more broadly—while, according to research, it has received increased funding[5] in recent years—institutional actors have mobilized to address this phenomenon.

More specifically, on 13 February 2019, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution concerning reactionary mobilizations against women's rights and gender equality in the EU. The text defines these mobilizations as "a reactionary movement against progressive social change, a rollback of acquired rights, or the maintenance of a status quo of inequality."[6]

According to the Resolution, the objectives of the anti-gender movement appear to be common across all countries and include key areas of the institutional and political framework for gender equality and women's rights, such as the integration of a gender perspective across different policy areas, social and labor protection, education, sexual and reproductive health and related rights, the prevention and combating of violence against women and gender-based violence, LGBTQ+ rights, the promotion of women's participation in decision-making positions […] and adequate funding for women's and other human rights organizations and movements[7].

Through its Resolution, the European Parliament calls on Member States "to ensure that women's rights and LGBTQ+ rights are protected and recognized as fundamental conditions of equality

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[4] A detailed study of the anti-gender movement, its objectives, strategies, and its alarmingly increasing capacity to attract funding is provided by the two-volume report of the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy, published in March 2021. Available online:
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57cd7cd9d482e9784e4ccc34/t/60c865e5f8c3ce53222039e3/1623746023308/PowerOverRights_Volume1_web.pdf and
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57cd7cd9d482e9784e4ccc34/t/60cb90dc89619a5c8234aadf/162395 3630210/PowerOverRights2_web.pdf. For the implications of the movement in Europe, see Kuhar & Paternotte (2017) and Verloo (2018).
[5] See also https://www.efsyn.gr/nisides/331829_ypogeia-epithesi-sta-anthropina-dikaiomata .
[6] European Parliament resolution on experiencing a backlash in women's rights and gender equality in the EU (2018/2684(RSP)), under A.
[7] European Parliament resolution on experiencing a backlash in women's rights and gender equality in the EU (2018/2684(RSP)), under M.

within the framework of democracy and the rule of law."[8]

Similarly, the statement of the American Association of University Professors in 2018 condemned the attempt of the anti-gender movement to conceptualize gender strictly in biological terms and to undermine decades of scientific research on issues of gender, gender equality and sexuality. The statement highlights that initiatives such as that of the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán to prohibit Gender Studies in the country constitute a direct attack on academic freedom and democracy[9]. In this context, the academic community and, in particular, the public university, has the duty to safeguard and reinforce its independence and openness as a democratic and inclusive institution, providing equal opportunities in education and employment.

Given the decisive role of the public university in advancing the democratization of society, the establishment of an institutional Gender Equality Action Plan is regarded as a strategically significant commitment of the University of Thessaly and its community. As will be further analyzed in Chapter III, *Proposed Actions*, in seeking to align the GEP with the above direction of continuous democratization of the public university, it was considered essential that the planned actions be guided by polyphony, participatory initiative, transparency, clear distinction of responsibilities among involved bodies and clarity in the established procedures.

B. Institutional Framework
International and European Institutional Framework

Since 1948 and the adoption of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights[10], a multitude of international and European guidelines and regulatory texts have sought to promote gender equality, propose effective measures to combat various forms of social discrimination and exclusion, address gender-based violence and encourage social inclusivity, with critical axes including gender, sexual orientation, class, race, ethnicity, language, religion and disability. This institutional framework, among its other specific objectives, elaborates on the concept of gender equality and is utilized in the present GEP as a key reference and analytical tool for the formulation of a holistic, intersectional approach to equality at the University of Thessaly, which will decisively contribute to the promotion of the continuous democratization of the institution.

For example, regulatory texts such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural

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[8] European Parliament resolution on experiencing a backlash in women's rights and gender equality in the EU (2018/2684(RSP)), under 6.

[9] https://www.aaup.org/article/gender-studies-and-dismantling-critical-knowledge-europe#.YmkNVi8Ro6U .

[10] OHCHR | Universal Declaration of Human Rights - English

Rights (1966)[11], the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)[12], and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing, 4–15 September 1995)[13] have served as cornerstones for establishing, at the international level, the need for strong political commitment and long-term institutional intervention to promote gender equality, combat gender-based discrimination, ensure equal access to employment, education, decision-making and personal development, as well as to address gender-based violence. The Beijing Declaration explicitly defines gender-based violence in paragraph 118 as follows:

Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to the domination of men over women and to discrimination against women, resulting in the impediment of women's development. (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action [Beijing, 4–15 September 1995], §118).

In the same vein, in recent years international organizations have increasingly recognized the need to study the profound impacts that discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals has on contemporary democracies, employment, education, personal development, and social well-being. Since 2008, the informal United Nations LGBTI Core Group[14] has been working within the UN framework with the primary objective of ensuring the universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, particularly for LGBTQ+ persons, with a special emphasis on protection from racist violence and discrimination.

In July 2013, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) launched *UN Free & Equal*,[15] an innovative global awareness campaign aimed at promoting equal rights and fair treatment for LGBTQ+ individuals. Within the same framework, through successive resolutions in 2011[16], 2014[17], and 2016[18], the United Nations has:

1. Undertaken to conduct systematic research on discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity;
2. Encouraged Member States to adopt legislative initiatives preventing discrimination, exclusion, torture, degrading treatment and other forms of homophobic and transphobic

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[11] As ratified by Law No. 1532/1985, Government Gazette 45/A/19-03-1985 (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights | OHCHR).
[12] As ratified by Law No. 1342/1983, Government Gazette 39/A/01-04-1983 (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women New York, 18 December 1979 | OHCHR).
[13] BDPfA E.pdf
[14] Home - UN LGBTI CORE GROUP
[15] LGBTQI+ | United Nations .
[16] Microsoft Word - A HRC RES 17 19final.doc .
[17] United Nations .
[18] 1612176 .

violence;

3. Urged Member States to share and adopt best practices (particularly legislative initiatives) that demonstrably reduce inequalities and combat discrimination;
4. Introduced an independent expert to the United Nations Human Rights Council for the protection of LGBTQ+ persons.

Since 2014, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)[19], recognizing the decisive importance of equality for social well-being and economic development, has been conducting systematic research on issues of inclusion and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals[20].

Taking into account international commitments and guidelines, the European Union has undertaken a series of initiatives, strategic proposals and regulatory obligations aimed at achieving inclusive societies that guarantee equality and work to combat gender-based discrimination, exclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals and gender-based, homophobic and transphobic violence. These initiatives draw on foundational EU texts, such as the founding Treaties of the European Union[21], the European Convention on Human Rights[22] and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union[23].

A decisive development was the adoption of the Istanbul Convention by the Council of Europe (Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence[24]), which, beyond its critical contribution to the prevention and combat of violence against women and the protection of survivors, recognized in its preamble the causal link between gender inequality and gender-based violence and incorporated the following fundamental assumptions:

Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between women

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[19] About | OECD .

[20] https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/lgbti.htm .

[21] See Articles 13 and 141 of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, as amended by the Treaty of Nice, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EL/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12002E/TXT&from=EL

[22] See Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights, available at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-convention/discrimination. Article 14 has been systematically applied by the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, including in cases of discrimination based on sexual orientation (see: https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-convention/the-prohibition-of-discrimination-in-practice).

[23] See Articles 21 §1 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EL/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT&from=cs.

[24] Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS 210)

and men, which have led to the domination of men over women and to discrimination against women by men, as well as to the prevention of women's full advancement […] [Member States of the Council of Europe recognize] the structural nature of violence against women as gender-based violence and the fact that violence against women constitutes one of the key social mechanisms through which women are forced into a subordinate position compared to men (Istanbul Convention, Preamble).

Within the same protective framework established by the fundamental regulatory texts of the European Union, the EU's specific initiatives for the protection of LGBTQ+ persons are situated. Council Directive 2000/78/EC, establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, aims to combat discrimination against, among others, LGBTQ+ individuals and to ensure their equal participation "in economic, cultural, and social life, as well as in their personal advancement."[25]

In 2015, at the initiative of the Commissioner responsible for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, the European Commission drafted a List of Actions to Promote LGBTI Equality[26]. The list included six pillars of initiatives:

1. Strengthening the rights and ensuring the legal protection of LGBTI persons and their families in key areas of EU competence.
2. Robust monitoring and enforcement of existing protective frameworks for LGBTI persons and their families in accordance with EU law.
3. Engaging citizens and promoting diversity and a culture of inclusion.
4. Supporting key stakeholders responsible for promoting equal rights for LGBTI persons within the EU.
5. Providing policymakers with data regarding the challenges faced by LGBTI persons in the EU: data collection and research activities.
6. External action: LGBTI issues in the European neighbourhood and third countries.

In 2020, the European Commission, recognizing the persistent discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals across all areas of social, political, and economic life[27], adopted the EU LGBTI Equality Strategy 2020–2025[28], which is structured around four pillars:

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[25] §9 of the Preamble to Council Directive 2000/78/EC: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32000L0078&utm_source=chatgpt.com
[26] Documents - European Commission .
[27] See, for example, https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/9b338479-c1b5-4d88-a1f8-a248a19466f1 and the most recent research initiated by the European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/trans_and_intersex_equality_rights.pdf.
[28] Documents - European Commission .

1. Addressing discrimination against LGBTI individuals;

2. Ensuring the safety of LGBTI individuals;

3. Building societies free from exclusion of LGBTI persons; and

4. Positioning the EU as a global leader in advocating for equality worldwide.

The European Commission's five-year LGBTI Equality Strategy (2020–2025) aligns with its equally five-year Gender Equality Strategy (2020–2025)[29]. Both initiatives are part of a broader set of European Commission actions aimed at establishing a Union of Equality[30]. The Gender Equality Strategy also includes seven key pillars:

1. Combating gender-based violence;

2. Eliminating gender stereotypes;

3. Closing the gender gap in the labour market;

4. Achieving equal participation of all genders across various economic sectors;

5. Addressing the gender pay and pension gap;

6. Bridging the gender gap in care responsibilities;

7. Achieving balanced gender representation in decision-making processes and politics.

The aim of these initiatives is to consolidate equality within the European Union and to reinforce it through actions addressing identified gaps and challenges, such as gender inequality in employment and education, discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals across all areas of social and economic life and the combatting of gender-based, homophobic and transphobic violence and exclusion. It is noteworthy that challenges, inequalities, and issues related to sex, gender identity and sexuality are often addressed through joint or parallel legislative and strategic initiatives within the European Union. This integrated approach to inequalities based on sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation recognizes the close interrelation of these inequalities and the necessity of developing intersectional responses to the policy challenges they pose.

National Legal Framework

At the constitutional level, the Greek legal order protects gender equality (Article 4 § 2) and

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[29] See https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_el#-2020-2025.

[30] See European Commission Press Release
(https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/el/ip_20_2068)

provides for the adoption of positive measures to promote gender equality (Article 116 § 2). Specific national laws establish measures to enhance gender equality, combat gender-based violence, and address discrimination.

In particular, the measure of gender quotas for promoting the participation of women in decision-making bodies and research, permitted under Article 116 of the Constitution, is also regulated legislatively by Article 57 of Law 3653/2008 (Government Gazette A/21.3.2008). According to this provision, the number of scientists is determined "in accordance with the implementation of a minimum 1/3 quota for each gender, based on Article 116 of the Constitution, provided that the candidates possess the necessary qualifications to fill the respective position in each case."[31]

Under Law 3896/2010 (Government Gazette 207/A/08-12-2010), entitled *"Implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of work and employment – Alignment of national legislation with Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 and other related provisions"*, national legislation was harmonized with Directive 2006/54/EC[32].

The purpose of the law is to ensure the application of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of work and employment. To this end, it contains provisions for the implementation of the principle of equal treatment with regard to:

1. Access to employment, including professional advancement, and vocational training;
2. Working conditions, including remuneration;
3. Occupational social security schemes.

Additionally, Law 3896/2010 (Government Gazette 207/A/08-12-2010) defines sexual harassment in the workplace (Article 2), prohibits it and classifies it as a form of gender-based discrimination in employment, which entails civil and criminal liability (Article 23).

Under Law 4531/2018 (Government Gazette 62/A/05-04-2018), the Hellenic Parliament ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, which was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 7 April 2011 and signed on 11 May 2011 during the 121st session of

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[31] In any case, it is recognized that the quota measure is not a panacea, as it may continue to reproduce the stereotypes associated with identity categories in the legal recognition of gender-based exclusions. On the other hand, if applied strategically and critically, it could contribute to overturning entrenched hegemonies in spaces that traditionally sustain gendered inequalities, which, although mitigated, are not fully overcome (see Subsection II B).

[32] eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EL/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32006L0054&from=BG

the Council in Istanbul.

The provisions introduced to incorporate the obligations arising from the Istanbul Convention include:

1. Strengthening criminal legislation to address crimes committed against women (female genital mutilation, stalking, "honor" crimes);
2. Amending Law 3500/2006 on domestic violence, with the aim of broader and more effective implementation and protection of survivors of domestic violence.

The General Secretariat for Demographic and Family Policy and Gender Equality[33] (formerly the General Secretariat for Gender Equality) is designated as the monitoring authority for the Convention.

Law 4604/2019 (Government Gazette A 50/26-03-2019) aims to promote substantive gender equality and provides measures for the prevention and combat of gender-based violence. Specifically, the law includes provisions that:

1. Define the authorities and bodies responsible for investigating issues of gender equality, proposing policies for its promotion and supervising the correct implementation of relevant national legislation;
2. Oblige the competent authorities to systematically investigate and study gender equality in the country across all areas of political, social and economic life;
3. Establish candidate quotas by gender for parliamentary elections and elections for members of the European Parliament;
4. Introduce measures for the protection of maternity;
5. Introduce measures to promote equality in education, public health, economic life and public discourse;
6. Strengthen the protection of survivors of gender-based violence;
7. Provide for the use of gender-neutral language in administrative documents.

Additionally, Law 4604/2019 recognizes the need to include measures addressing discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation, encouraging a holistic approach to inequalities intersecting with gender, gender identity and sexuality.

With regard to universities, Article 17, paragraph 2 of Law 4604/2019 emphasizes the importance of gender equality in all aspects of academic life. Specifically, it states that: *"Higher Education*

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[33] General Secretariat for Equality and Human Rights – MINISTRY OF SOCIAL COHESION AND FAMILY AFFAIRS

Institutions (HEIs) shall ensure the promotion of gender equality at all levels of their operations and in all procedures of academic life, in accordance with Article 33 of Law 4589/2019 (A' 13)."

The above legislation is cited as indicative of the commitments arising from national law on issues concerning gender equality and the assurance of equal participation for all, regardless of gender, gender identity or sexual orientation, in all aspects of the country's social, political, and economic life.

Furthermore, the specific directions of the medium-term national policy on gender equality are set out in the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021–2025[34]. The action plan establishes five priority axes (and more specific sub-axes):

1. Prevention and combat of gender-based and domestic violence:
    1.1. Implementation of the provisions of the Istanbul Convention (Law 4531/2018)
    1.2. Combatting workplace violence
    1.3. Strengthening and upgrading the network of structures for the combat of violence against women
    1.4. Combatting other forms of violence
2. Equal participation of women in the labor market
    2.1. Promotion of female employment
    2.2. Reconciliation of professional and family life
    2.3. Reduction of the gender pay and pension gap
    2.4. Promotion of women's entrepreneurship
    2.5. Enhancement of education and training for women and girls in research and technology
3. Equal participation of women in decision-making/leadership positions
    3.1. Increase in the number of women in politics
    3.2. Increase in the number of women in positions of responsibility in the public and private sectors
    3.3. Strengthening the education and training of girls and women for taking on leadership roles
4. Integration of a gender perspective into sectoral policies
    4.1. Integration of the gender dimension into all policies (gender mainstreaming)
    4.2. Strengthening the cross-sectoral approach to gender equality issues

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[34] ΕΣΔΙΦ-2021-2025.pdf

4.3. Improvement of the position of women facing multiple discrimination and elimination of their social exclusion

4.4. Promotion of gender equality in education – science – research

4.5. Promotion of gender equality in health

4.6. Promotion of gender equality in sports

4.7. Promotion of gender equality in culture – media

4.8. Strengthening statistical data, research, and access to knowledge from a gender perspective

In 2021, a committee was established for the drafting of a National Strategy for LGBTI+ Equality[35]. The National Strategy encourages a series of measures to combat discrimination and violence against LGBTI+ individuals, to ensure their equal participation in employment and education, unhindered access to healthcare and protection of their family life. Additionally, the National Strategy recognizes the need for systematic research and study of socially determined factors that reinforce homophobic and transphobic stereotypes and increase inequality, discrimination, exclusion and violence.

