



CUNIVERSITÀ CUSANO

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN GEP 2022-2024

NICCOLÒ CUSANO UNIVERSITY

REVISIONS

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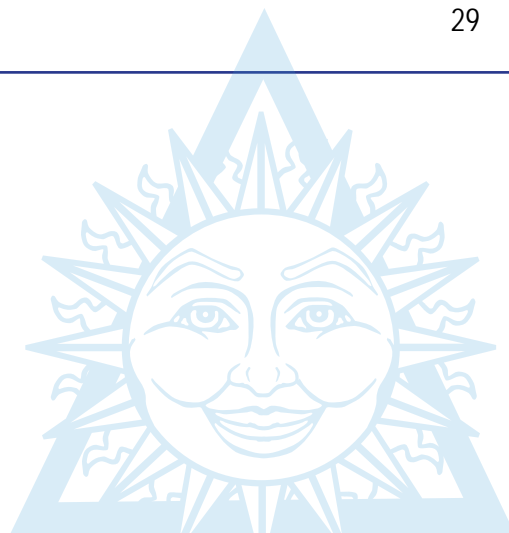
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Preface



The ways in which scientific knowledge is produced and communicated is negatively affected by the conditioning that derives from gender inequalities within the various types of organization, which leads to disparities emerging between men and women. European and Italian universities are now activating Gender Equality Plans (GEP) which are becoming increasingly widespread. Our University, in compliance with this trend, here presents its first GEP, the outcome of months of prolonged work by the people tasked with preparing it. Important features of the working group include its variety and its crossover and interdisciplinary approach, and along with the skill-sets of other contributors to the plan, including the internal stakeholders involved in its development, the resulting document emphasises the major importance we attach to gender equality in Niccolò Cusano University.

The document is a valuable tool, filled with historical details and testimony, and sets out guidelines for our involvement in gender equality; in particular, it shows the strengths and weaknesses of the three communities that take part in the life of a university: the students, the teachers and the administrative staff.

This awareness, acquired over the years, of how relevant the issue is, has already achieved notable results, and important initiatives are planned for further action. There is still much to do to overcome or at least mitigate inequalities, including those of gender, but we are strongly convinced of the validity of this tool and confident in its potential. The gradual process of its application within the University will certainly help to improve the quality of life of both the individuals involved and the institution as a whole.

A sincere and dutiful thanks goes to all those who have lent their efforts to the creation of the present document.

Prof. Fabio Fortuna
Rector

Introduction

“Gender equality is a core principle of the European Union, but it is not yet a reality. In business, politics, and society as a whole, we can only reach our full potential if we use all of our talent and diversity. Using only half of the population, half of the ideas or half of the energy is not good enough.”

Ursula Von Der Leyen, Presidente della Commissione Europea

“In a gender equal Europe we are FREE to pursue our chosen path in life”.

European Commission (2020)

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of Niccolò Cusano University (UNICUSANO) has its origins in a well thought-out and consistent appraisal of the processes involved at all levels of the university’s organisational structure. The GEP provides us with a valuable opportunity to improve and foster the well-being of our human resources, including both staff and students, since it focuses on creating an increasingly inclusive and non-discriminatory working and studying environment in terms of both organisation and education.

The plan derives from an awareness that scientific knowledge and research are closely linked to the sustainable development of the global economic system, and that universities can make a valuable contribution to such development by upholding principles such as respect for diversity and the promotion of equal opportunities at all levels of their organisation.

Data on the presence of women in academia and institutions dedicated to research and innovation show that the sector is not without gender inequalities and disparities in the role of men and women. The ERA Progress and She Figures reports (European Commission, 2019a, 2019b) indicate that women occupy only 24% of top academic positions and are still under-represented in the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), and that women account for less than 10% of patent holders. Bencivenga et al. (2021) indicate that the current disparity in Europe is directly linked to inadequacies in educational systems that give low priority to gender issues, which are still largely neglected in the scientific world.

It is to be hoped therefore that European organisations responsible for their own training and research education will not only try to restore the numerical balance between male and female participation in research and technological development activities, but also recognise that gender issues are a fundamental aspect of their policies and actions, thus helping to reverse the prolonged systematic underestimation that has beset the problem.

