



## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER EQUALITY REPORT**

**Year 2025**

Nova Gorica, February 2026

Recipients:

- The University Senate
- Equal opportunities committee
- Rector
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	Name or body	Date
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## 1. Introduction

In the field of employment, the University of Nova Gorica (hereinafter ‘the University’) operates in accordance with applicable legislation, in particular the Employment Relationships Act (ZDR-1), which requires equal treatment of employees regardless of gender, race, religion or other personal circumstances, and with the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act (ZEMŽM) and the Protection against Discrimination Act (ZVarD), which ensure protection against discrimination and promote equal opportunities in the workplace. Furthermore, the University also acts in accordance with the Higher Education Act (ZViS-1), which stipulates that higher education institutions must ensure equal access to education and the performance of activities for all, regardless of personal circumstances, and to create conditions for the equal treatment of male and female students and staff. ZViS-1 also emphasises the duty of institutions to actively contribute to the creation of an inclusive academic environment in which all individuals are guaranteed equal opportunities for education, research and professional development.

At the University level, these legal requirements are set out in internal documents, in the Gender Equality Policy and in implementation strategies that operationalise its objectives. The implementation strategy is adapted and supplemented annually in line with current needs, with specific measures and activities planned in annual reports and their implementation reported on in the following reporting period.

As at 31 December 2025, the University employed 231 people, of whom 97 were men and 134 were women. There were 72 foreign nationals, of whom 36 were men and 36 were women. There were 11 men and 6 women in management positions, of whom 4 were foreign nationals (2 women, 2 men).

In September 2025, for the first time in the University’s history, the title of honorary doctorate – doctor honoris causa – was awarded to a woman, namely to the internationally renowned astrophysicist and Director of Science at the European Space Agency (ESA), Prof. Dr Carole Mundell.

As of 31 December 2025, 592 people were enrolled on the University’s study programmes, of whom 322 were women and 270 men, and 390 were foreign nationals and 202 were Slovenians.

The University strives for academic excellence and to create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which all members of the academic community feel accepted and equal. Through various measures, it prevents discrimination and harassment and promotes equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender or other personal circumstances. In doing so, it ensures access to information on gender equality and consistently fulfils its legal obligations. It pays particular attention to removing barriers to equal participation, strengthening mutual respect, and promoting the participation and inclusion of all members of the academic community, with equality, diversity and inclusion being its core values.

## 2. Gender Equality Report for 2025

This report focuses on reviewing the measures we implemented in 2025 with the aim of strengthening our efforts towards equal opportunities.

## 2.1. The work of the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Equal Opportunities Coordinator

The Equal Opportunities Commission (hereinafter: ‘the Commission’), comprising Prof. Dr. Andreja Gomboc, Prof. Dr. Peter Purg, Prof. Dr. Katja Mihurko and Assoc. Prof. Dr Blaž Belec, as well as the Equal Opportunities Coordinator Tina Šček Krušec (hereinafter: “the Coordinator”), addressed current issues relating to its remit on an ad hoc basis throughout 2025, via email or telephone discussions.

Individual members of the committee and the coordinator attended the following events on gender equality:

- On 11 February 2025, Prof. Dr. Andreja Gomboc participated as a guest at a round table during the event entitled “Science is for Everyone”, organised by the National Institute of Chemistry. Prof. Dr. Andreja Gomboc was also a guest on the live radio show on Radio Val 202 to mark International Women in Science Day.
- On 28 May 2025, the coordinator attended the IDEA-net webinar. IDEA" on inclusion, diversity, equity and access in higher education (I-inclusion, D-diversity, E-equity and A-access).
- As part of the Rectors’ Conference of the Republic of Slovenia, a consultation was organised on 31 March 2025 entitled “Diversity as a driver of social progress: Universities’ contribution to social inclusion and a fairer society – Presentation of good practices implemented by universities in the field of inclusion. The University of Nova Gorica was represented by Assoc. Prof. Dr Blaž Belec and Prof. Dr. Peter Purg, who presented the topic ‘Included in Diversity: Frameworks and Practices at the University of Nova Gorica’.
- In September 2025, Prof. Dr. Andreja Gomboc took part in the STEMfluencerke campaign, organised by OnaVe, which aimed to encourage girls to pursue studies and careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
- On 1 October 2025, the Coordinator took part in the University’s Orientation Day, where she presented her work and responsibilities to first-year students.
- The Coordinator participated in and addressed participants at the 4th International Scientific Conference “Education for Everyone”, organised by the University of Banja Luka.
- On 2 December 2025, the Coordinator attended the event “VODA Conference – Building a Society on the Foundations of Inclusion, Environment, Digitalisation and Active Participation”, specifically the workshop “Inclusion and Diversity”, organised by CMEPIUS.
- Prof. Dr. Andreja Gomboc participated in the project “STEAM Tales: Enhancing STEAM education through storytelling and hands-on learning”, which aims to encourage girls to pursue STEAM fields.