Complementing the initiatives and guarantees established by the aforementioned texts, bodies responsible for policy-making that promotes equality, such as the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (formerly the General Secretariat for Gender Equality), undertake the systematic study of relevant topics and the proposal of policies to address inequalities. Notably, the Guide for the Use of Non-Sexist Language in Administrative Documents[36], published by the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality, represents an effort to identify and combat linguistic sexism as it appears in various administrative documents, providing practical guidance for its elimination.

It is important to note that at international, European, and national levels, gender equality is institutionally enshrined and protected within regulatory frameworks that recognize, among other things, gender as a basis for discriminatory treatment and social exclusion. Within this context, the present Institutional Gender Equality Action Plan (GEP), while focusing on specific provisions, initiatives and guidelines concerning gender,

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[35] Εθνική Στρατηγική για την Ισότητα των ΛΟΑΤΚΙ+
[36] 32_18_Teliko.indd

takes into account the importance of understanding it not as an isolated identity that uniformly causes discrimination, but as a basis for discriminatory treatment and social exclusion, which reproduces inequalities in combination and relation with other bases of discrimination, such as age, ability, ethnicity, nationality and social and economic class. For this reason, the relevant institutional framework for gender equality is situated, understood and interpreted within its broader institutional context.

For example, at the national level, the above framework for gender equality cannot be isolated from laws such as Law 4443/2016, which transposed Directive 2000/43/EC on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin and Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation. According to Article 2 of Law 4443/2016:

"[…] a) 'direct discrimination' shall mean where a person is treated less favorably than another in a comparable situation on the grounds of race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, religion or other beliefs, disability or chronic condition, age, family or social status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender characteristics […]"

Similarly, regarding racist violence, Law 4285/2014 provides in its first article:

"Anyone who intentionally, publicly, orally or through the press, via the internet, or by any other means or method, incites, provokes, stimulates, or encourages acts or actions that may cause discrimination, hatred, or violence against a person or group of persons based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability, in a manner that endangers public order or poses a threat to the life, liberty, or physical integrity of the aforementioned persons, shall be punished with imprisonment of three (3) months to three (3) years and a monetary fine of five thousand to twenty thousand (5,000–20,000) euros.".

Horizon Europe 2021-2027

According to the Horizon Europe program, the new framework for Research and Innovation (2021–2027) of the Council of Europe, as well as the long-standing European policies promoting actions for equal opportunities and inclusion with an emphasis on gender equality, the elimination of gender inequalities and discrimination, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-related social violence, all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Greece are required to draft and implement Institutional Gender Equality Action Plans

(GEPs).

The drafting and implementation of each institution's GEP is a necessary prerequisite and eligibility criterion for Horizon programs, as well as for inclusion in other strategic and research planning initiatives in which each HEI wishes or is required to participate. Specifically, a GEP, according to the Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans (2021)[37], must meet specific requirements to comply with funding criteria.

These requirements concern the structural elements of such a plan and the procedures that must be included within it.

Structural Element 1: The GEP must be a public, official document, signed by the senior management, disseminated within the institution, demonstrating commitment to the Gender Equality Committee and setting clear objectives, detailed actions, and measures to achieve them.

Structural Element 2: It must have dedicated resources: resources for the design, implementation, and monitoring of the GEP. These resources may include funding for specific positions, such as Gender Equality Officers or Gender Equality Teams, as well as dedicated working time for academic, administrative and managerial tasks related to the GEP.

Structural Element 3: It must include data collection and monitoring. GEPs should be evidence-based and rely on gender-disaggregated baseline data collected for all staff categories. This data should be used to set specific purposes and objectives within the GEP framework and to define appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators for the continuous evaluation of progress.

Structural Element 4: GEPs must be supported by continuous training and skills development actions. These actions may include the development of gender competence (skills in empathy and awareness related to gender), addressing unconscious gender bias, as well as fostering inclusion skills among staff, management, and decision-makers, the establishment of working groups dedicated to specific issues (e.g., a harassment response

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[37] Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans - Publications Office of the EU .

code) and raising awareness through experiential workshops and other communication activities.

In addition to these four (4) mandatory procedural requirements, five (5) thematic areas are recommended regarding the content:
1. Work-life balance and organizational culture
2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
4. Integration of the gender dimension in research and teaching content
5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

It is worth noting that Horizon now considers an intersectional approach as critical, focusing on funding proposals that include only intersectional content, as is evident, for example, in the recent 2021–2022 Program calls for the Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society section[38]. It also appears to be moving away from the gender binary and taking into account other gender performances in its documents, aiming to collect data concerning the non-binary gender category (see *Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans*, pp. 23–24[39]). In this context, the present IAPGE aligns with the parameters set by Horizon regarding the collection of data that explores gender intersectionally in relation to other possible forms of discrimination and proposes the inclusion of the non-binary gender category in the University's administrative documents (see *Proposed Actions*).

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[38] wp-5-culture-creativity-and-inclusive-society_horizon-2021-2022_en.pdf .
[39] Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans - Publications Office of the EU .

Chapter II. Gender and Equality at the University of Thessaly

The University of Thessaly was founded in 1984, with its headquarters in Volos. Today, the University operates a total of 35 Departments, organized into 8 Schools, covering a wide range of scientific fields. The University of Thessaly has academic units in the Regions of Thessaly and Central Greece. Specifically, its Schools and Departments are located in Volos, which serves as the University's administrative center, as well as in Larissa, Karditsa, Trikala and Lamia.

Schools and Departments of the University of Thessaly

1. **School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS)**, based in Volos, which includes the following six (6) Departments: Pedagogical Department of Primary Education, Department of Early Childhood Education, Department of Special Education, Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, Department of Culture, Creative Media and Industries, Department of Language and Intercultural Studies

2. **School of Agricultural Sciences**, which includes the following five (5) Departments: Department of Ichthyology and Aquatic Environment, Department of Agriculture, Crop Production and Rural Environment, Department of Agrotechnology, Department of Animal Science, Department of Food Science and Nutrition

3. **School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics (SPESSD)**, based in Trikala, which includes the following two (2) Departments: Department of Physical Education and Sport Science (DPESS), Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

4. **School of Health Sciences**, based in Larissa, which includes the following six (6) departments: Department of Biochemistry and Biotechnology, Department of Public and One Health, Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Nursing, Department of Physiotherapy

5. **School of Sciences**, based in Lamia, which includes the following four (4) Departments: Department of Computer Science and Biomedical Informatics, Department of Mathematics, Department of Physics, Department of Informatics and Telecommunications

6. **School of Economics and Business Administration (SEBA)**, based in Larissa, which includes the following three (3) Departments: Department of Economics, based in Volos, Department of Business Administration, based in Larissa, Department of Accounting and Finance, based in Larissa

7. **School of Engineering**, based in Volos, which includes the following five (5) Departments: Department of Mechanical Engineering, Department of Planning and Regional Development Engineering, Department of Civil Engineering, Department of Architecture, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

8. **School of Technology**, based in Larissa, which includes the following four (4) Departments: Department of Energy Systems, based in Larissa, Department of Environmental Sciences, based in Larissa, Digital Systems Department, based in Larissa, Department of Forestry, Wood Science and Design, based in Karditsa

Within the framework of this Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP), the starting point for designing effective policies, programs and regulatory measures at all stages of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation is to capture the current status at the University of Thessaly (UTH) regarding gender equality, inclusivity and ongoing efforts to eliminate social discrimination.

In the process of assessing the situation at the University of Thessaly (UTH), the first step was the preparation of a list of quantitative and qualitative research data to be investigated. The compiled list included the following categories/questions:
1. Gender representation in positions of responsibility and decision-making, as well as in collective governance bodies (overall and by school/department).
2. Gender distribution of staff in teaching, research, technical and administrative positions (overall and by school/department).
3. Gender distribution of students and graduates (overall and by school/department):

- Undergraduate level
- Postgraduate level

4. Integration of the gender intersectional dimension into study programs and research: Structure of Gender Studies courses, courses/research programs with a primary focus on gender and sexuality (overall and by school/department).

5. Data concerning the relationship of educational material to the heterogeneity of knowledge and research subjects, where heterogeneity is considered in relation to gender, race, cultural background, sexual orientation, physical ability and other intersectional dimensions.

6. Interdisciplinarity and collaborations regarding Gender Studies issues across different schools/departments (e.g., jointly organized events/conferences, interdisciplinary undergraduate and postgraduate programs, interdisciplinary doctoral/postdoctoral research).

7. Public actions of the University concerning the intersectional dimension of gender, including informational seminars and training of the academic community on gender-based violence and inequality.

8. Gender dimensions of digital participation and access, particularly during the pandemic and periods of remote learning, as well as digital skills of staff and students.

9. Data on accessibility in relation to intersectional parameters (gender, class, age, ethnicity, etc.). For example, the existence of appropriately designed websites and educational materials for individuals with hearing and visual impairments. In particular, at the intersection of accessibility and age, data regarding enrollment at UTH through entrance exams, as well as data concerning students who are employed.

10. Operation of psychosocial support structures and services, such as childcare facilities for University staff, reporting mechanisms for incidents of gender-based violence, sexual harassment, homophobia or transphobia, mental health services, helplines and legal assistance.

11. Structures for preventing discrimination based on gender identity and expression, sexuality, race, ethnicity, physical ability, religion, age, class, etc. among members of the academic community.

12. Quantitative and qualitative data on recorded incidents of gender-based violence, sexual harassment, homophobia or transphobia (e.g., number of complaints, management procedures).

13. Participation of students by gender in University activities, including parallel activities in sports, visual arts, theatre, etc.

14. Gender distribution (students and staff) in the operation of accessibility structures and services.

15. Gender-based separations in the education–labor market relationship, e.g., participation of graduates from specific fields in the labor market.

16. Data on the University's interaction with student unions for actions/initiatives related to gender equality and sexuality issues.
17. Information regarding Erasmus+ mobility for students and teaching staff, in connection with intersectional parameters.
18. Gender-disaggregated data on parental leave/allowances for University staff.
19. Gender dimensions of salary and pension data (for all categories of staff).
20. Data on teaching and research staff with fixed-term contracts or in precarious employment conditions, including their labor rights, in relation to intersectional parameters.
21. Gender parameters used by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) for the collection and processing of data (e.g., men, women, non-binary individuals, cis/trans/intersex persons).
22. Gendered expressions in administrative language (e.g., use of masculine, feminine, and neutral terms).
23. Research data linking gender and sexuality with study and work at the University.
24. Research data linking race and/or ethnicity with study and work at the University.

The next step involved identifying the competent administrative services and approaching them to obtain the necessary data. During the subsequent research process, new research questions and inquiries emerged regarding the possibilities for critical analysis of the quantified data. Limitations, such as incomplete available data concerning critical parameters of this study, restricted access to and the ability to collect the requested data from different University of Thessaly (UTH) services, the lack of more specific data and the absence of systematic, long-term records on gender-related issues (such as the gender distribution of human resources and Gender Studies), led to a redefinition of our methodology based on the data at our disposal.

This methodological adjustment proved to be a crucial step throughout our communication with the services providing the available data, specifically with the Quality Assurance Unit (hereinafter QAU), the IT Department and the Directorate of Academic Affairs. New research paths also emerged, as gaps in the collected material opened the way for parallel research using other data sources, such as the Departments' websites, the UTH e-learning platform (eclass), the electronic database of the UTH Research Committee, as well as data collected and cross-verified through communication with teaching staff of the University, which we chose to include as indicative research data.

We consider it necessary to highlight that the quantitative data we collected are organized based on the gender binary of men/women, which, in our view, does not sufficiently capture gender inequalities, as it excludes other gender performances.
As noted in the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of Panteion University:

"We are aware of the limitations posed by the use of gender classification categories within quantitative data collection methodologies. Dominant demographic categories do not adequately reflect the complexities of the full spectrum of gender self-identifications. For example, the available categories 'male'-'female' exclude other options, such as 'other' and 'non-binary.' Especially in the era dominated by algorithms and big data, the question of which subjects and in what ways they are 'counted' concerns issues of visibility, access, and power relations, which are central to social research. The ultimate goal should be the design of more inclusive methodological approaches to gender, which do not treat it as a static demographic variable" (2022, p. 6, note 6).

The analysis of the current situation is threefold. First, we refer to the existing institutional structures aimed at equal treatment and inclusion, based on information collected from the University of Thessaly's website. Next, we present the gender dimensions in the distribution of human resources: academic and research staff, administrative staff and the student population, through the analysis of quantitative data obtained from the Quality Assurance Unit (data from May 2022) for the academic year 2020-2021. Finally, we map the gender dimensions in the Study Programs and research activities, documenting positions with a focus on Gender Studies, undergraduate courses explicitly referencing gender issues in their titles or in the course description/summary and relevant educational material, postgraduate courses addressing gender and social inequalities and recent or ongoing research projects primarily focused on gender, diversity, social inequalities, and social change.

For data collection, it was deemed necessary to gather and cross-check information through alternative channels beyond the University's administrative services responsible for this task. Data were collected from the complete course catalog provided by the IT Services, online searches of Study Guides and Programs of Study on the websites of individual Departments of the University of Thessaly, the University's e-learning platform eClass, the electronic database of the University Research Committee (search date: May 2022) and additionally through communication with academic staff of the University of Thessaly.

A. Structures Aimed at Equal Treatment and Inclusion

The University of Thessaly (UTH) has a range of social support structures designed to ensure the principle of equal treatment and to combat any form of direct or indirect discrimination, victimization, bullying, or harassment within the University's work and academic environment. The following provides a brief assessment of the situation at UTH regarding issues related to

gender and other forms of discrimination: structures aimed at inclusion, accessibility, counseling and equality. The goal of this mapping is to maximize the utilization of existing structures and services and to identify potential expansions through new proposed actions.

The structures presented in this section (Gender Equality Committee, policies addressing harassment and bullying [hereinafter Harassment-Bullying], Student Counseling and Psychological Support Center, Accessibility Office, Student Ombudsman, Scholars at Risk, University Nursery) aim to promote inclusion and support for vulnerable groups, ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities on campus, provide counseling support and foster gender equality.

The data for this assessment were sourced from the University of Thessaly's website and from members of the university community.

Specifically:

The **Gender Equality Committee**[40] (hereinafter GEC) of the University of Thessaly (UTH), established by the decision of the Senate (regular session no. 248/26-2-2021) and in accordance with the law (provision of Article 33 of Law 4589/2019, Government Gazette 13/A/29-1-2019), which mandates the establishment of Gender Equality Committees in Greek universities, is a nine-member committee composed of six (6) Faculty Members (Teaching and Research Staff), one (1) member of Special Educational Staff (SES, Greek: Ε.Ε.Π.) or Laboratory Teaching Personel (LTP, Greek: Ε.ΔΙ.Π.) or Special Technical Laboratory Staff (STLS, Greek: Ε.Τ.Ε.Π.), one (1) administrative employee and one (1) student.

Members serve a three-year term and are appointed following a call for expressions of interest. The responsibilities of the GEC include:

- Developing action plans to promote and ensure substantive equality in the University's educational, research and administrative processes and preparing an annual report submitted to the Senate.
- Proposing measures to the competent bodies to promote equality and combat sexism.
- Providing information and training to members of the academic community on gender and equality issues.
- Offering mediation services in cases of complaints related to discrimination or harassment.
- Promoting the development of postgraduate programs and organizing seminars and lectures focused on gender studies.
- Conducting studies and research on topics within its field of competence.
- Assisting individuals who experience discrimination when they report cases of unequal

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[40] Gender Equality and Anti-Discrimination Committee | University Of Thessaly

treatment.

Within the framework of Law 4604/2019 (Government Gazette 50/A/26-3-2019), municipal and regional Gender Equality Committees have been established, functioning both as liaison links between the General Secretariat for Demographic and Family Policy and Gender Equality and local government and as communication channels between central and decentralized administration. Two faculty members of the University of Thessaly (UTH) and members of its Gender Equality Committee (GEC), Assistant Professor Elena Tzelepi (regular member) and Professor Eleni Andreou (alternate member), have served as representatives of UTH on the Regional Gender Equality Committee of the Region of Thessaly and Central Greece since 2020.

The policy addressing issues of harassment, victimization, bullying, and, more broadly, negative behaviors—hereinafter "Harassment-Bullying"[41], which falls under the responsibility of the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)—upholds the principle of equal treatment and promotes the development of a work environment in which no form of discrimination is tolerated.

