



## THE GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY AND THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2024-2027

### “VICTOR BABEȘ” UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND PHARMACY

### STRATEGIA ȘI PLANUL DE IMPLEMENTARE AL EGALITĂȚII DE GEN (2024 - 2027) ÎN UNIVERSITATEA DE MEDICINĂ ȘI FARMACIE “VICTOR BABEȘ” DIN TIMIȘOARA

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### Abbreviations and definitions

GE	Gender equality
GEP	Gender equality plan
HoD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources Department
VR	Vice Rector
R	Rector
D	Dean
GAD	General Administrative Director
UMFVBT	"Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Timișoara
AC	The Administrative Council
DSGU	University General Secretariat Directorate (Direcția Secretariat General Universitate)
CR	Rector's Office (Cancelaria Rectorului)
CRACH	The Commission for Receiving and Addressing Cases of Harassment (Comisia de primire și soluționare a cazurilor de hărțuire)
SAAP	Entrepreneurship, Website Administration, and E-Learning Platform Department (Serviciul Antreprenoriat, Administrare website și platforme de e-learning)
Sex	Either of the two major forms of individuals that occur in many species and that are distinguished respectively as female or male especially on the basis of their reproductive organs and structures ( <a href="https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/">https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/</a> )
Gender	The behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex ( <a href="https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/">https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/</a> )
Sex vs Gender	A clear delineation between sex and gender is typically prescribed, with sex as the preferred term for biological forms, and gender limited to its meanings involving behavioral, cultural, and psychological traits. In this dichotomy, the terms male and female relate only to biological forms (sex), while the terms masculine/masculinity, feminine/femininity, woman/girl, and man/boy relate only to psychological and sociocultural traits (gender) ( <a href="https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/">https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/</a> )



## I. Introduction

"Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Timișoara (UMFVBT) is a public higher education institution with legal personality, integrated into the national higher education system. It offers university training in medical and pharmaceutical sciences.

The university's autonomy grants the academic community the right to define its mission, institutional strategy, structure, activities, organization, and functioning, as well as manage human and material resources, in accordance with current legislation.

The Gender Equality (GE) strategy for 2024-2027 was developed by the "Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Timisoara, on the basis of input from the entire university and takes into account everyone who works and studies at our university. The GE strategy was built on the provisions of the European Charter for researchers and of the Code of Conduct in the process of the recruitment of researchers<sup>1</sup>, 2015-2019, the European Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025<sup>2</sup> and the Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans<sup>3</sup>.

The motivation for developing the GE strategy is to ensure that our university is a safe place for everyone, and all activities and processes that take place respect the principles of equality, diversity, inclusiveness and non-discrimination.

Based on the GE strategy, the university developed the GE Plan (GEP) for 2024-2027, with concrete actions and measures, as well as indicators for measuring progress of its implementation and revisions.

Enforcing its mission and values, the GE strategy and the GEP of the "Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy ensure and promote equality and diversity to knowledge and the acquisition of skills to all. The objectives of the GE strategy are implanted through specific actions that aim at safeguarding an equal and inclusive organizational culture and promoting gender-equality at all levels. As such, the GE strategy and the GEP will pro-actively enable, gender equality awareness raising, skills and competences; gender balance in decision-making structures and processes, including recruitment; gender

<sup>1</sup> [https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy\\_library/ttf\\_goal\\_2\\_results\\_v1.0.pdf](https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/ttf_goal_2_results_v1.0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en)

<sup>3</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffc06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1>



equality in teaching and research; and integrating the gender dimension in teaching curricula and the entire research process.

The document aims to establish a general framework for interventions designed to address significant weaknesses identified in this area, including inequities, optimized resource utilization, and the use of evidence-based data.

## II. Gender Equality Context at the European, National, and University Levels

### Gender Equality Context at the EU level

Gender equality is one of the fundamental values of the European Union (EU), as enshrined in Article 2 and Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which stipulates that gender equality is a constitutive principle of the EU. This principle has been integrated into the founding treaties of the EC/EU since its establishment through the Treaty of Rome in 1957, by introducing, at that time, Article 153 - currently Article 157, which aimed at equal pay for equal work of equal value.