Other activities undertaken by the members of the Commission and the Coordinator in the field of gender equality are also listed under other sections of this report, depending on the content of the contribution or the area of involvement.

## **2.2. Development of codes of conduct focusing on ensuring equal opportunities**

In July 2024, the University adopted new Rules on Working from Home, aimed at enabling staff to better balance their professional and private lives. Since these rules came into force, 54 University employees have opted to work from home, of whom 24 male and 30 female staff members regularly use this form of work.

In 2025, the University also formally established the right to disconnect within the framework of the Rules on ensuring the attendance of colleagues of the university of Nova gorica at the workplace. The right to disconnect refers to the time when staff members are not bound by work obligations; its purpose is to encourage rest, relaxation and the maintenance of good mental health, as well as to strengthen the balance between professional and private life.

All staff members were informed of the adopted rules by email, and the rules are published on the University's website and on the intranet.

## **2.3. Activities and events raising awareness of sexual and other forms of harassment and bullying, and of the importance of equality issues and fostering a positive attitude towards diversity**

In 2025, the University organised several events aimed at raising awareness of sexual and other forms of harassment and bullying, as well as events highlighting the importance of equality and promoting a positive attitude towards diversity.

As part of International Women in Science Day, statements and reflections by female staff members and researchers at the University were published on social media: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erika Jež, Prof. Dr. Dorota Korte and Prof. Dr. Kristina Pranjić. On 11 February 2025, the University Rector took part in an online discussion on STA entitled "Women in Science: The Power of Female Researchers in Shaping the Future".

On World Autism Awareness Day, 2 April 2025, the University, in collaboration with the local community, marked the occasion by illuminating Lanthier Palace in blue.

From 2 to 4 April 2025, the international conference "Strong Women in Culture: A Day of Inspiration" took place at Xcenter Nova Gorica, co-organised by the University. The event highlighted the role of women in contemporary culture and provided a space for networking, knowledge exchange and inspiration. The University contributed to the conference with a workshop led by Émilie Pigéard and a discussion with Urška Djukić, a graduate of the University's Academy of Arts and a filmmaker.

On 15 May 2025, the Atrium of Lanthieri Manor in Vipava hosted the now traditional event marking the conclusion of animal-assisted therapy and activities, "Day of Smiling Paws", organised by the Vipava Centre for Education, Rehabilitation and Training.

Activities focusing on equality also took place during "University Day", which was organised on 22 May 2025 in Ajdovščina. The School of Humanities, the Research Centre for Humanities, the Centre for Cognitive Linguistics, and the Language Centre contributed an interactive experiment on the topic of grammatical gender: passers-by could take part in the experiment on a computer, and once the experiment was completed, the anonymised results of

everyone who had participated that day were displayed. The results sparked a discussion on grammatical, biological and social gender, and the differences and connections between them. The presentation by the Research Centre for the Humanities also focused on the PISMA project. They presented letters with an emphasis on the theme of social gender.

In May 2025, we began adapting the University's websites in accordance with the Act on the Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications (ZDSMA) and the Act on Accessibility of Products and Services for Persons with Disabilities (ZDPSI), under which websites must be designed so that they can be used by all persons, regardless of their physical, sensory or cognitive abilities or limitations.

As part of the Interreg project, in which the Forum of Slavic Cultures, the Lojze Bratuž Cultural Centre, and the University's Research Centre for the Humanities – which, as an academic partner, contributed to the design of the route and the preparation of materials – are collaborating, the Ljubka Trail, a new cycling and walking route, was created in 2025. The basis for its design was the literary walk 'Čezmejno-drzne po Gorici' (Boldly Across the Border in Gorica), which took place back in 2023. The walking route was designed by Prof. Dr. Katja Mihurko and focuses on female writers who lived and worked in the city and acted as cultural mediators; a special place is reserved for Ljubka Šorli.

In May 2025, the University, in collaboration with the Writers' Path association, presented a way in which academic work can connect culture and creativity. The Faculty of Humanities and the Research Centre for Humanities, as part of the Council of Europe's cultural route – the Women Writers' Trail – created a space for the exchange of ideas that brings the literary works of female creators to life and promotes the sustainable development of cultural tourism.