Key triggers for harassment include: age differences, disabilities/special educational needs (motor, cognitive, learning, sensory, developmental), gender differences (including sexual harassment), gender-based distinctions, physical appearance differences, institutional role or hierarchical superiority, racial and/or social-cultural differences, maternity/pregnancy, marital status or participation in groups with special interests (e.g., religious or political organizations).

Within this policy framework, there is a Complaints Handling Committee that can refer an incident to a Departmental Student Affairs Committee and/or the Ethics Committee. A specific management procedure is in place to ensure prevention, outline a set of response strategies and maintain continuous awareness-raising and training of students and staff through workshops and seminars.

The **Student Counseling Service (SCS)[42]** at the University of Thessaly provides psychological support and skill development for problem-solving to students across all university departments. Through individual or group sessions with specialized counselors or by participating in open seminars, students can seek support from SCS for issues related to their academic and student life, interpersonal relationships or matters concerning sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-based violence and racism.

PROSVASI[43] supports and enhances the learning and social access of students with disabilities

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[41] Harassment - Bullying | University Of Thessaly
[42] Counselling | University Of Thessaly
[43] Accessibility Center for individuals with disabilities at the University of Thessaly | University Of Thessaly

and/or special educational needs, as well as teaching and administrative staff across all departments of the University of Thessaly. In addition, PROSVASI participates in initiatives concerning accessibility within the university premises. The PROSVASI team consists of the scientific coordinator, staff, scientific collaborators and volunteer students. Its committee is composed of faculty members from different departments, with one faculty member in each department acting as a liaison with PROSVASI and one responsible member in the Secretariat.

The **Student Advocate**[44] was established under Government Gazette 6019/B/20-12-2021. Its responsibilities include mediating between students and faculty or administrative services, ensuring compliance with the law within the framework of academic freedom, addressing cases of mismanagement, and safeguarding the smooth operation of the university. The relevant form available on the University of Thessaly website allows students to submit either anonymous or identified requests to the Office of the Student Advocate.

The **Greek Section of the International Scholars at Risk Network (SAR Greece)**[45] was established on October 1, 2021, with founding members including Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the Ionian University, the University of the Aegean and the University of Thessaly. Its purpose is to support and coordinate actions for threatened or persecuted academics and researchers at risk— whether they remain in their home countries facing discrimination, persecution, violence or other hardships, or have sought or are seeking safe refuge in Europe—and to promote their integration. Through these efforts, SAR Greece defends academic values and promotes academic freedom in collaboration with the International SAR Network.

The **University Nursery**[46] at the Gaiopolis campus of the University of Thessaly in Larissa can accommodate children whose parents or guardians have an employment or student relationship with the University (regular and temporary administrative and academic staff, students of all levels eligible for legal student welfare benefits).

Finally, the above structures and initiatives are aligned with the approved **Code of Ethics**[47], which was adopted by the University Senate during its 89th session on July 3, 2009. The Code stipulates that members of the University of Thessaly community: [...] must recognize that no form of discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion

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[44] Student Advocate | University Of Thessaly
[45] Scholars at Risk Ελλάδα | Πανεπιστήμιο Θεσσαλίας
[46] Childcare Center | University Of Thessaly
[47] Ethics Issues | University Of Thessaly

or other beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation is tolerated by the University and that the principle of equal treatment must be ensured. No form of direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, or sexual harassment is tolerated by the University. In the workplace, all members of the University community are required to behave with due respect, without any form of discrimination or harassment[48].

B. Human Resources – Gender Analysis of Available Data at the University of Thessaly
Gender Distribution of Personnel

At the University of Thessaly (UTH), there are 654 faculty members, 213 members of SES, LTP, STLS and 165 administrative staff. The overall percentages indicate significant quantitative differences between women and men in employment positions. Notably, there are also differences in gender distribution across different types of positions (e.g., administrative staff, academic staff) and across levels of the professional hierarchy (e.g., faculty ranks, positions of responsibility). Selected points from these data are presented below, aiming to provide an initial mapping of gender inequalities/exclusions at UTH, along with a preliminary interpretive approach.

Overall gender distribution:

Faculty members: women 29.2%, men 70.8%

SES, LTP, STLS members: women 44.6%, men 55.4%

Administrative staff: women 74.5%, men 25.5%

It is worth conducting an in-depth study, including qualitative parameters, of the gender imbalances across different staff categories, particularly the notable difference between faculty and administrative personnel. In the latter case, the gender imbalance is reversed, possibly confirming the stereotype that women predominantly occupy supportive roles, which are culturally associated with prestige, often come with material benefits and produce knowledge, such as positions within the Teaching and Research Staff. Furthermore, as will be discussed later, the career progression of women across the various faculty ranks appears to encounter obstacles that warrant careful study.

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[48] See also the **Code of Ethics of the University of Thessaly**, p. 3. It should be noted that, in addition to the Code of Ethics that applies to the University as a whole, there is also the **Code of Ethics and Research Conduct (KODIKAS-ETHIKIS-KAI-DEONTOLOGIAS-STHN-EREYNA.pdf)**, which was adopted by the University Senate of Thessaly in its 233rd session on May 29, 2020.

Table/Graph 1. Gender distribution of Faculty members, SES, LTP, STLS members and administrative staff

Gender distribution of personnel		
	Men	Women
Faculty Members	463	191
Members of SES, LTP, STLS	118	95
Administrative staff	42	123
Total	623	409

Faculty members by gender

29,2%

70,8%

■ Men ■ Women
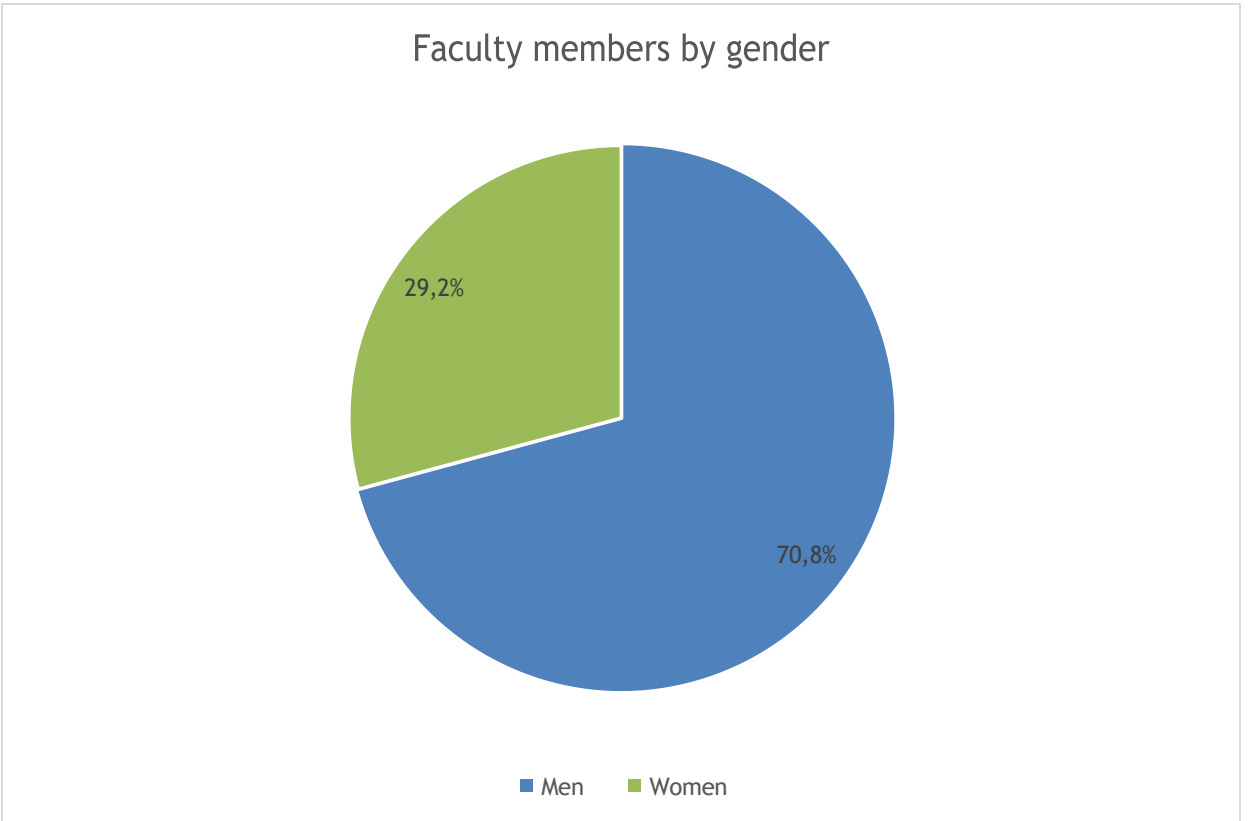
SES, LTP, STLS members by gender

44,6%

55,4%

■ Men   ■ Women
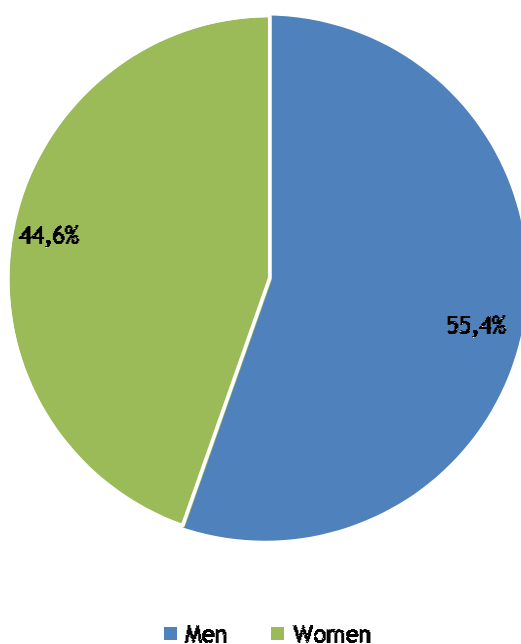
Administrative staff by gender

25,5%

74,5%

■ Men   ■ Women
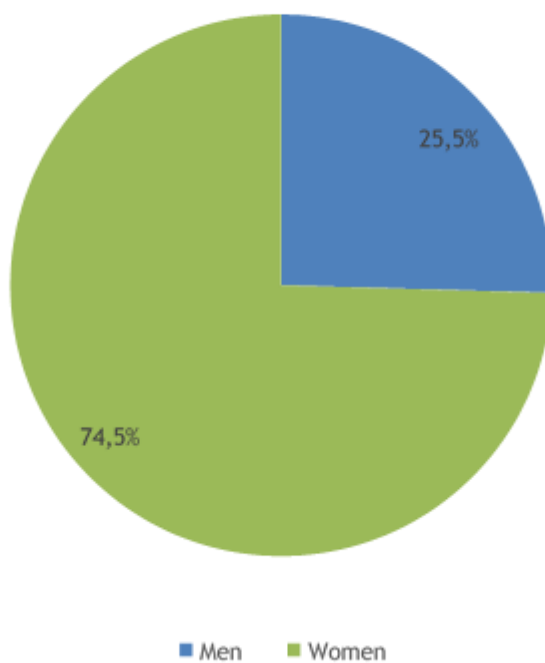
Data for the academic year 2020-2021. Data source: QAU UTH, May 2022.

1. Faculty Members

The unequal gender distribution among the Teaching and Research Staff warrants careful and in-depth study, as it exhibits variations when analyzed according to more specific parameters. For example, significant differences exist in the distribution inequality across the various academic ranks (Full Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, and Lecturers of Applications).

As shown in the following chart, across all schools of the University of Thessaly, male Full Professors represent 78.4% of the staff at this rank, while women account for only 21.6%. Moving down the hierarchy, the imbalance appears to decrease somewhat, but it is not fully resolved. Specifically:

At the Associate Professor level, women make up 27.4% of the rank, while men account for 72.6%.

At the Assistant Professor level, women represent 40% of the rank and men 60%.

At the Lecturer of Applications level, women constitute 27.3%, while men make up 72.7%.

The inequality in distribution, both across the different faculty ranks and overall, raises concerns regarding its underlying causes. It is important to study the qualitative factors that hinder women from working in higher education and academic research, as well as from advancing in their careers. Based on such an analysis, strategies should be developed to mitigate these obstacles.

For example, regarding career progression, a key question remains whether the gender imbalance is related to the criteria for promotion and/or potential discriminatory practices.

Table/Graph 2. Faculty members at each rank by gender

Faculty members at each rank by gender				
	Teachers	**Associate Professors**	**Assistant Professors**	**Application Lecturers**
Men	207	119	129	8
Women	57	45	86	3
Total	264	164	215	11

Faculty members at each rank by gender

Rank	Men	Women
Application Lecturers	72,7%	27,3%
Assistant Professors	60,0%	40,0%
Associate Professors	72,6%	27,4%
Teachers	78,4%	21,6%

Men ■ Women ▪
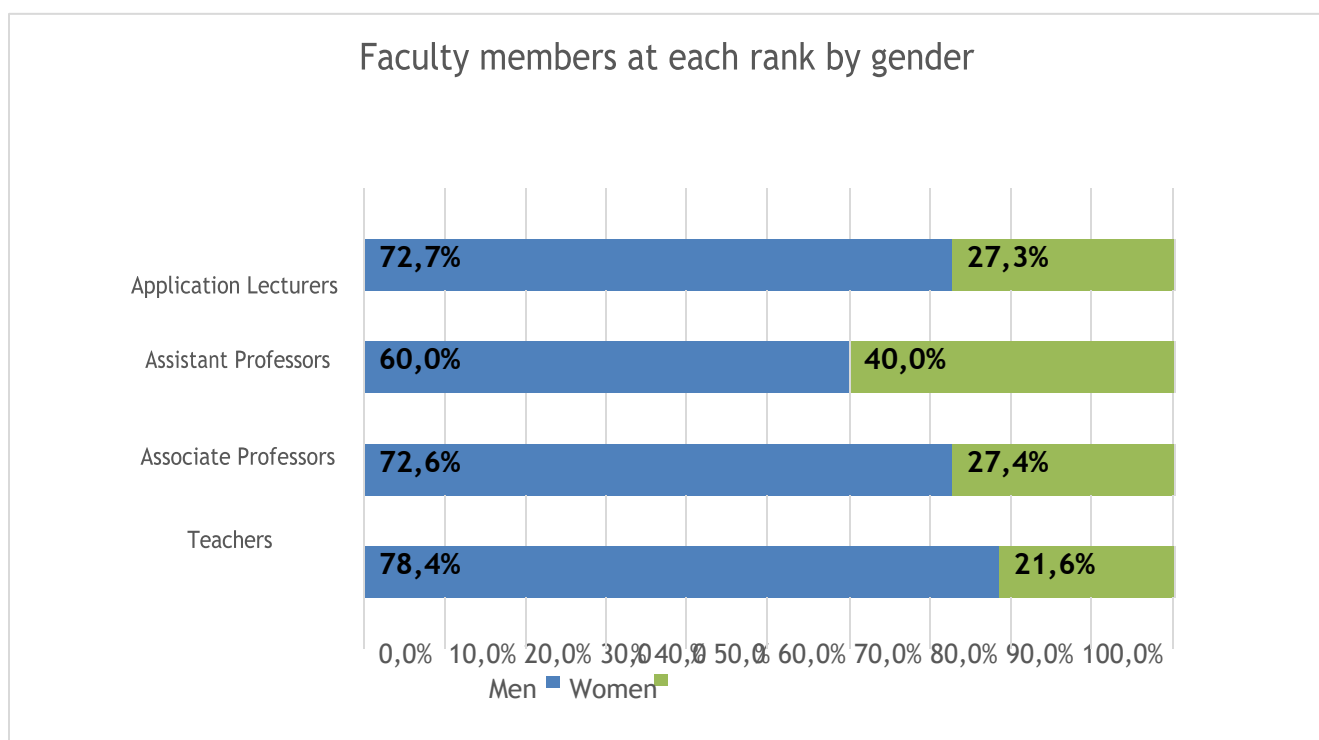
Data for the academic year 2020-2021. Data source: QAU UTH, May 2022.

Variations in gender distribution are also evident across the different schools of the University of Thessaly (UTH). Specifically:

- In the School of Agricultural Sciences, women represent 25.3% and men 74.7%.
- In the School of Physical Education, Sport Sciences and Dietetics, women represent 33.3% and men 66.7%.
- In the School of Economics and Business Administration, women represent 12.8% and men 87.2%.
- In the School of Health Sciences, women represent 36.6% and men 63.4%.
- In the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, women represent 58.4% and men 41.6%.
- In the School of Engineering, women represent 19.3% and men 80.7%.
- In the School of Technology, women represent 10% and men 90%.
- In the School of Sciences, women represent 9.6% and men 90.4%.