Although gender equality in the EU has seen positive developments, it is deemed as progressing too slowly in the most recent report by the European Commission<sup>4</sup>. Disparities between men and women remain pronounced, both in key areas and among EU member states. Statistical data presented in the Commission's report showed that, in the EU in 2017, women's participation rate in the labor market, despite reaching its highest historical level, was still significantly lower than that of men by 11.5%. Women still earn 16% less, on average, and are nearly absent from the highest leadership positions in private companies, with only 6.3% of publicly listed private companies having a woman as CEO.

Encouraging trends include the increasing number of women in the labor market and their advancements in obtaining better education and training. However, gender gaps persist, with women still over-represented in lower-paid sectors and under-represented in decision-making positions<sup>5</sup>.

Achieving gender equality goals requires a structural approach to change across the entire European R&I system. This approach involves the collective commitment of R&I organizations, their funders, national authorities, and the European Commission. The introduction of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) eligibility

<sup>4</sup> Report on equality between women and men in the EU 2019, available:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/aid\\_development\\_cooperation\\_fundamental\\_rights/annual\\_report\\_ge\\_2019\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/aid_development_cooperation_fundamental_rights/annual_report_ge_2019_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en)



criterion supports these efforts and reflects the Horizon Europe legal basis, which reinforces gender equality as a cross-cutting priority<sup>6</sup>.

The new European Union Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025 prioritizes the issue of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value, emphasizing the need for adopting mandatory measures to ensure transparency. The European Commission has announced plans to implement mandatory measures for member states regarding salary transparency, preparing a legislative proposal to this effect. The EU Commission further emphasizes the importance for this proposal to aim at balancing the promotion of the principle of equal pay with the introduction of additional administrative requirements for employers. These measures are accompanied by tools to support their effective implementation, along with the necessity of monitoring to strengthen mechanisms for facilitating compliance with the new standards.

### **Gender Equality Context at the National level**

In Romania, the policy on equal opportunity and equal treatment between women and men was first legislated in 2002. The primary government body for equal opportunities was established as a national agency in 2005. Since then, several changes have occurred in both the legislation and the institutional structure of these government bodies.

In 2002, the Parliament passed Law 202/2002 on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, specifically addressing gender equality (Gender Equality Law). This law includes provisions for positive actions to promote gender equality, described as "special actions adopted on a temporary basis to accelerate the practical realization of equal opportunities between women and men" (Article 4(e)). However, these actions are permitted only if they are "aimed at protecting certain categories of women or men, and not women as a group in comparison with men" (Article 6(5)(b)).

The primary responsibility for gender equality lies with the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (Agenția Națională pentru Egalitatea de Șanse între Femei și Bărbați - ANES), established in 2002.

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<sup>6</sup> REGULATION (EU) 2021/695 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013 and COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2021/764 of 10 May 2021 establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and repealing Decision 2013/743/EU



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The 2022 - 2027 National Strategy for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities and Treatment between Women and Men, and the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence, approved by Government Decision 1.547/2022, has two general objectives: Pillar I - Equality of Opportunity and Treatment between Women and Men and Pillar II - Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence and Violence against Women .

At the national level, indicators measuring equality of opportunity and treatment between women and men show a rather slow progress compared to other EU member states. For example, the Gender Equality Index for 2019 ranks Romania 25th out of 28 in the European Union, with a score of 54.5 out of 100, which is 12.9 points below the EU average. The Index aims to measure "progress in gender equality in EU member states" by aggregating calculated scores on inequalities between women and men in six fundamental areas: work, money, knowledge, time, power, and health. In this section, the main results obtained by Romania on the gender equality index in the mentioned domains are presented<sup>7</sup>.