In 2025, the University also participated in the international student and staff mobility network CEEPUS Women Writers in History. Led by the University, the network brings together students, lecturers and researchers from fifteen universities across Central and Eastern Europe who are researching the lives and works of women writers across linguistic and national borders. The network organises joint summer schools, online seminars, workshops and field research.

In June 2025, staff members at the University were invited to take part in a survey organised by the Commission for Equal Opportunities in Science at the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, which aimed to gain an insight into the working conditions and career prospects of those employed in science in Slovenia.

From 27 August to 1 September 2025, the Research Centre for the Humanities and the Faculty of Humanities at the University hosted an interdisciplinary summer school entitled 'Crossing Media Boundaries: Gender and Writing at the Intersection of Artistic Media', which focused on the intersections of gender, writing and the media. As part of the summer school, a discussion evening on the topic of 'Gender, Media and Artistic Residency' was also held on 28 August 2025.

In September 2025, the University took part in a survey/research project conducted by the TransAkcija Institute, which collected data on the inclusion and protection of transgender students in education in Slovenia; this will form the basis for developing recommendations for

faculties on working with transgender people. The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain a comprehensive picture of higher education institutions' attitudes towards issues of trans identity and the adjustments they provide for transgender students. We have not yet received the research report.

In October 2025, the University published information regarding the L'Oréal–UNESCO “For Women in Science” call for applications (2026).

In November 2025, the University held its now traditional presentations by confidential persons and the equal opportunities coordinator at breakfasts with students. A presentation took place in Ajdovščina on 4 November 2025 and in Rožna Dolina on 19 November 2025. A presentation is planned for Vipava in January 2026.

As part of activities to improve support and assistance in cases of mental distress and measures to prevent sexual and other forms of harassment and bullying, a lecture/training session was held on 3 December 2025 entitled: “How to listen to, understand and talk to a person who has experienced violence”, delivered by Ms Maja Plaz, Chair of the SOS Telephone Association for Women and Children – Victims of Violence. The lecture was also intended to train confidential advisors.

In 2025, posters were displayed at University locations stating that the University holds the “LGBT-friendly” certificate.

#### **2.4. The University's participation in the international university network Across**

In 2025, the University became a member of the European cross-border university Across – an alliance of ten European universities. Within the Across consortium, the partners reaffirm, among other things, their shared commitment to the core values of the Erasmus+ programme, including sustainability, inclusion, academic freedom and respect for diversity. The partners have agreed to promote ethical conduct, non-discrimination and equal opportunities throughout the project implementation process.

Within Working Group 1.4 ‘Inclusion, Gender, Equality and Diversity’, which aims to implement a joint plan for inclusion, gender equality and diversity, and to link the existing advisory services of partner universities into a common system through appropriate measures, Commission member Prof. Andreja Gomboc and coordinator Tina Šček Krušec are collaborating.

On 23 May 2025, the working group organised an online event – a round table entitled: “Across borders and biases. Inclusion in action: bridging differences”. The round table was designed to promote a culture of inclusion, highlight the value of diversity, and facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices implemented by universities within the Across network. The event featured contributions from seven university representatives (including from the University), who shared their personal experiences in the areas of accessibility, anti-discrimination efforts and the promotion of gender equality.

The universities within the Across network have established the framework for the ‘Across Award for Inclusion, Gender, Equality and Diversity’. The purpose of the award is to recognise

and reward outstanding bachelor's or master's theses that address topics related to gender equality, gender-based violence, non-discrimination in education or the workplace, diversity and inclusion, the protection of vulnerable individuals and groups, and equal opportunities policies. The call for entries for the award will be published in 2026.

As part of efforts to develop a joint action plan for inclusion, gender equality and diversity, the universities that are members of the Across alliance analysed, in May and June 2025, the state of inclusion, gender equality and respect for diversity at universities as at 30 September 2024, based on an internally prepared questionnaire. Inclusion refers to the degree of social inclusion of various groups that are in any way disadvantaged or marginalised due to specific characteristics (e.g. disability, gender, sexual orientation, social status, ethnicity, religion, race, domestic or international status, etc.).

To the same end, each university also conducted interviews with experts, students and staff.

Based on the data collected, an analysis of inclusion, gender equality and diversity within the Across alliance was carried out. The results of the analysis are compiled in the document 'Inclusion, gender equality and diversity report'.

Members of Working Group 1.4 and a member of the Equal Opportunities Commission and Prof. Dr. Peter Purg, participated in the preparation of the draft Across Code of Conduct.

## **2.5. Dealing with situations involving harassment, bullying or sexual and other forms of harassment**

In 2025, the University did not receive any formal reports of sexual or other harassment or bullying.

Four cases of sexual and other forms of harassment and bullying were recorded. The cases were dealt with on an individual basis, using informal approaches focused on dialogue and clarifying the circumstances.