It is worth noting that these variations significantly influence the overall gender imbalance among UTH faculty members. The need for further study is particularly indicated by the largest of these differences.

For instance, the greatest disparity in gender distribution occurs between the School of Humanities

and Social Sciences and the School of Technology. In the former—which is the only school at UTH where female faculty slightly outnumber male faculty—men represent 41.6%, while women account for 58.4%. Conversely, in the School of Technology, women constitute only 10% of all faculty members.

This disparity should be analyzed through qualitative parameters related to stereotypes regarding women's performance in STEM fields and their ability to pursue careers in traditionally male-dominated disciplines[49] as a result of such gender biases. A deeper understanding of these inequalities will enable the development of targeted strategies to mitigate gender disparities and discrimination, which is crucial for a university where the majority of schools are in STEM-related disciplines.

Table/Graph 3. Faculty Members by School by gender

Faculty Members by School by gender			
	Men	Women	Total
School of Agricultural Sciences	62	21	83
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	22	11	33
School of Economics and Business Administration	41	6	47
School of Health Sciences	121	70	191
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	37	52	89
School of Engineering	88	21	109
School of Technology	45	5	50
School of Sciences	47	5	52

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[49] Here, the distinction between fields is broad and does not follow the specific division of the University of Thessaly's schools. However, it aligns with the categorization commonly used in studies of gender bias, which suggest that women tend to perform better in the humanities and social sciences, in "theoretical" scientific fields, and in disciplines related to care- or education-oriented professions. We recommend an in-depth study of these differences, framed within the context of the relevant international literature.

Faculty Members by School by Gender

School	Men	Women
School of Sciences	90,4%	9,6%
School of Technology	90,0%	10,0%
School of Engineering	80,7%	19,3%
School of Humanities and Social Science	41,6%	58,4%
School of Health Sciences	63,4%	36,6%
School of Economics and Business Administration	87,2%	12,8%
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	66,7%	33,3%
School of Agricultural Sciences	74,7%	25,3%
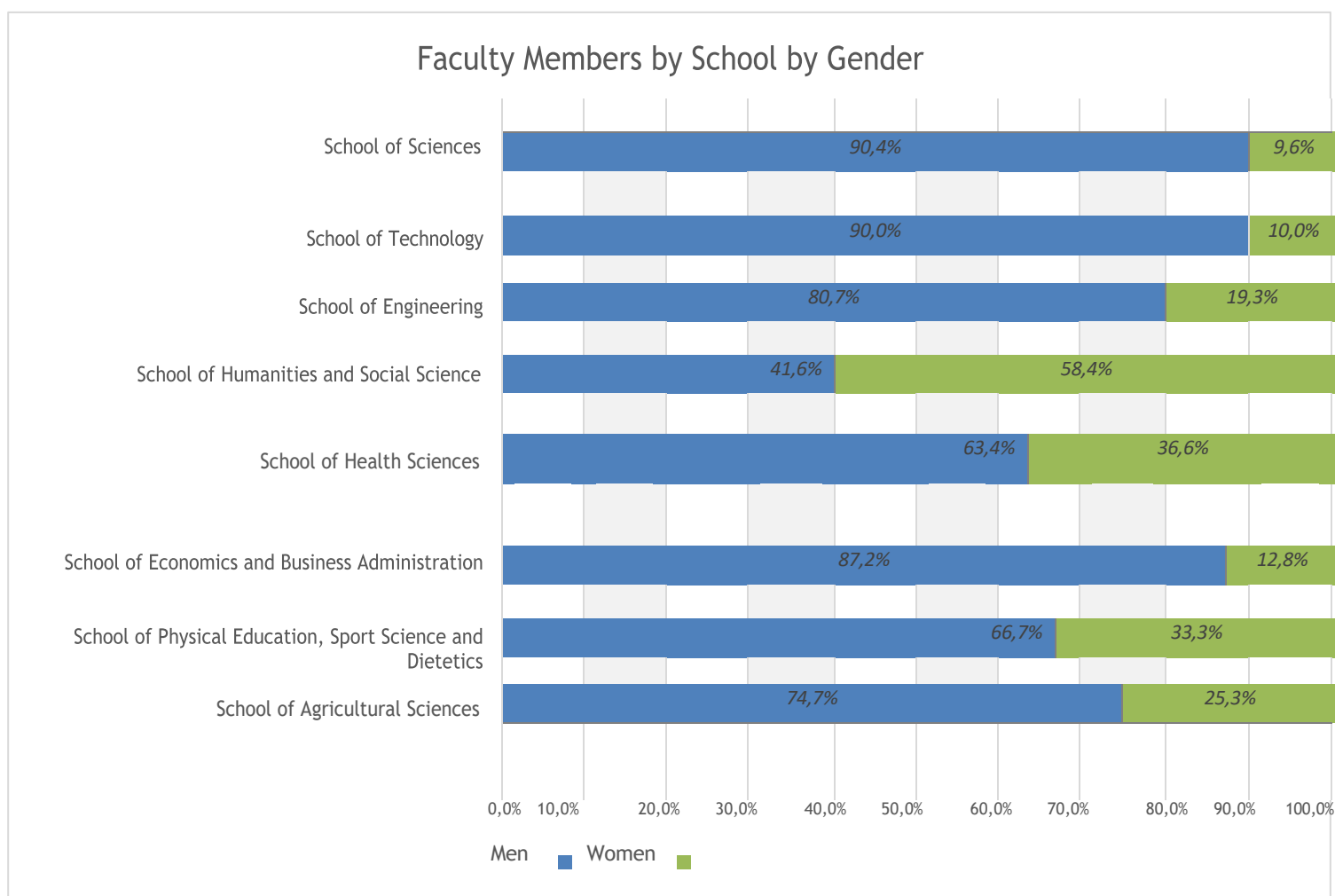
Data for the academic year 2020-2021. Data source: QAU UTH, May 2022.

Particular attention could be given to the gender distribution differences between departments that are stereotypically associated with "male" or "female" professions, sectors, or scientific fields. For example, in the Department of Mathematics, there are 4 male faculty members and no women; in the Department of Physics, there are 13 male faculty members and no women; while in the Department of Early Childhood Education, there are 9 male and 12 female faculty members. In the Department of Nursing, there are 5 female and 3 male faculty members, whereas in the Department of Medicine, there are 73 male and 36 female faculty members. Therefore, although the gender differences seem to confirm the corresponding stereotypes—that women are more skilled in care-related fields and men in STEM fields[50] or in areas associated with social recognition and material

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[50] For the gendering of labor in the care sector, see: https://socialpolicy.gr/2021/12/η-φροντίδα-είναι-

privileges—the "female-dominated" fields do not appear to strictly preserve their majority.

Table/Graph 4. Indicative Comparison of Faculty Members in Selected Departments

	Faculty of Medicine	Department of Nursing	Department of Early Childhood Education	Department of Physics	Department of Mathematics
Men	73	3	9	13	4
Women	36	5	12	0	0
Total	109	8	21	13	4
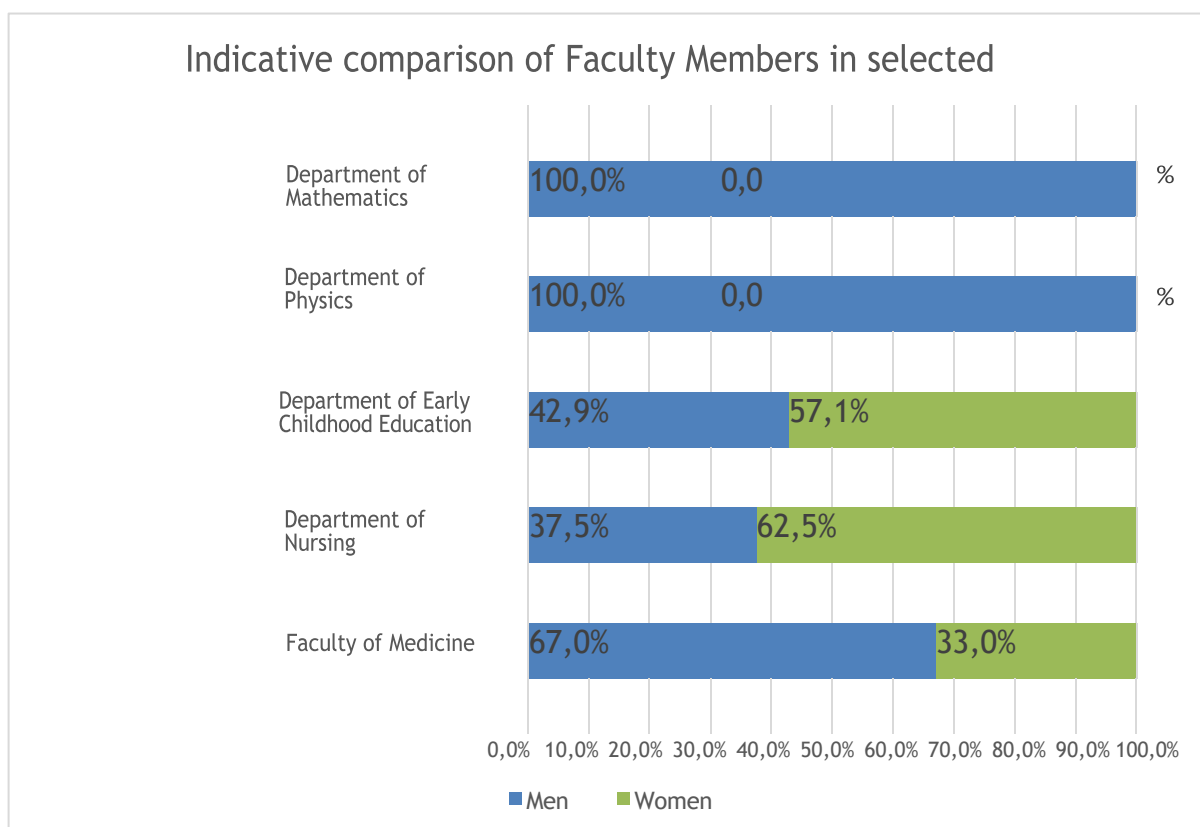
εμφυλοποιημένο-ζήτη.
For a detailed discussion of the relationship between gender and the science of mathematics, see Chronaki (2009).

Data for the academic year 2020-2021. Data source: QAU UTH, May 2022

2. Academic Staff in Leadership Positions

According to the data provided by the University Quality Assurance Unit for the academic year 2020–2021 (May 2022), the gender distribution in academic leadership positions is as follows:

The Rectorate consists of 4 men and 1 woman (serving as Vice-Rector for Research and Lifelong Learning).

The deanships of the schools consist of 8 men and no women.

The department presidencies are staffed by 10 women and 25 men.

Table 5/Figure 5. Gender distribution in positions of responsibility for teaching staff

Gender distribution in positions of responsibility for teaching staff								
Rectorate Authorities			Deans			Heads of Departments		
Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
4	1	5	8	0	8	25	10	35

Gender distribution in positions of responsibility for teaching staff

22,9%

77,1%

■ Men   ■ Women
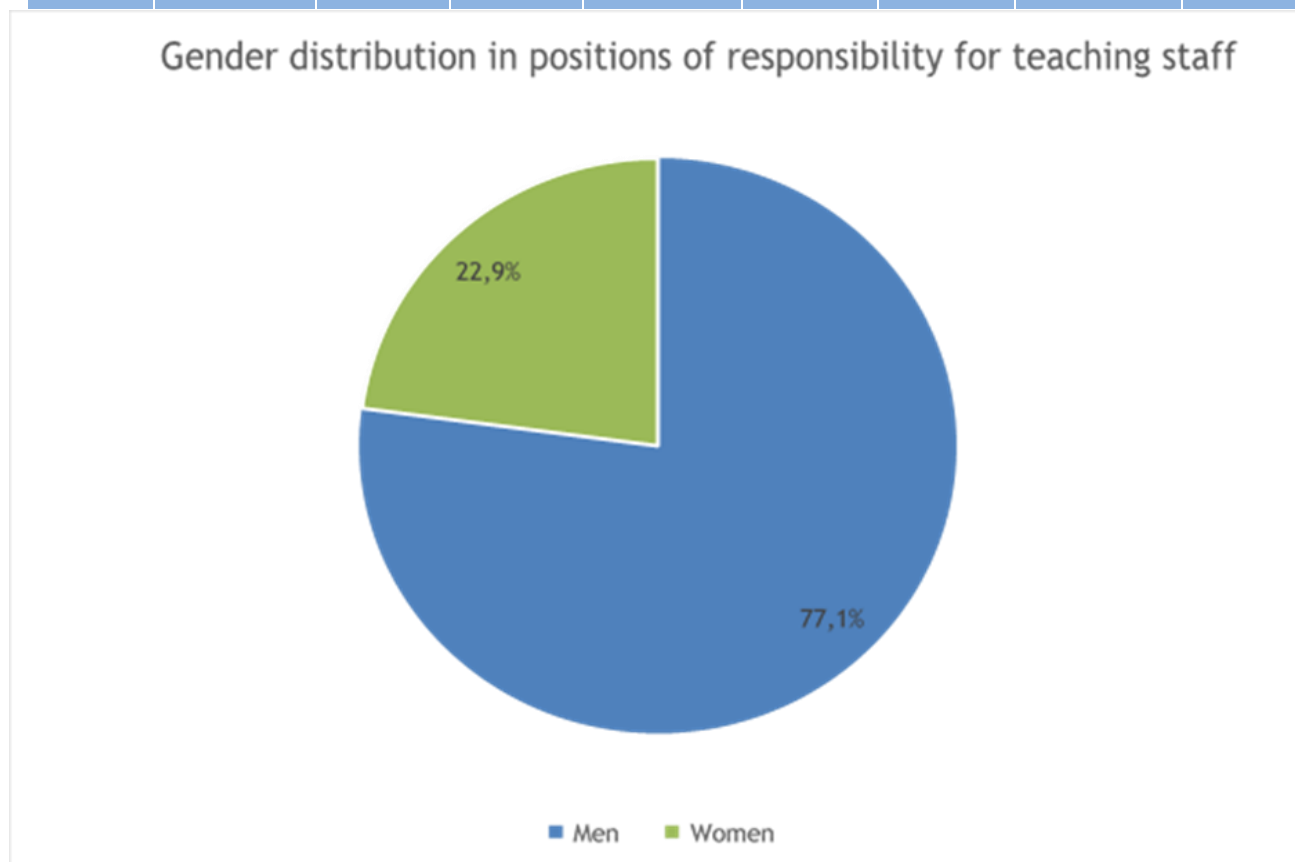
3. Members of SES, LTP, STLS

Gender inequalities among members of SES, LTP and STLS appear to follow patterns similar to those observed among faculty members. The main distinction, which warrants further study, is that gender disparities within the SES, LTP and STLS categories tend to be generally more moderate and nearly proportionally balanced compared to those among faculty members. This difference may be related to similar structural barriers that hinder the career progression of women within the ranks of faculty members.