### **Gender Equality Context at the University level**

In addition to system-level reforms, regulations, and supportive policies, it's crucial to pinpoint specific examples at the institutional level to demonstrate how diversity, equity, and inclusiveness can be integrated as distinct features into higher education, research, and university management. Universities worldwide have, for instance, explicitly incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into their policy frameworks as part of their strategies. In numerous instances, universities have taken proactive steps in developing diversity and inclusion strategies tailored to their respective societies, even in the absence of explicit national policy frameworks for widening participation. The urgency for broader participation has been underscored by the recent influx of refugees, prompting European universities to initiate targeted integration efforts. This raises strategic and practical questions about how institutions can address issues of diversity, inclusion, equity, and access—a challenge that requires tailored approaches depending on national and cultural contexts. Possible responses include implementing institutional strategies for diversity management, policies promoting equal opportunities, fostering social innovation, or enhancing the participation of underrepresented groups, such as those from lower socio-economic backgrounds or ethnic

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<sup>7</sup> <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-equality-index-2019-romania>



minorities. Responses may focus on outreach, access, and student retention, as well as encompass staffing policies<sup>8</sup>.

In order to achieve its objectives under optimal conditions, UMFVBT organizes and operates according to the following principles:

- Principle of university autonomy;
- Principle of academic freedom;
- Principle of public accountability;
- Principle of quality assurance;
- Principle of equity;
- Principle of managerial and financial efficiency, aiming to achieve adequate educational outcomes through the management of existing resources;
- Principle of transparency;
- Principle of respecting the rights and freedoms of members of the university community;
- Principle of national and international mobility for students, teaching staff, and researchers;
- Principle of student-centered education;
- Principle of relevance, ensuring education meets personal and socio-economic development needs;
- Principle of guaranteeing the cultural identity of all members of the academic community and promoting intercultural dialogue;
- Principle of embracing, promoting, and preserving the national identity and cultural values of the Romanian people;
- Principle of recognizing and guaranteeing the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, including the right to preserve, develop, and express their ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious identities;

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<sup>8</sup> <https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/universities-39-strategies-and-approaches-towards-diversity-equity-and-inclusion.pdf>





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- Principle of ensuring equality of opportunity and non-discrimination;
  - Principle of freedom of thought and independence from political and religious ideologies and doctrines;
  - Principle of consulting social partners in decision-making;
  - Principle of student participation in decision-making.

Furthermore, UMFVBT has approved the Guide for the Prevention and Combating of Harassment on the Basis of Sex, as well as Moral Harassment in the Workplace, as an annex to the Internal Regulations.

### III. Review of requirements, policies and case studies

Prior to developing the GE strategy and the GEP, the “Victor Babeș” University of Medicine and Pharmacy appointed a working group to conduct a literature review of the existing requirements, policies, recommendations and examples and case studies pertinent to discrimination, inclusiveness, and gender equality, with a special focus on universities and research performing organizations.

The resources used in this literature review study are presented in Annex 1.

### IV. Diagnosis (data collection and analysis)

#### IV.1. Data collection

The following quantitative indicators were collected at the UMFVBT as relevant for the discussion on gender equality issues:

- Staff numbers by sex/gender at all levels, by departments and function (including administrative / support staff)
- Staff share by sex/gender hired in research contracts/grants
- Numbers of women and men in academic and administrative decision-making positions;
- Number of female and male students at all levels and for all disciplines
- Wage gaps by sex/gender and job;
- Numbers of female and male candidates applying for distinct job positions;

As part of qualitative data collection and diagnosis, the working group conducted university-wide interviews, with regards to the GDPR provisions, with the following indicators:



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- Opinions on the work-life balance in the university
  - Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content
  - Perception of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment in the university
  - Perception (opinion) regarding inclusiveness and discrimination at the university

## IV. 2. Data analysis

### The quantitative and qualitative analysis of data showed that:

- There are more women (71%) than men (29%) administrative / support staff
- There are more women (61%) than men (39%) teaching staff
- There are more women (62%) than men (38%) applying for teaching positions in the last 3 years
- There are more women (66%) than men (34%) staff hired in research contracts/grants
- There is an even number of women (54%) and men (46%) in academic and administrative decision-making positions, reflecting good existing leadership practices in the university;
- There are NO wage gaps by sex/gender and job;
- The university is perceived as a safe place, without gender-violence
- The university is overall perceived as inclusive
- Combining work and family life – women more often declare that they are responsible for most of family duties
- The gender dimension is not yet well integrated in research and teaching
- There is a relative lack of procedures and knowledge about the gender equality, inclusiveness and non-discrimination
- Stereotypes and unspoken biases regarding gender still exist in the University community, such as beliefs that women are less ambitious, less talented, or that they are less often considered experts, while men are more determined and resistant to stress

It is worth mentioning that the student admission process at UMFVBT is conducted through a competition, and the recruitment process, including career promotion, is carried out through a public competition. UMFVBT does not have the legal ability to promote gender equality in these areas without being accused of direct or indirect discrimination.