## **2.6. Good practices in the field of equal opportunities**

For many years, the University has been implementing well-established practices that focus on preventing discrimination, harassment and victimisation, whether based on gender or other personal circumstances. Particular attention is paid to promoting equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender, and to fostering an inclusive culture.

Language courses are organised for staff and students. The courses are open to non-native speakers of Slovenian – both staff and students – to help them learn the language, as well as to native speakers of Slovenian – both staff and students – who wish to learn a foreign language. The first course of the academic year is free of charge for staff and students.

We provide support to new staff and students in finding accommodation, arranging health insurance and finding a GP, to help them settle into the university environment. In 2025, the committee submitted a proposal to the University management to address the situation regarding access to healthcare services and the choice of a GP for foreign nationals.

As part of our equality policy for students, we facilitate the recognition of qualifications obtained abroad. With the aim of facilitating the transition between different education systems for international students enrolling for the first time on an undergraduate or postgraduate programme at the University, we offer an additional preparatory year, known as the ‘Year Plus’. We have established a tutoring system that provides mentoring and support to students in the learning process and in adapting to the academic environment. The regulations on the content and format of diplomas allow for the issuance of a new diploma in the event of a change in a student’s gender. Students with special needs (blind and visually impaired students or students with visual impairments, deaf and hard-of-hearing students, students with speech and language disorders, students with learning difficulties in specific areas, students with physical disabilities, students with long-term illnesses, students with autism spectrum disorders and students with psychosocial difficulties) may be granted the status of a student with special needs, which allows for the adaptation of their study obligations. The regulations on students with special status enable students who are recognised artists and cultural figures participating in (specialised) international competitions, and student parents on all study programmes within the University to obtain special status, which allows them to adjust their study obligations.

### **2.7. Providing information or publishing key information, data and documents relating to gender equality**

As part of measures to raise awareness and provide information regarding protection against harassment, bullying and sexual harassment, posters aimed at raising awareness of sexual and other forms of harassment in the academic environment have been displayed at all University locations since the summer of 2023. The posters also list the contact details of the coordinator and confidential advisors, whom staff and students can contact with any questions, suggestions or requests for help regarding equal opportunities, discrimination and harassment.

Members of the academic community are kept informed through the publication of key information on the website <https://ung.si/sl/o-univerzi/enake-moznosti/> or <https://ung.si/en/university/equality/> and via email notifications.

To ensure easier access to key information on equality and mental health, the University’s websites were reorganised in November 2025 so that this information is accessible directly from the homepages <https://ung.si/sl/> or <https://ung.si/en/>.

## **3. Plan for 2026**

In 2026, the University will continue to focus on policies and practices that promote an inclusive approach to equality. It will continue to take active measures and promote positive practices.

The Equal Opportunities Committee has adopted the following plan for 2026:

- **Balancing work and private life**

Since 2024, the University has had in place Rules on Ensuring the Attendance of University Staff. In 2026, a regular evaluation of the impact of the remote working scheme will be established, with regular monitoring of the use of remote working by gender, age group and country of residence, as well as according to the nature of the work performed.

Monitoring of work-life balance will also be systematically incorporated into the employee satisfaction and organisational climate survey, which will be revised by June 2026. A regular (annual) survey will be established, ensuring more effective real-time identification of challenges and opportunities and, consequently, timely action.

- **Balanced gender representation in senior and management positions, and equal opportunities for both genders in recruitment and promotion processes**

In 2026, the University will implement measures to achieve a more balanced gender representation within its staff structure, taking into account management and leadership positions, academic and research fields, and the student body. An analysis of the gender representation structure at the University will be carried out, on the basis of which recommendations will be adopted to ensure balanced gender representation. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring equal opportunities for women and men in recruitment and promotion procedures, with the principle of gender equality being consistently applied in all selection procedures.

- **Mainstreaming gender in research and teaching**

In 2026, the University will draw up guidelines for the systematic integration of a gender perspective into research and teaching, and will introduce a brief gender self-assessment into project and course proposals.

- **Prevention of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment**

In 2026, the University will continue and strengthen measures to prevent gender-based violence through regular (mandatory) training for confidential advisors and all staff, regular updates on the availability of information (including details of confidential advisors) and anonymous monitoring of perceptions of a safe working environment. Accordingly, at least one training session and one presentation for confidential advisors and the coordinator will be organised; staff and students will be informed about the availability of information; and an analysis of the number of reports will also be carried out.

The preparation and adoption of a multi-annual Gender Equality Plan is also scheduled by the end of 2026.

Prof. Dr Boštjan Golob