Table/Graph 6. Indicative Comparison of SES, LTP, STLS members in selected Departments

Members of SES, LTP, STLS by School by gender		
	Men	Women
School of Agricultural Sciences	18	19
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	13	8
School of Economics and Business Administration	9	2
School of Health Sciences	21	15
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	11	18
School of Engineering	23	19
School of Technology	12	8
School of Sciences	11	6

Members of SES, LTP, STLS by School by gender

School	Men	Women
School of Sciences	64,7%	35,3%
School of Technology	60,0%	40,0%
School of Engineering	54,8%	45,2%
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	37,9%	62,1%
School of Health Sciences	58,3%	41,7%
School of Economics and Business Administration	81,8%	18,2%
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	61,9%	38,1%
School of Agricultural Sciences	48,6%	51,4%
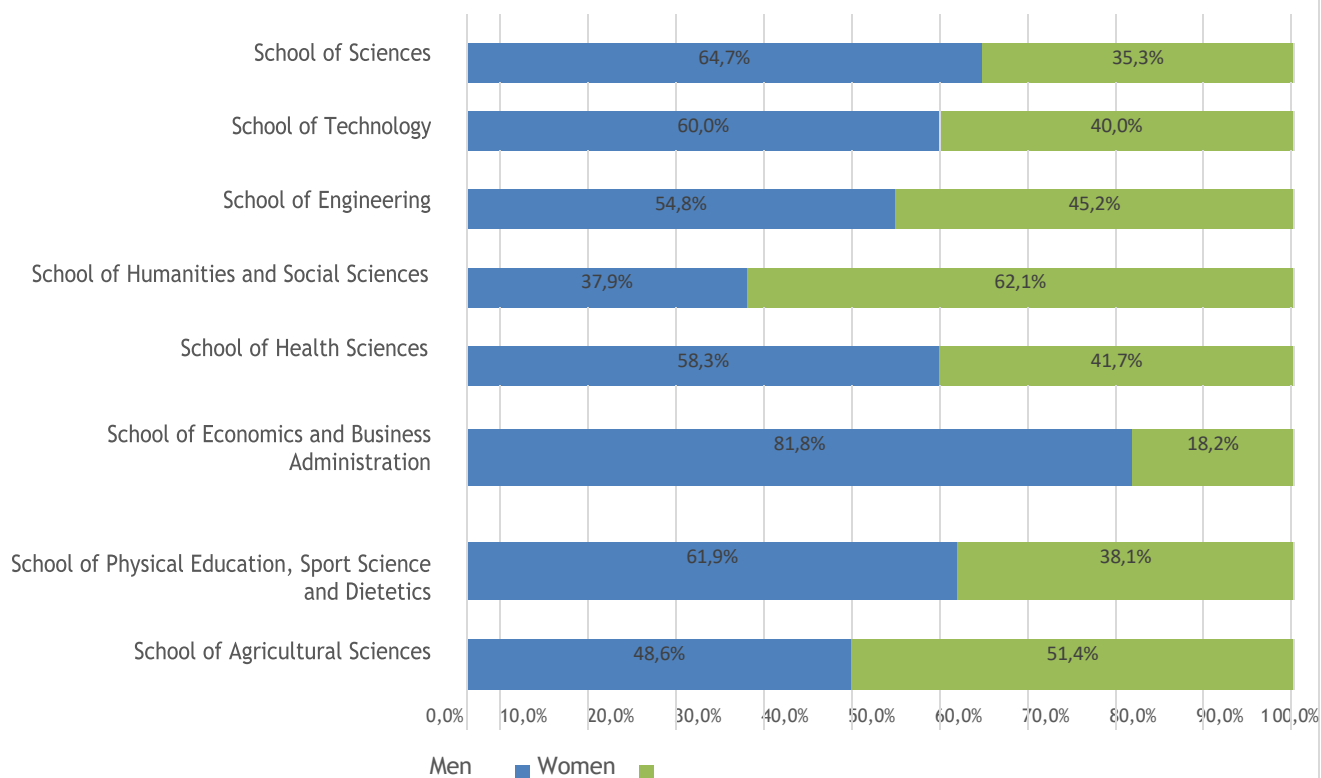
Data source: QAU UTH, May 2022.

4.Administrative Staff

Table/Graph 7. Gender Distribution of Administrative Staff by School

Administrative staff by School by gender			
	Men	Women	Total
School of Agricultural Sciences	6	9	15
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	5	6	11
School of Economics and Business Administration	4	5	9
School of Health Sciences	8	51	59
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	0	16	16
School of Engineering	11	20	31
School of Technology	4	6	10
School of Sciences	4	10	14
Total	42	123	165

Administrative staff by School by gender

School	Men	Women
School of Sciences	28,6%	71,4%
School of Technology	40,0%	60,0%
School of Engineering	35,5%	64,5%
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	0,0%	100,0%
School of Health Sciences	13,6%	86,4%
School of Economics and Business Administration	44,4%	55,6%
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	45,5%	54,5%
School of Agricultural Sciences	40,0%	60,0%
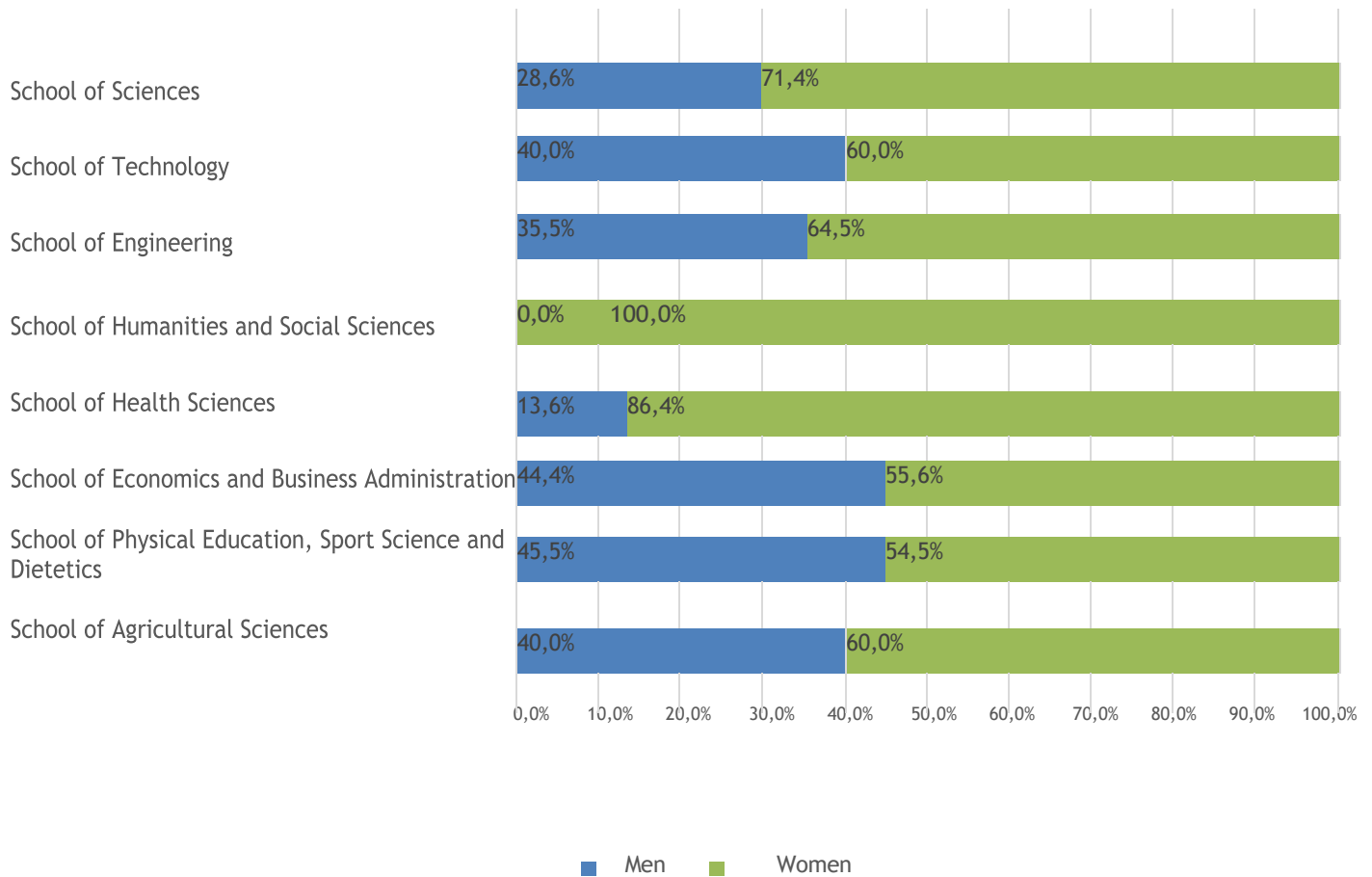
Data for the academic year 2020-2021. Data source: QAU UTH, May 2022.

With regard to the gender distribution of administrative staff, we observe an overall predominance of women employed in administrative positions at the University of Thessaly, amounting to 74.5%. In the case of administrative staff positions, the gender imbalance presents itself in a distinctly different way compared to that of faculty positions (70.8% men), as presented above, with women clearly outnumbering men.

Of particular interest are two Schools with the highest percentage of administrative staff: The Faculty of Medicine, where women account for 86.4% and the School of Engineering, where women account for 64.5%. Equally noteworthy is the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, where all administrative staff positions (16 in total) are held by women.

Beyond the gendered differentiation between Schools and corresponding fields, the overall picture of imbalance in administrative staff positions—when compared to faculty positions—requires further study on the basis of qualitative parameters. These parameters relate to stereotypes concerning the predominance of women in positions supporting the administrative functions of the Institution, as opposed to their minority presence in teaching, research and scientific roles as faculty members.

5. Student Population

The gender distribution of the student population at the University of Thessaly during the academic year 2020-2021 does not present significant differences in terms of the overall number of male and female students, either at the University as a whole or at each level of study (undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral). Specifically, out of the 25,072 students enrolled at the University of Thessaly in the academic year 2020-2021, 49.4% were men and 50.6% were women.

At the undergraduate level, male students represented 50.9% of the student body, while women accounted for 49.1%. At the postgraduate level, women held the majority (60.1% compared to 39.9% men). At the doctoral level, 48.7% of doctoral candidates were men, while 51.3% were women.

Table/Graph 8. Overall assessment of the gender distribution of female students

Overall assessment of the gender distribution of female students			
	Men	Women	Totally
Undergraduate students	10.352	9.983	20.335
Postgraduate students	1.259	1.900	3.159
PhD candidates	768	810	1.578
Total	12.379	12.693	25.072

Undergraduate students

49,1%   50,9%

■ Men ■ Women

Postgraduate students

39,9%

60,1%

■ Men ■ Women

PhD candidates

48,7%

51,3%

■ Men ■ Women
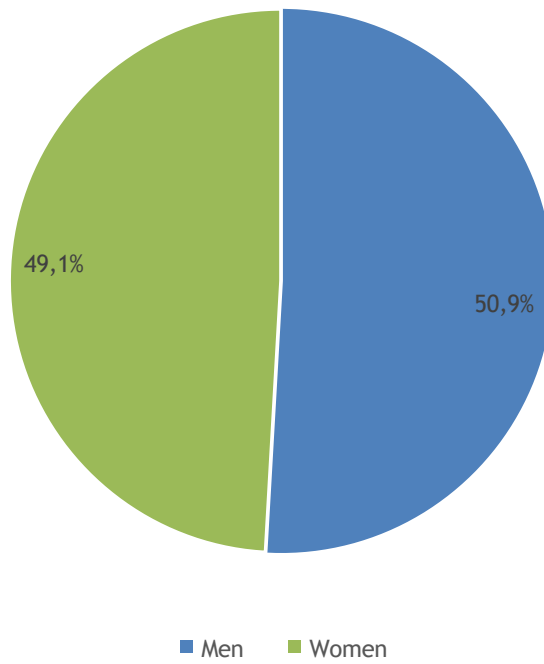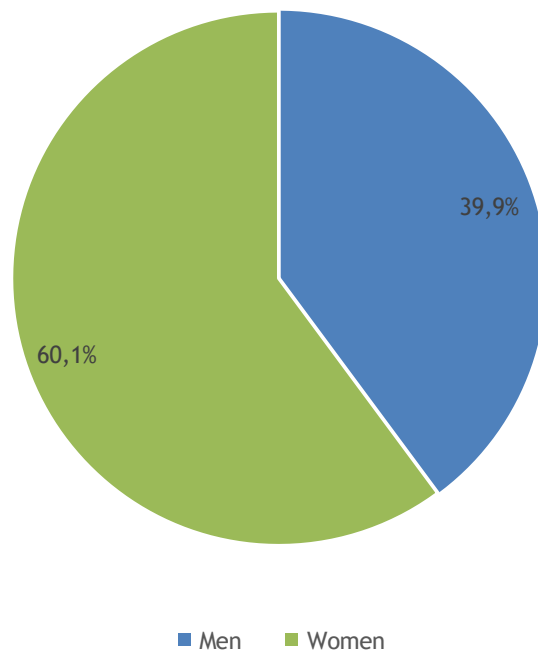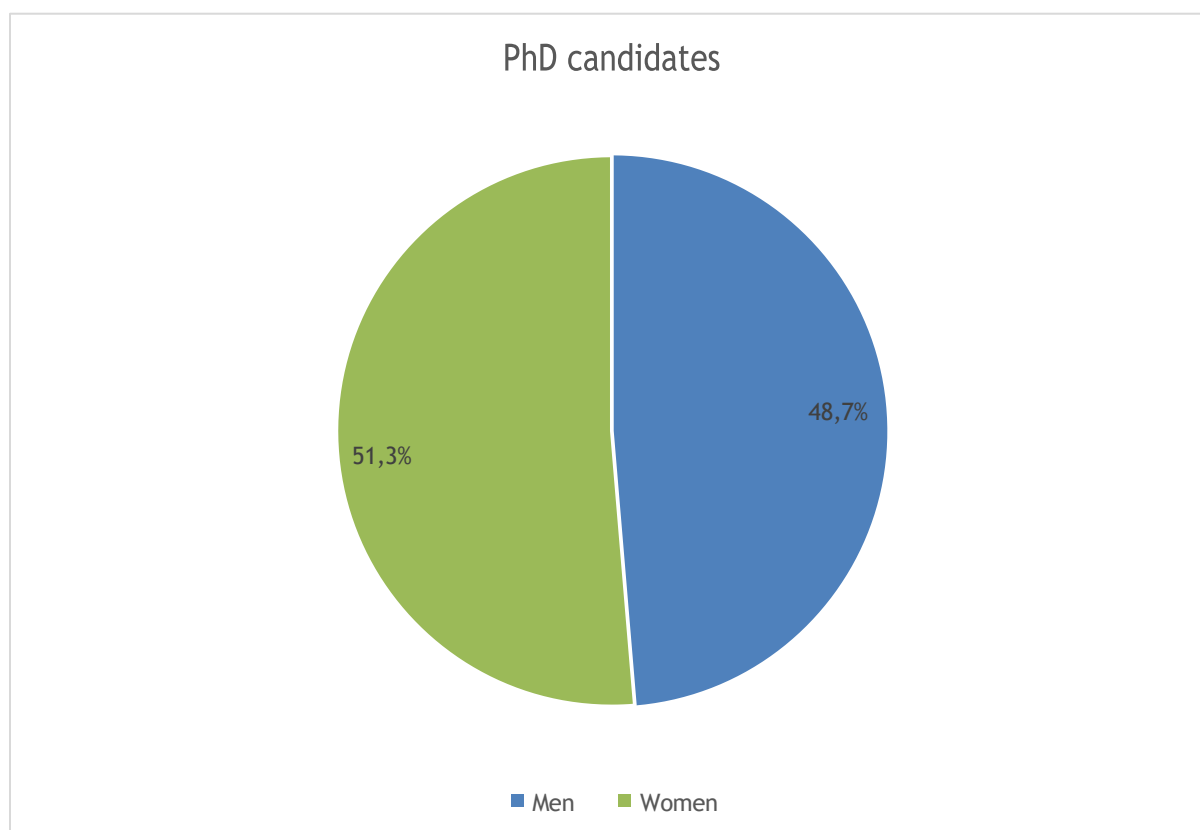
Proceeding with the analysis of the available data by School, the relative gender balance observed in the overall figures (49.4% men and 50.6% women) begins to shift. Specifically, significant differences are observed in the gender distribution of the student population across Schools.

The largest gender disparities are found in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, where 21.5% of enrolled students are men and 78.5% are women, and in the School of Technology, where 72% of enrolled students are men and 28% are women.[51]

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[51] It should be noted that in the tables and charts that follow, the data concerning postgraduate students (PG) refer to students enrolled in the academic year 2020-2021. Data on graduates are not disaggregated by gender, as gender-specific information is not available for this group.