After conducting the internal analysis, a set of proposals were made at the institutional level to enhance aspects ensuring better equal opportunities. All of the data led to the development of a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) based on actionable steps.

Also, the university will appoint an institution-wide EG Committee with the following responsibilities:

- implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the PEG
- provide practical support and tools to the actors involved in the implementation of the PEG
- cooperate and involve stakeholders at all levels to ensure the implementation of the PEG measures
- raise awareness of the benefits of gender equality in research
- to assess progress on gender equality within the university

## V. GE strategy and GEP

Based on the internal review and the national and European policies and requirements, the university Senate and the Rector committed to developing the university strategy for gender equality for 2024-2027, and the corresponding GEP.

### V.1. GE Strategy 2024-2027

The GE Strategy comprises the following areas of intervention and objectives for 2024-2027:

Area of intervention	Objectives
<b>1. Work-life balance and organisational culture</b>	Promoting integration of work with family and personal life
<b>2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making</b>	Promoting gender equality in the institutional culture, processes and practice
<b>3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression</b>	Promoting processes to favor and support gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments
<b>4. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content</b>	Promoting a gender and sex perspective in research processes



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	Promoting the integration of a sex and gender perspective in teaching curricula
<b>5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment</b>	Raising awareness about the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity

## V.2. GE Plan 2024-2027

The GE Plan at the “Victor Babeș” University of Medicine and Pharmacy comprises areas of intervention, objectives, key measures, target audience, timeline, responsible persons, and indicators to measure progress.



## Area 1. Work-life balance and organizational culture

### Objective: Promoting integration of work with family and personal life

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2024	2025	2026	2027		
1. Developing an informative back-to-work kit and disseminating it to employees returning from maternity/paternity leave	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff				X	Informative kit developed Informative kit disseminated periodically	Rector, HR, GE Committee
3. Availability of flexible working times arrangements	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Policies, procedures, and services for work and personal life integration	Rector, HR AC, GE Committee
4. Enhancing the organizational culture by improving working conditions tailored to the specific needs of teachers. Ensuring workplace health and safety and adjusting the work environment to accommodate both regular and crisis situations.	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X	X	X	Improved working conditions Number of compartments/departments/improved	Rector, AC, GE Committee



## Area 2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

**Objective: Promoting gender equality in the institutional culture, processes, and practice**

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2024	2025	2026	2027		
1. Appointing a Committee with a proactive or consultant role to be responsible for monitoring and ensuring that workplace procedures and practices respect gender equality	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff	X	X			Appointed GE Committee	Rector, AC
2. Communication and dissemination of the GEP at institutional level	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff, students	X	X	X	X	Periodically disseminating via institutional e-mail of the GEP	GE Committee
3. Routine revision of any text, regulation, communication, images, from a gender equality and diversity standing point	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff, students	X	X	X	X	Revised texts, regulations, communications, and images from the perspective of gender equality and diversity	AC, Senate, DGSU, CR
4. Internal training seminars on gender	Academic		X	X	X	Awareness	GE



awareness	staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff, students					training on gender equality issues	Committee
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### Area 3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

**Objective: Promoting processes to facilitate and support gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments**

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2024	2025	2026	2027		
1. Courses and training on gender equality, career development and leadership	University management, Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff, students		X	X	X	Courses and training for career progression Courses and training for leadership	GE Committee
2. Disseminate and communicate career good practices - role models for women (scientists, researchers and academics)	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative		X	X	X	Initiatives for raising awareness on female role models	GE Committee



	staff, students					Initiatives for raising awareness on gender diversity in research teams	
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#### Area 4. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