Table 9. Gender distribution of enrolled students by School

Enrolled students by School by gender			
	Men	Women	Total
School of Agricultural Sciences	1227	1143	2706
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	1404	651	1511
School of Economics and Business Administration	112	119	2937
School of Health Sciences	1893	2918	4811
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	881	3211	4092
School of Engineering	3147	1734	4881
School of Technology	1056	1095	1467
School of Sciences	1641	1026	2667
Total	11361	11897	25072

Table/Figure 10. Gender Distribution of Undergraduate Graduates by School

Undergraduate Graduates by School by gender			
	Men	Women	Total
School of Agricultural Sciences	80	92	172
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	112	86	198

School	Men	Women	Total
School of Economics and Business Administration	112	119	231
School of Health Sciences	127	240	367
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	87	531	618
School of Engineering	242	178	420
School of Technology	0	0	0
School of Sciences	62	77	139
Total	822	1323	2145

Undergraduate Graduates by School by gender

School	Men	Women
School of Sciences	44,6%	55,4%
School of Technology		
School of Engineering	57,6%	42,4%
School of Humanities and Social Science	14,1%	85,9%
School of Health Sciences	34,6%	65,4%
School of Economics and Business Administration	48,5%	51,5%
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	56,6%	43,4%
School of Agricultural Sciences	46,5%	53,5%
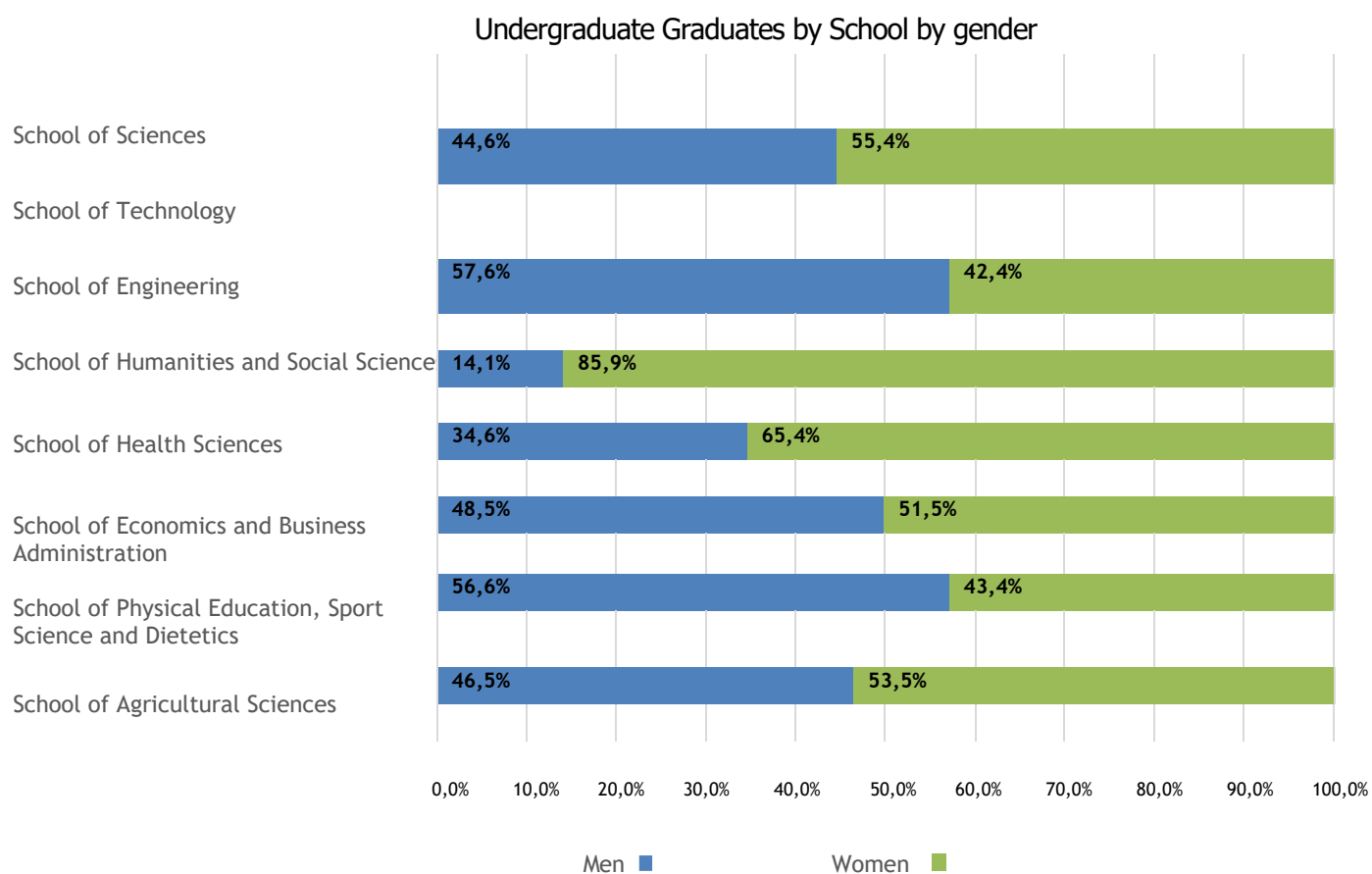
Men ■ Women ■

Data for the academic year 2020-2021. Data source: QAU UTH, May 2022.

Table/Graph 11. Gender distribution of postgraduate graduates by School

Postgraduate graduates by School by gender			
	Men	Women	Total
School of Agricultural Sciences	14	37	51
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	24	18	42
School of Economics and Business Administration	51	49	100
School of Health Sciences	136	305	441
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	15	96	111
School of Engineering	56	56	112
School of Technology	7	3	10
School of Sciences	63	86	149
Total	366	650	1016

Postgraduate graduates by school by gender

School	Men	Women
School of Sciences	42,3%	57,7%
School of Technology	70,0%	30,0%
School of Engineering	50,0%	50,0%
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	13,5%	86,5%
School of Health Sciences	30,8%	69,2%
School of Economics and Business Administration	51,0%	49,0%
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	57,1%	42,9%
School of Agricultural Sciences	27,5%	72,5%

Men ■ Women ■
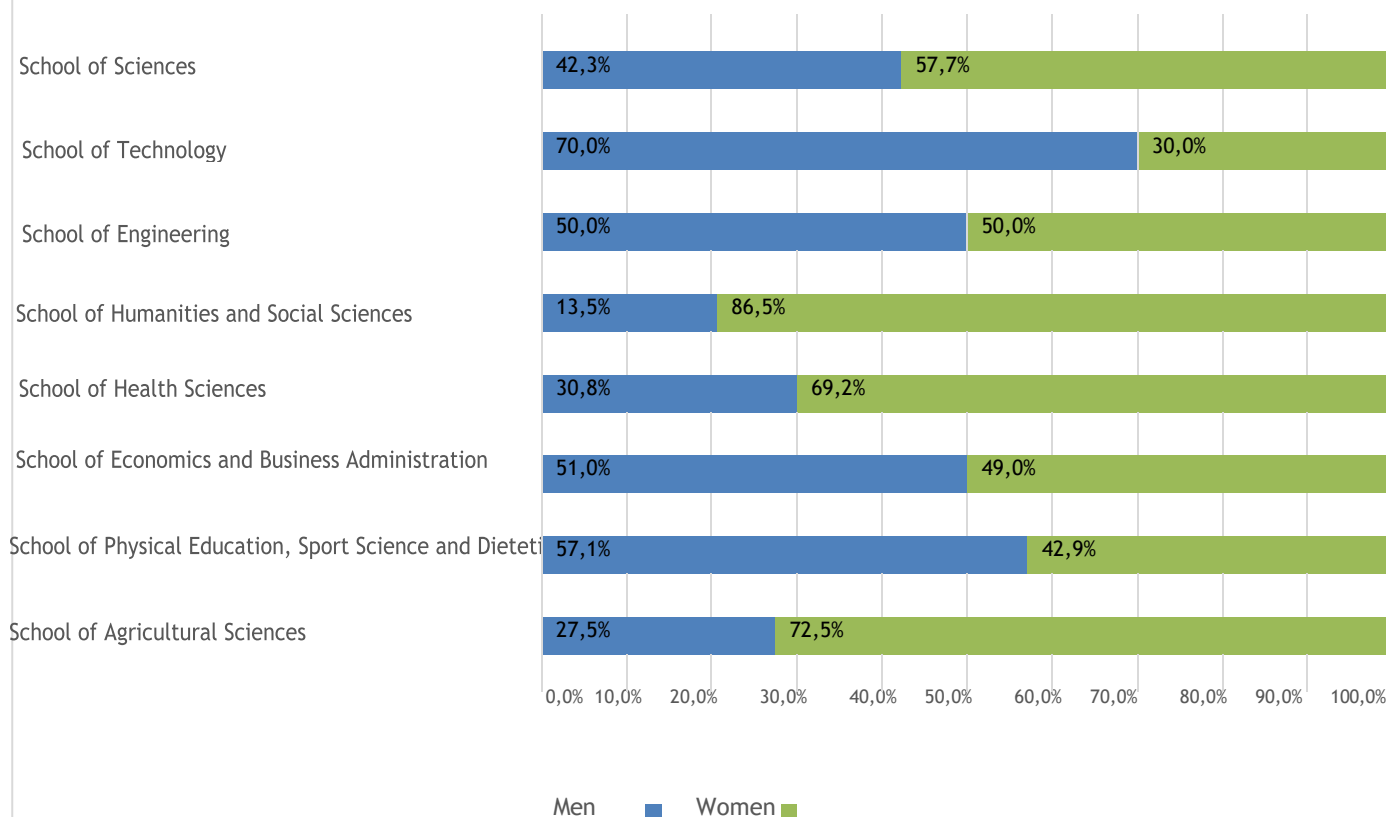
Data for the academic year 2020-2021. Data source: QAU UTH, May 2022.

Table/Graph 12. Gender distribution of PhD candidates per School

PhD Candidates by School by gender			
	Men	**Women**	**Total**
School of Agricultural Sciences	62	66	128
School of Physical Education, Sports and Dietetics	44	33	77
School of Economics and Business Administration	43	23	66
School of Health Sciences	271	324	595

School of Humanities and Social Sciences	57	147	204
School of Engineering	171	154	325
School of Technology	28	11	39
School of Sciences	92	52	144
Total	768	810	1578

PhD Candidates by School by Gender

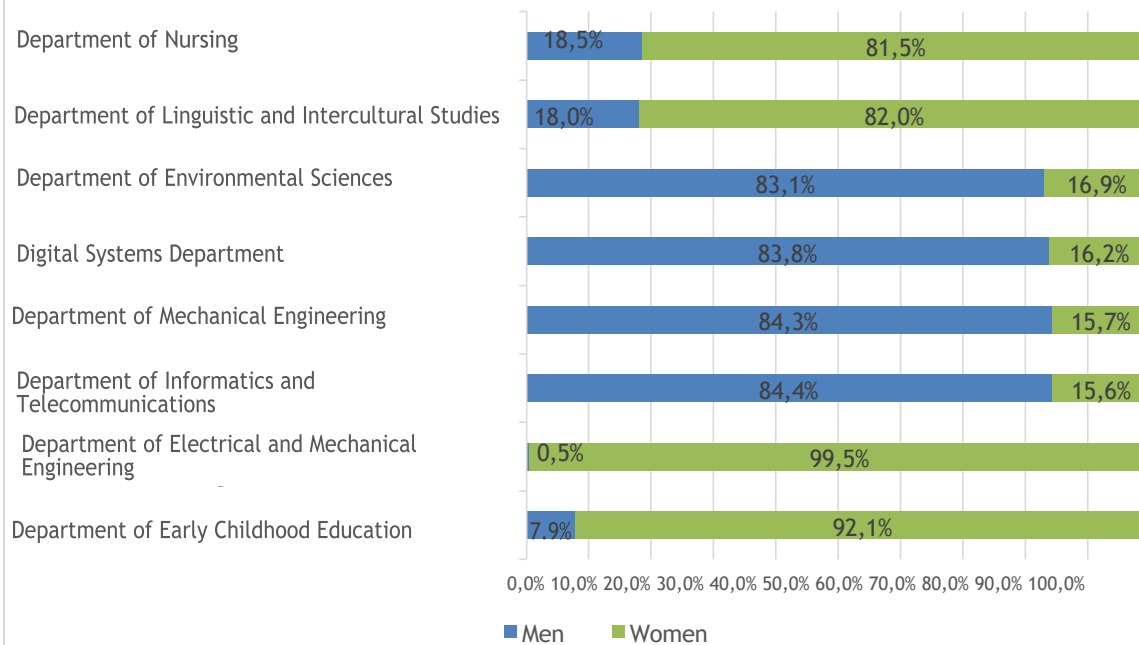| School	Men	Women
School of Sciences	63,9%	36,1%
School of Technology	71,8%	28,2%
School of Engineering	52,6%	47,4%
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	27,9%	72,1%
School of Health Sciences	45,5%	54,5%
School of Economics and Business Administration	65,2%	34,8%
School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics	57,1%	42,9%
School of Agricultural Sciences	48,4%	51,6%
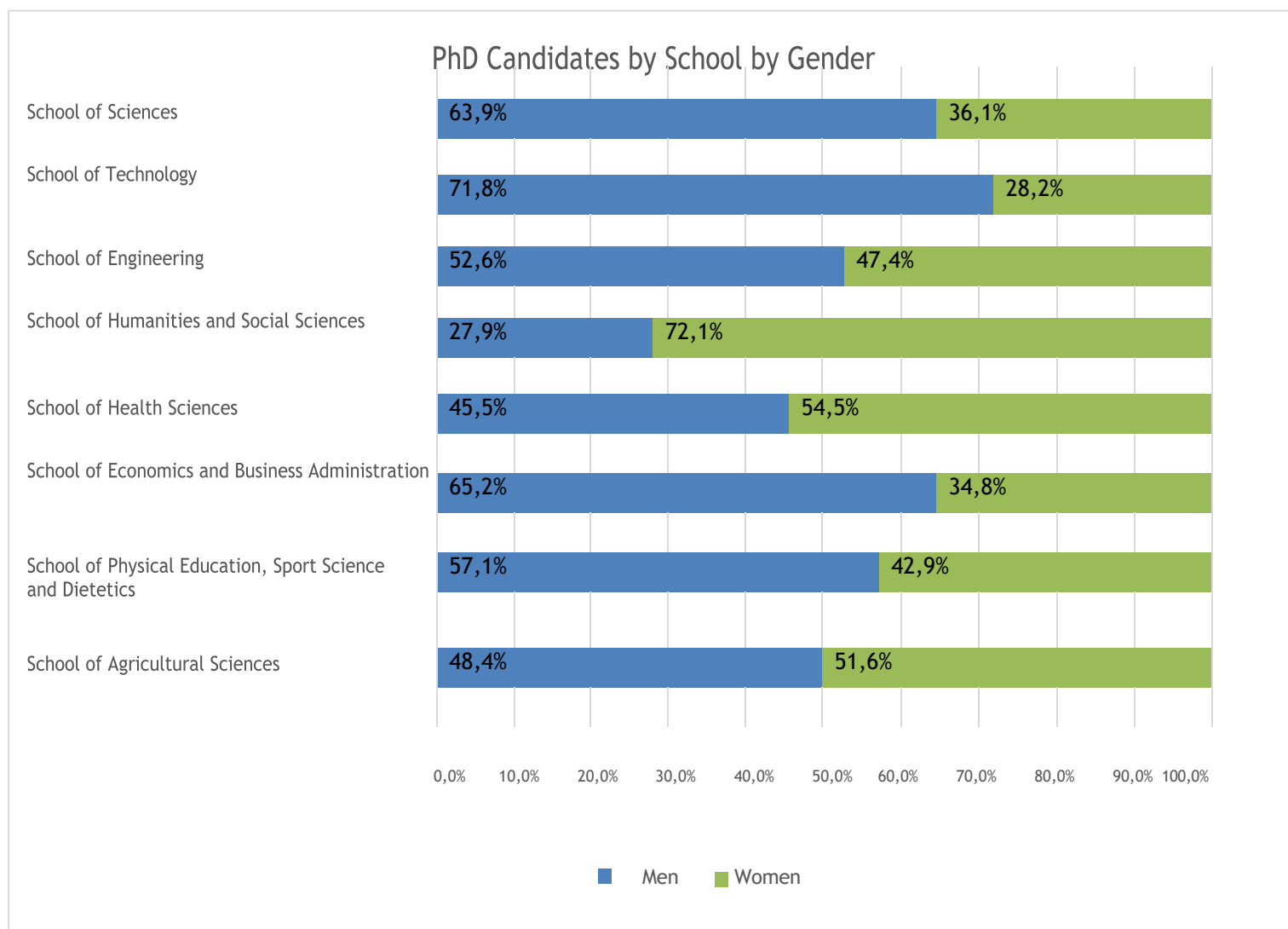
Data for the academic year 2020-2021. Data source: QAU UTH, May 2022.

As noted above with respect to faculty members, similar patterns are observed in the case of the student population, where particular interest lies in the differences between departments that are stereotypically associated with "male" or "female" professions, fields or disciplines. This is reflected in the indicative comparative mapping of eight departments of the University of Thessaly, in which the presence of one gender, according to the gender binary, exceeds 80%.

The most pronounced disparity for the academic year 2020–2021 is found in the Department of Early Childhood Education (School of Humanities and Social Sciences), where female students account for 92.1% of the student body, while men account for only 7.9%. This is followed by the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (School of Engineering) with 84.5% men and 15.5% women, the Department of Informatics and Telecommunications (School of Science) with 84.4% men and 15.6% women, the Department of Mechanical Engineering (School of Engineering) with 84.3% men and 15.7% women, the Digital Systems Department (School of Technology) with 83.8% men and 16.2% women, the Department of Environmental Sciences (School of Technology) with 83.1% men and 16.9% women, the Department of Language and Intercultural Studies (School of Humanities and Social Sciences) with 18% men and 82% women, and the Department of Nursing (School of Health Sciences) with 18.5% men and 81.5% women.

A preliminary observation based on the available data is that women predominate in departments linked to care-related professions, while, conversely, stereotypes concerning men's association with digital technology appear to persist, as indicated by the majority presence of male students in the corresponding departments.

Indicative comparison of enrolled students in selected Departments (undergraduate level of study)

Department	Men	Women
Department of Nursing	18,5%	81,5%
Department of Linguistic and Intercultural Studies	18,0%	82,0%
Department of Environmental Sciences	83,1%	16,9%
Digital Systems Department	83,8%	16,2%
Department of Mechanical Engineering	84,3%	15,7%
Department of Informatics and Telecommunications	84,4%	15,6%
Department of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering	0,5%	99,5%
Department of Early Childhood Education	7,9%	92,1%

0,0% 10,0% 20,0% 30,0% 40,0% 50,0% 60,0% 70,0% 80,0% 90,0% 100,0%

■ Men   ■ Women

C. Gender in Study Programs and Research

Brief Historical Overview

Over the years, the University of Thessaly (UTH) has undertaken initiatives in both research and teaching concerning Gender Studies and gendered approaches within the humanities and social sciences. These initiatives have, for example, addressed gender dimensions in relation to Philosophy, Anthropology, Literature, History, Education and spatial theories.

A significant boost to Gender Studies at the University of Thessaly (UTH) was provided by the Interdepartmental Undergraduate Program on Gender and Equality Issues[52], which operated from 2003 to 2007 through the collaboration of five UTH departments and was funded by the Special Management Service of the Operational Program for Education and Initial Vocational Training (O.P.E.I.V.T. II, Greek Ε.Π.Ε.Α.Ε.Κ. II). Specifically, the participating departments were the Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, the Department of Architecture, the Pedagogical Department of Primary Education, the Department of Early Childhood Education and the Department of Physical Education and Sport Science. The program included a unified interdisciplinary course cycle, distributed over four academic semesters and scientific activities covering a wide range of practical exercises, seminars, symposia and field research. The program's rich online database documents the course archive in relation to gender, the digital educational material of the four laboratories ("Women, Migration," "Gender and Sports," "Gender and Education," "Gender and Space"), as well as research activities aimed at the program's goal of fostering a multidisciplinary development of the field of Gender Studies. A representative example with a strong interdisciplinary educational imprint is the interdepartmental elective course "Gendered Places: Cultural Approaches to Urban Space" (2007-2008)[53] in the Department of Architecture, taught by Giorgos Marnelakis.

The focus on gender is highlighted by a number of research projects carried out within specific UTH Laboratories during the period 2004–2009. These projects explored gender in an interdisciplinary way, examining its relationship with other fields such as technology,

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[52] Θέματα Φύλου και Ισότητας
[53] ENGLISH (Erasmus) | Gendered Places 2007-2008

history, mathematics and sports, as well as at its intersection with aspects of migration. Indicatively, the following research projects are listed in the electronic database of the UTH Research Committee (search date: May 2022):

1. Gender, Mathematics and Technology in Education: Exploring the Strategies for Using Logico-Mathematical Concepts in Open Software Environments: Issues of Gender and Equality. Project under the PYTHAGORAS – GENDER and EQUALITY initiative.
   Funding: O.P.E.I.V.T.. Project Code: 52101.02. Period: 2004–2009. Scientific Supervisor: Anna Chronaki. Laboratory of Science and Technology, Department of Early Childhood Education.

2. Gender and the Middle Ages, bibliographic database (2009). Laboratory of History, Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology.

3. Attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors regarding: 1) physical education classes, 2) sports and exercise spaces, 3) a healthy lifestyle,among individuals differing by gender, age, social class, religion and degree of motor difficulty/impairment. (Program: O.P.E.I.V.T., Research, 1998). Laboratory of Exercise Psychology and Quality of Life, Department of Physical Education and Sport Science.

4. "Gendered Dimensions of Migration in Southeastern Europe" (2004–2007). Funding: "Pythagoras" program of the European Union ("4.2.1e – support for university research groups on gender issues"). Scientific Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Riki van Boeschoten. Laboratory of Social Anthropology, Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology.

The current situation

We now attempt to provide an indicative overview regarding Gender Studies at the University of Thessaly (UTH). The documentation of the current situation includes: faculty positions and advertised positions with Gender Studies as their field of expertise, undergraduate courses that explicitly reference gender issues in their title or include gender-related issues in their course description/summary and related educational material, postgraduate courses that address gender and social inequalities and recent, as well as ongoing research projects focusing on gender, otherness, social discrimination and social change.

Faculty positions in Gender Studies:

Election to a faculty position at the rank of Assistant Professor with tenure in the field of "Gender Theories and Cultural Criticism." (Government Gazette of tenure appointment: FEK 952/20-04-2021/Vol. Γ΄).

Advertised faculty positions in Gender Studies

Within the framework of the project "Acquisition of Academic Experience for Young Researchers Holding a Doctoral Degree 2022–2023," a position was announced at the Department of Early Childhood Education in the field of Gender Studies for teaching the courses "Contemporary Gender Theories", "Theory and History of Gender and Sexuality" and "Gender, Sexuality, and Pedagogy."

The data concerning advertised positions were provided by the administrative services.

Undergraduate courses referencing gender issues in the current academic year (2021–2022)

The data for this analysis were drawn from the 2021–2022 course catalogue[54] provided by the IT Services Department, from online searches of the Study Guides of the Departments and Schools of the University of Thessaly (UTH) and from the eClass electronic learning platform of UTH.

The results of the search include not only courses explicitly referencing gender in their title, but also those whose content, as developed in the course description/summary, intersects in an interdisciplinary and cross-thematic manner with issues of inequality and exclusion—among them gendered performative practices and the politics of the body.

The identification of relevant courses was carried out using keywords such as "gender," "gendered," "Gender Studies," "performativity," "body," "intersectionality," "equality" and "inequality". The results are not exhaustive, but indicative of the cross-disciplinary dimension of gender, and are subsequently presented along two axes: courses with explicit reference to gender in their title and courses with reference to gender issues in their description/summary and associated educational material.

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[54] καταλογος μαθηματων_2021_2022.xlsx - Υπολογιστικά φύλλα Google

- **Courses with explicit reference to gender issues in their title:**

1. *Gender Theory*[55,] Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Elena Tzelepi.

2. *Gender, the Body and Politics in Europe (13th–18th c.)*[56], Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Androniki Dialeti.

3. *Gender Studies and Literature*[57,] Department of Early Childhood Education, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Eugenia Sifaki.

4. *Gender, Mathematics and Technology in Education*[58], Department of Early Childhood Education, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Anna Chronaki.

5. *Gender and Equality Issues in Sport*, Department of Physical Education and Sport Science, School of Physical Education, Sport Science and Dietetics. Instructor: Vasiliki Zisi. (see relevant Study Guide[59]).

- **Indicative courses with reference to gender issues in the course description/summary and related teaching material:**

1. *Body Politics*[60], Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Elena Tzelepi.

2. *Social and Cultural Theory*[61], Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Elena Tzelepi.

3. *Modern Readings of Ancient Greek Tragedy*[62], Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Elena Tzelepi.

4. *Contemporary Cultural History*[63], Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Nikolaos Tsikrikis.

5. *Colonialism and Cultural Critique*[64], Department of History, Archaeology and Social

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[55] IAKA :: About :: UG :: Course List
[56] IAKA :: About :: UG :: Course List
[57] Gender Studies and Literature – Department of Early Childhood Education
[58] Gender, Mathematics and Technology in Education – Department of Early Childhood Education
[59] ΤΕΦΑΑ Πανεπ. Θεσσαλίας - Course Guide
[60] IAKA :: About :: UG :: Course List
[61] IAKA :: About :: UG :: Course List
[62] IAKA :: About :: UG :: Course List
[63] IAKA :: About :: UG :: Course List
[64] IAKA :: About :: UG :: Course List

Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Pinelopi Papailia.

6. *South, Space and Non-Hegemonic Examples of Knowledge[65]*, School of Engineering, Department of Architecture. Instructor: Iris Lykourioti.

7. *Medical Anthropology[66]*: Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Dimitra Mari Varvarezou.

8. *Rituals and Performances[67]*: Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Dafni Tragaki.

9. *Introduction to Social Anthropology[68]*, Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Instructor: Eleftheria Deltsou.

Indicative postgraduate courses referring to gender and social inequalities in the current academic year (2021-2022)

The Master's Program *"Mobility Studies"* [69](Government Gazette 6034/B'/31.12.2020) is organized on the basis of courses offered by the Department of History and the Department of Social Anthropology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Thessaly, which promote interdisciplinarity in the study of mobility, focusing among other aspects on gender, racial, national and ethnic dimensions of mobility. Examples that explicitly address the intersectional dimension of gender or focus on issues of social inequalities, postcolonial critique, democracy and citizenship include the courses *"Arts and Mobilities"* [70] taught by Elena Tzelepi and Daphne Tragaki, *"Mobility and Enclosure, Statelessness and Democracy"[71]* taught by Ioanna Laliotou, and *"Migrations, Exiles, Deportations: European Jews on the move"* [72] taught by Rika Benveniste.

The Master's Program *"Educational Sciences: Creative Learning Environments and Play"* [73] (Government Gazette 1353/19-04-2018), organized by the Department of Early Childhood Education, School of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Thessaly, focuses on the interdisciplinary exploration of creative learning. An example that includes a reference to gender issues is the course *"Social Constructions of Childhood, Education, and Creativity"* [74] taught by

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[65] [Department of Architecture - University of Thessaly](#)
[66] [IAKA :: About :: UG :: Course List](#)
[67] [IAKA :: About :: UG :: Course List](#)
[68] [IAKA :: About :: UG :: Course List](#)
[69] [IAKA ::](#)
[70] [IAKA :: About :: MA "Mobility" :: Courses](#)
[71] [IAKA :: About :: MA "Mobility" :: Courses](#)
[72] http://www.ha.uth.gr/index.php?page=pmsk-lessons-search.display&a=SK1110
[73] [Educational Sciences: Creative Educational Environments and Playing – Department of Early Childhood Education](#)
[74][1st semester – Seminar: Social Constructions of Childhood, Education and Creativity – Department of Early Childhood Education](#)

Anna Chronaki and Giannis Pechtelidis.

The data on the above postgraduate courses were drawn from teaching staff as well as from online searches in the Study Programs of the Departments and Schools of the University of Thessaly.

We would also like to highlight an upward trend observed in the production of undergraduate theses and postgraduate dissertations that focus on issues related to Gender Studies or employ gender as a central analytical methodology. The same observation applies to ongoing doctoral dissertations. These findings emerged from information provided by teaching staff and from departmental websites (indicatively, the Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, the Department of Primary Education, the Department of Early Childhood Education and the Department of Architecture).

Finally, we note that the research did not identify any active seminars of the University of Thessaly's Center for Lifelong Learning (KDMV) addressing issues of gender and social inequalities (source: KDMV e-learning platform[75]).

Recent and ongoing research projects focusing on gender, diversity, social inequalities, and social change:

-Antigones: Bodies of Resistance in the Contemporary World – ANTISOMATA[76]

The research project is funded by the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (H.F.R.I.) under the action "1st Call for HFRI Research Projects to Support Faculty Members and Researchers and to Provide High-Value Research Equipment" (Project Number: 3316).

Research Team:

Assistant Professor Elena Tzelepi, Principal Investigator

Professor Athina Athanasiou, Panteion University

Professor Olga Taxidou, University of Edinburgh and New York University

Athina Papanagiotou, Postdoctoral Researcher

Marios Chatziprokopiou, Postdoctoral Researcher

Alkistis Efthymiou, Doctoral Researcher

Stavrenia Sarantopoulou, Administrative and Financial Support Staff

Host Institution: University of Thessaly

Collaborating Institution: Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences

Project Duration: 2020–2022

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[75] eClass του Κέντρου Επιμόρφωσης & Διά Βίου Μάθησης του Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλίας | Courses List
[76] Antigones

In the research project, the multiple critical engagements with *Antigone* are used as a starting point for the literary-theatrical imagination of Western modernity in order to philosophically, anthropologically and aesthetically explore the relationship between embodied resistance, heterodoxy and contemporary conditions of democratic politics and its contestation. *Antigone* is not interpreted as a model of classical Western modernity, but as a performative possibility to pose the question of political resistance—particularly in its intersections with the body, gender, race, ethnicity and belonging—in relation to contemporary transnational conditions of otherness, biopolitics, violence and displacement.

The legacy of *Antigone* includes the critical voices of marginalized and oppressed groups, which on contemporary (political and theatrical) stages present postcolonial and anti-colonial deconstructions and reframings of the classical canon. The research program analytically assesses what persists and what remains from Antigone's legacy in the present historical moment, focusing on "other Antigones," that is alternative, postcolonial, mobile and transformative versions of her in diverse, pluralistic and translocal contexts.

-Centre of New Media and Feminist Public Practices[77]

The research project was funded by the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation and the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (GSRI-HFRI) within the framework of the "1st Call for HFRI Research Projects to Support Postdoctoral Researchers" (Project Number: 5758).

Research team: Elpida Karaba, Principal Investigator – Postdoctoral Researcher; Associate Professor Iris Lykourioti, Advisor – Faculty Member; Ioanna Zouli, Silas Michalakas, Kostas Stasinopoulos, Valia Papastamou, Marianna Stefanitsi, Chara Stergiou, Christina Konstantinidou, Scientific Collaborator – Faculty Member.

Host Institution: University of Thessaly.

Project Duration: 2018–2021.

The research project was structured as a multi-person pioneering initiative that strengthens domestic production and research in the field of the intersection of art, feminism and technology. It is dedicated to the production of discourse, artistic creation, the development of new artworks, original theory and methodology and the provision of an expanded pedagogy on these issues, organizing diverse educational activities.

The project encompasses plural scientific and techno-aesthetic practices bridging academic research and theory, artistic practice and educational work, which constitute

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[77] https://www.centrefeministmedia.arch.uth.gr/ .

the three main pillars of the initiative. These three directions are conceived as interconnected and mutually reinforcing fields, with the shared goal of developing a dynamic feminist discourse, theory and practice, aimed at highlighting particular, locally specific parameters that are interconnected with developments and struggles in other localities and other struggles within the context of globalization and structural constraints.

-Gender Equality in Schools[78]

The research project was developed within the framework of Erasmus+: *Enriching Lives, Opening Minds*, which took place between 2018 and 2021. Building on the results of a previous project on gender equality policies (GECM: Gender Equality Charter Mark), the project focused, through collaboration with partners in nine European countries, on developing specific action areas such as school leadership and community, the curriculum, the surrounding environment and interpersonal relationships.

The Principal Investigator at the University of Thessaly is Professor Anna Chronaki, with participation from PhD candidates at the Department of Early Childhood Education, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Thessaly: Eirini Lazaridou and Efi Manioti.

-G*|PAIDEIA: Touching Gender in Education[79]

G*paideia constitutes a common space for studying gender as a non-continuous and non-finalized educational process, as well as for pedagogical experimentation as a creative process of engaging with knowledge, learning and life—a life deeply inscribed in gender. It began as a need to discuss binary gender as a social construction in which gendered normativity predominates. This normativity is established as the one and only desirable and/or ideal order, permeating the institution of education and educational processes.

The resources in g*paideia are organized into thematic categories: gender, FACTS, language, numbers, action, education, and news, aiming to destabilize this generalized discourse of normativity. These resources include references to published theoretical work on gender, as well as accounts of abusive discourse through testimonies. Focus is also placed on how language and numbers constitute politics for expressing inequalities. Furthermore, the attention to the historiography of gender through the creation of gender timelines and movements allows for highlighting key moments in the consolidation of perceptions regarding gendered normativity in society and social relations.