##### Objectives:

- Promoting a gender and sex perspective in research processes
- Promoting the integration of a sex and gender perspective in teaching curricula

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2024	2025	2026	2027		
1. Internal trainings on the use of sex and gender perspective in research, to foster the acknowledgment of its economic, social and innovation value	Academic staff, researchers, students, scientific community			X	X	Participation in training seminars on integrating sex/gender analysis methods, by gender and field of research	VR for Research, GE Committee
2. Development, communication, and implementation of standards for the incorporation of the sex and gender variables	Academic staff, researchers,		X	X	X	Participation in training seminars on integrating	VR for Research, GE Committee





into research	students					sex/gender analysis methods, by gender and field of research  Perception of the gender/sex variables in research contents	
3. Institutional recognition within the university of those dissertations that have taken the gender dimension into account.	Academic staff, students		X	X	X	Awarded Bachelor's/ Masters/PhD Thesis	Deans, AC, VRs
4. Disseminate and communicate career good practices - role models for women (scientists, researchers, and academics)	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff, students		X	X	X	Initiatives for raising awareness on female role models  Initiatives for raising awareness on gender diversity in research teams	GE Committee



5. Elective courses available for students on gender equality and soft skills in their study curricula	students			X	X	Sex/ gender variables in teaching	VR responsible for teaching, Deans, AC, Senate
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### Area 5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

**Objective: Raising awareness about the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity**

Action/Measure	Target	Timeline				Indicator(s)	Responsible
		2024	2025	2026	2027		
1. Training on discrimination phenomena (including discriminatory language), violence (including that based on prejudice or gender), harassment, and sexual harassment	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff, students		X	X	X	Participation in training, per categories  Skills acquired in relation to identifying and responding to discrimination and violence phenomena	Rector, GE Committee, CRACH
2. Develop internal (university) electronic tool (website/platform) supporting information and	Academic staff,		X	X	X	Dedicated university	Rector, AC, SAAP, GE



education, as well as allowing the reporting of sexual harassment and discrimination	researchers, technical and administrative staff, students					website/platform, number of visits, number of real-case situations reported and solved	Committee
3. Developing an Gender Discrimination Avoidance Information Kit and disseminating it to employees and students	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff, students		X	X	X	Informative kit developed Informative kit disseminated periodically	GE Committee
4. Developing an Sexual and Moral Harassment Information Kit and disseminating it to employees and students	Academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff, students		X	X	X	Informative kit developed Informative kit disseminated periodically	GE Committee



## VI. Monitoring and evaluation of the GEP

The implementation of the GEP at the “Victor Babeș” University of Medicine and Pharmacy, the progress against the GE strategy aims and objectives are regularly assessed, through periodic meetings. The implementation of the GEP will be permanently monitored by the GE Committee at the university. The GE Committee is responsible with collecting data and input. They will perform a first analysis of the progress of the GEP (against the indicators), gather knowledge and feedback.

The GE Committee at the university will conclude findings reports (once a year), which are then presented to the university management (Rector, VRs, Deans) and discussed. These meetings will provide valuable conclusions on the implementation of the GEP. These meetings will also provide comments and recommendations that will enable adjustments and improvements to interventions on the GEP for the following year.

The periodic reports allow the continuous review of the impact of the GEP as well as keeping the wider community informed and engaged in the progress towards gender equality. The review of progress reports includes qualitative information as well as quantitative data, such as updates on human resource data disaggregated by sex, monitoring data to keep track of the implementation of key actions.

After their conclusion and adoption by the university management (Senate, Rector, VRs), the periodic (annual) GE progress report is published on the university website and communicated to the entire academic community.

Senatul Universității de Medicină și Farmacie „Victor Babeș” din Timișoara a aprobat prezentul document în ședința din data de 26.07.2024, dată la care intră în vigoare.

**Rector,**  
**Prof. univ. dr. Octavian Marius Crețu**

*Semnătura olografă este aplicată pe varianta originală a documentului care se păstrează în arhiva Senatului universitar.  
Prezentul act are aceeași forță juridică ca și documentul original.*

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