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[78] https://genderequalityinschools.org/ .
[79] https://g-paideia.ece.uth.gr/gp/index.php/en/ .

Research Team: Anna Chronaki, Professor, Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Thessaly, Principal Investigator; Dimitra Tzanaki, PhD, University of Oxford; Nikos Vlasseros, PhD, Loughborough University; Eirini Lazaridou, PhD Candidate, Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Thessaly; Efi Manioti, PhD Candidate, Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Thessaly; Persephone Kerentzi, PhD Candidate, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA); Pinelopi Kardasi, Master's Student, Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, University of Thessaly. The team also collaborated with teachers and members of the Queering Psychoanalysis group.

Project Duration: 2018–2021. The project is self-funded, ongoing, and participation is voluntary. The data concerning recent and ongoing research projects with primary focuses on gender, diversity, social inequalities and social change were obtained from the academic staff and through online searches on the websites of the respective research projects.

Chapter III. Proposed Actions

This chapter presents a set of proposed actions aimed at promoting gender equality and combating various social discriminations and exclusions at the University of Thessaly. The design of these actions is based on the university's needs, as identified through the review of the current situation presented in Chapter II, *Gender and Equality at the University of Thessaly*, and reflects the international, European, and national institutional framework discussed in Chapter I (Subchapter IB: Institutional Framework).

In addition, the proposed actions are developed according to four design principles, which are considered critical for the organization of academic life in terms of gender and social equality, intersectionality, and the democratic functioning of the University (Subchapter IA: Conceptual Framework).

Design Principles

Accessibility: Accessibility concerns both the physical/built environment and the digital space and constitutes a prerequisite and a claim for the participation of all in the activities and processes of university life[80].

Regarding the physical/built environment, there are relevant design and implementation regulations in the University's public facilities to ensure service and circulation for everyone

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[80] At the University of Thessaly, ACCESS supports and enhances the learning and social participation of students with disabilities and/or special educational needs, as detailed in Chapter II.

without exclusions[81].

Regarding the digital space, accessibility relates both to the material and technical conditions for participation and to technological literacy and digital skills. The aim of linking accessibility with technological literacy in order to empower individuals is explicitly stated in international and national regulatory texts. Among these, paragraph 5.6.b of UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality[82] encourages "the enhancement of the use of general-purpose technologies, particularly information and communication technologies, thus promoting the empowerment of women." Similarly, the National Digital Strategy for Higher Education 2021-2025 (NDSHE-2021-2025)[83] proposes promoting gender equality through targeted development of digital skills[84].

Inclusivity: Inclusivity concerns both education and the areas of employment and administration. The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)[85], as well as Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education)[86] and the Education 2030 Framework for Action[87] highlight the importance placed internationally on ensuring inclusion at all levels of education, as well as in its content. In particular, emphasis is placed on securing access for minority and vulnerable groups and ensuring that the knowledge offered is relevant to and inclusive of all members of the educational process.

Regarding inclusivity in employment, it is essential not only to provide opportunities for work regardless of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, social class or other factors, but also to ensure that the diverse needs of staff are equally considered and appropriately accommodated, so that everyone can work in a university environment without exclusions.

Sustainability: The principle of sustainability derives from the concept of sustainable development, which was established at the first Rio Summit in 1992 and further developed through the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[88]. As a design principle of the IAPGE,

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[81] For example, Government Gazette Issue 2, No. 18, 15/01/2002, includes design specifications and specific accessibility aids according to the needs of each group facing barriers.

[82] https://unric.org/en/sdg-5/

[83] https://isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/%CE%95%CE%A3%CE%94%CE%99%CE%A6-2021-2025.pdf

[84] We can highlight three indicative formulations: the "integration of digital specialized skills courses in Secondary and Higher Education through specific training programs," the "promotion of education and training in digital skills (digital skilling) as a tool for the reintegration of women into the labor market," and the "increase in the level of computer ownership and usage for the active participation of women in the contemporary ICT environment" (ESDIF, pp. 15–16).

[85] Convention against Discrimination in Education - Legal Affairs

[86] Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4) | United Nations Western Europe

[87] Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all - UNESCO Digital Library

[88] Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

sustainability—comprising economic, environmental and social dimensions—is understood as the optimal use of existing resources (material, environmental and human) and the maximization of interconnection and collaboration among the University of Thessaly's departments and services to effectively meet its needs. Specifically, regarding the social dimension of sustainability, this refers to the full cycle encompassing planning, monitoring of effective implementation, and reflective evaluation of actions. At all these stages, initiative-taking, participation and feedback from the entire academic community (staff and students) are encouraged.

Culture of Prevention: It is widely acknowledged that policies promoting gender equality and combating various social discriminations rely heavily on prevention[89]. Therefore, it is considered important to implement measures that cultivate a culture of openness within the university community, protecting the vulnerabilities experienced by individuals facing discrimination based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, social class, disability, race, ethnicity and other intersectional factors. The principle of prevention ensures that interventions target the elimination of structural inequalities that perpetuate exclusion[90]. Addressing cases of gender-based violence requires clear and effective response procedures that create a safe space within the university community for survivors and provide them with the necessary support. Nevertheless, in the case of gender-based violence, prevention is also regarded as a critical factor in tackling the phenomenon[91].

Prerequisites

Taking into account the principle of sustainability and in alignment with Horizon Europe, it is foreseen that the actions should be monitored to allow for short-term (1–2 years) and long-term (3–5 years) evaluation and revision. The successful implementation of the actions proposed below requires the **provision of financial, material, and human resources, as well as the allocation of space** by the University of Thessaly. Their monitoring also necessitates the establishment of **new qualitative evaluation indicators** (see Observatory below).

Administrative and research positions related to the design, implementation and monitoring of these actions should be clearly defined in the University's **Organizational Chart** and **Internal Regulations**. It is also critical for the Internal Regulations to record the University's commitment to promoting balanced gender representation in leadership and decision-making positions.

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[89] See CRWI Diotima (2017).
[90] UN Women. (2020). _Gender equality: Women's rights in review 25 years after Beijing_. Accessible online https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications /2020/Gender-equality-Womens-rights-in-review-en.pdf .p. 12.
[91] WHO. (2019). _Promoting gender equality to prevent violence against women_. Accessible online https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/44098/9789241597883_eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed =y

In particular, it is worth noting that the **support of the Gender Equality Committee (GEC)** is crucial both for the sustainable operation and functioning of the Committee itself and for its supportive role across all actions aimed at promoting gender equality and eliminating discrimination. This support is proposed to include the provision of a permanent office, funding for website creation, continuation of administrative support and organization of educational and training activities.

Proposed Action 1: Awareness Workshops for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment and the Promotion of Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Committee (GEC) of the University of Thessaly has established a collaboration with DIOTIMA: Center for Gender Rights and Equality[92] to provide informational workshops aimed at preventing sexual harassment and combating gender inequality, specifically designed for the University of Thessaly community.

The goal of this action is to provide the university community with direct access to educational programs that enhance understanding of gender-based violence and foster the necessary culture so that gender-based violence is not concealed, survivors are supported, abusive behaviors are isolated and ultimately the University is experienced as a safe space.

It is proposed that these workshops be immediately funded by the Rectorate authorities to schedule their commencement at the start of the new academic year (Winter Semester 2022). The evaluation indicator for the expected objective is the implementation of the proposed workshops, the documentation of their impact, and the assessment of participation by members of the university community.

Proposed Action 2: Inclusive Language in Texts and Public Discourse

This action concerns the promotion of equality in both oral and written expressions within the University of Thessaly. The objective is to combat linguistic sexism in official administrative documents, legal texts, printed and digital materials, and the public discourse of the University.

In this context, renaming structures/services/entities, such as "Student Advocate" or "Faculty Council," is considered a best practice that can be implemented immediately. The proposed implementing bodies are the Gender Equality Committee (GEC), the Ethics Committee, the Research Committee and the Observatory (see below). These bodies, by studying international best practices and taking into account the regulatory commitments of the University, will be responsible for preparing a Guide to Inclusive Language, prioritizing the use of categories that are

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[92] https://diotima.org.gr/en/

not limited to the gender binary (e.g. male, female, non-binary) and selecting expressions that ensure inclusivity in language.

It is proposed that the University commits to funding and implementing the Inclusive Language Guide. The evaluation indicators for the expected objective include: the application of inclusive language in all documents and public discourse of the University, the development of the Guide, its dissemination across all levels of administration and its publication on all departmental websites of the University of Thessaly.

Proposed Action 3: Updating the Code of Ethics[93]

It is proposed that the Code of Ethics be updated by the Ethics Committee, with the support of the Gender Equality Committee (GEC), aiming to clearly define and explicitly regulate the framework for preventing all forms of social discrimination, including issues related to gender inequalities and sexual harassment.

On this basis and in coordination with the Complaints Handling Committee, the update should include specific policies with clearly defined procedures (e.g. responsibilities, contact points for those affected) for investigating and addressing cases of bullying, victimization and harassment.

Finally, it is proposed that the updated Code of Ethics be incorporated into the Internal Regulations of the University of Thessaly. The evaluation indicators for this objective include the publication (posting on departmental websites and informing all members of the university community) and the implementation of the updated Code of Ethics at all levels of university life.

Proposed Action 4: Gender Map

The proposed action of developing a Gender Map concerns the collection, interpretation, and mapping of data regarding gender issues, equality and social inclusion at the University of Thessaly (UTH). The goal is to create a comprehensive picture of gender, both diachronically and synchronically.

The first step in preparing the map is the analysis already conducted in this Gender Equality and Diversity Action Plan (GEDAP) (see Chapter II), including the documentation of all limitations encountered during data collection and the gaps identified. This analysis will be expanded to include primary research with an intersectional approach to gender equality and other forms of social inclusion at UTH. Based on this research, the further actions proposed in the IAPGE will be specified and continuously updated.

For the implementation of the Gender Map, it is necessary to secure a commitment from the

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[93] Ethics Issues | University Of Thessaly

Rectorate to commission and fund the research described in detail below, as well as to ensure the dissemination of its results. The responsible entities for implementing this action are the Special Account for Research Funds, the Gender Equality Committee (GEC) and the Observatory (see below).

The stages of preparing the Gender Map are defined as follows:

1. Primary research with an intersectional approach to gender equality at the University of Thessaly (UTH):

    1.1. Preparation of a questionnaire and distribution to members of the academic community, along with individual and group interviews with a representative sample of staff and students across all levels and from different fields. Special attention will be given to including a representative sample of teaching, research and administrative staff employed under fixed-term contracts or in precarious work conditions, aiming to collect data and explore an area identified by our research as underexplored. The proposed data collection and analysis will include non-binary gender performances as well as other intersectional parameters to further investigate multiple and overlapping exclusions and the level of awareness regarding equality.

    1.2. Parallel archival research concerning Gender Studies at UTH, aiming to highlight a genealogy of theories and practices in the university's history.

    1.3. Collection of information from the University's administrative documents regarding balanced gender representation in decision-making bodies and in relation to defining their responsibilities, gender distribution of positions in senior administrative levels, gender-equitable recruitment in teaching and research positions, balanced career progression of teaching and research staff.[94]

2. Analysis/interpretation of the data resulting from the questionnaire responses, interviews, archival research records, and administrative documents. The data will be compared with the quantitative and qualitative information already collected at the current stage of the preparation of the Gender Equality Institutional Strategy (GEIS). Particular emphasis will be placed on the qualitative processing and interpretation of gender inequalities and/or exclusions reflected in the quantitative data (e.g., gender imbalances in faculty positions, opportunities for career advancement of faculty members, employment across different staff categories, exclusion or difficulties in inclusion in specific scientific fields).

3. Mapping of dynamics, needs, and demands that will be reflectively assessed in relation

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[94] See *Gender Equality Action Plans in Universities and Research Organizations: Guidelines and Tools*. (TARGET_DIGITAL_WEBSITE_USE.pdf)

to the collected data and will inform the proposed actions.

4. Visualization of the Gender Map and creation of a public online repository. An evaluation indicator for the objectives of the Gender Map is the publication of the online Gender Map repository, where all research results will be presented.

Evaluation indicator for the objectives of the Gender Map is the publication of the Gender Map's online archive, where all research results will be presented.

Proposed Action 5: Observatory for Equality

The Observatory is proposed as a body that monitors and participates in the effective implementation of the above proposed actions. It will have both a research and training role, while simultaneously acting as a mediator between the structures and services of the University of Thessaly on issues related to gender and other forms of equality within the university. For the establishment of the Observatory, it is recommended that the Rectorate commit funding to cover its human and technical resources needs, as well as the provision of space.

1. Research Role

The research role of the Observatory concerns the self-monitoring of the University of Thessaly (UTH). Within this framework, the Observatory is proposed to:

Conduct targeted research using data from the Gender Map, with a focus on intersectionality;

Monitor the inclusivity of the University across its various activities (education, work, research, teaching, administration), focusing on areas where barriers to inclusion and significant inequalities have been identified (e.g. career progression of faculty members, male-dominated scientific fields, overrepresentation of women in support roles);

Evaluate and provide feedback on existing practices, identifying needs for the expansion or strengthening of current practices or structures;

Study and propose best practices related to gender/sexuality issues and broader aspects of inclusivity, accessibility and openness within the University (e.g. addressing linguistic sexism and developing an Inclusive Language Guide).

To achieve this goal, the Observatory may connect with and mediate between university services and structures, for example in the context of research on harassment and bullying complaints, linking stakeholders such as the Gender Equality Committee (GEC), QAU and the Complaints Handling Committee of UTH.

Additionally, the Observatory proposes the integration of new qualitative evaluation indicators based on gender inclusivity, especially in fields that consistently remain male-dominated. These indicators will also consider other gender performances that fall outside the male/female binary.

Evaluation Indicator: The objective of the Observatory will be assessed based on the implementation and documentation of its research through the publication of an annual report and the dissemination of results across the entire university community.

2. Educational Role

The Observatory aims to educate and raise awareness among all members of the university community regarding gender issues and social discrimination, fostering a culture of inclusivity and openness. It is proposed that the Observatory promotes the organization of activities (seminars, events, workshops) either independently or in collaboration with the Gender Equality Committee (GEC) and other UTH services (counseling, psychosocial support, legal aid and accessibility), as well as with collective bodies within the academic community (e.g., student associations), local government and other public/social services at the municipal or regional level.

Additionally, in collaboration with the GEC, the Observatory will monitor and support the necessary transformations for the use of inclusive language in the University's documents and public discourse.

Evaluation Indicator: The goal will be assessed based on the organization of educational activities and the documentation of the impact of the events organized by the Observatory.

Conclusion: Long-Term Actions

The observed mobility in recent years within teaching and research, as previously analyzed (see Subsection IIC), the range of social support structures aimed at ensuring the principle of equal treatment and combating social discrimination (see Subsection IIA), as well as collaborations with community-based organizations specializing in gender, equality and social justice issues (such as DIOTIMA: Center for Gender Rights and Equality), highlight the progressive trend regarding Gender Studies and awareness of social inclusion issues at the University of Thessaly (UTH).

This mobility, which has an interdisciplinary dynamic, indicates that the potential for the organized development of Gender Studies is maturing. It also points to the need for further reinforcement of existing initiatives and support for the emergence of new ones. One such example is the utilization of existing courses and research programs addressing gender-related topics, as well as the academic staff with interest in these (inter)disciplinary areas, alongside calls for positions with gender-focused expertise.

An inclusive approach to leveraging existing capabilities could involve the systematic strengthening of gender study within the framework of lifelong learning. Additionally, special emphasis should be placed on undergraduate and postgraduate studies. In departments that currently offer few or no courses related to Gender Studies, the horizontal integration of such courses into their curricula is recommended. Particularly at the postgraduate level, as revealed by the mapping of the current situation (see Subsection IIC), the presence of isolated courses could be significantly enhanced through the establishment of a comprehensive framework, such as the development of an interdepartmental postgraduate program in Gender Studies.

Finally, a well-founded perspective for supporting gender in teaching and research would be the establishment of a comprehensive institute with an academic and research orientation. Such a structure would systematize existing initiatives, create space for new ones—functioning, for example, as a host for research projects—implement interdisciplinary and cross-thematic activities (seminars, conferences and other educational and training initiatives) and connect with other structures and services of the University of Thessaly (such as the University of Thessaly Press[95], as well as the Library and Information Center of the University of Thessaly[96], to enrich their collections with Gender Studies-related literature and to digitize archival and other research material), thereby expanding their activities on gender-related issues.

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[95] https://press.uth.gr/ .
[96] http://www.lib.uth.gr/ .

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