For many years, EU Framework Programmes have supported gender issues by funding initiatives promoting gender equality in research and innovation, and it is the central theme of the current Horizon Europe programme (European Commission, 2021). In keeping with the guidelines of the European Commission, the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR, of the Ministry of Universities and Research, 2021) emphasises the need to expand the number of women involved in Italian research at every level of responsibility.

On this basis, the first edition of the GEP UNICUSANO was created, following the stipulations of the Vademecum for the introduction of the Gender Equality Plan in Italian Universities (CRUI, 2021), and the guidelines for the Gender Budget (CRUI, 2019). The drafting process benefited from the analysis of the documentation made available by the European Institute for Gender Equality¹ and consultations on GEP by various Italian universities, carried out as part of the European projects funded by the Horizon 2020 programme².

As a programme, the GEP UNICUSANO is fully concordant with the strategic guidelines of the University, and is conceived as a key document for producing the organisational and structural changes that are needed to achieve the gender equality objectives of the European Gender Equality Strategy (European Commission, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c), supported by the Horizon Europe Programme and the previous Horizon 2020 programme. The commitment to pursue these goals indicates the importance that UNICUSANO attaches to its role as a protagonist in the transformations taking place at national and European levels.

The areas covered by the GEP UNICUSANO are based on the five themes proposed by the European

Commission (EIGE, 2016) and taken from the Vademecum CRUI for the elaboration of the Gender Equality Plan in Italian Universities (CRUI, 2021):

1. Culture of Organization and Balance of Private Life/Working Life;
 2. Gender balance in leading positions and institutional bodies;
 3. Gender equality in recruitment and career advancement;
 4. Gender mainstreaming in research and teaching programmes;
 5. Measures to combat gender-based violence, including sexual harassment;
- For each area, several objectives are defined with various steps to be taken.

The timing of each step and the responsibility for its application are defined, and its particular role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) stipulated in the UN 2030 Agenda³.

Niccolò Cusano University sees gender equality as one of the mainstays in the improvement of its sustainability performance; over the last few years it has already developed several environmentally focused initiatives, including the Green University and the Unicusano Green Code. In addition, in its commitment to improving its performance, the university supports medical-scientific research in the treatment of rare diseases and other health issues, offers educational services to guide students during their university career and provides opportunities for their professional and cultural development, creates projects and initiatives aimed at students and employees of the University to improve their quality of life by promoting healthier lifestyles, participates in international projects in support of the disadvantaged and cooperates with the Community of Sant' Egidio to give practical help to the less fortunate.

The UNICUSANO GEP has three sections.

1. <https://eige.europa.eu/>
2. As highlighted by Bencivenga et al. (2021), the European Union does not bind institutions to a common GEP model but suggests universities to take into consideration those information, recommendations, and best practices available online, with particular attention to examples of GEP developed within projects funded by European programs. Among the considered Gender Equality Plans:
 - University of Bologna (2017). "Piano di Eguaglianza di Genere dell'Università degli Studi di Bologna" developed according to "The PLOTINA project-Promoting gender balance and inclusion in research, innovation and training" funded by Horizon 2020 Programme.
 - University of Cagliari (2020). "Piano di uguaglianza di genere dell'Università degli Studi di Cagliari (UNICA)" developed according to "SUPERA-Supporting the Promotion of Equality in Research and Academia" funded by Horizon 2020 Programme.
 - University of Messina (2021). "Piano di uguaglianza di genere dell'Università degli Studi di Messina (UNIME)" developed according to the European Project Le TSGEPs "Leading Towards Sustainable Gender Equality Plans in research performing organisations".
 - Università of Reggio Calabria Mediterranea (2020). "Piano di uguaglianza di genere per il triennio 2021-2023" developed by H2020 local research unit of the project "Gender Equality in Engineering through Communication and Commitment (GEECCO)".
 - Università of Salerno (2019). "Piano per la parità di genere dell'Università degli Studi di Salerno" developed according to the European project "R&IPEERS- Piloting experiences for improving gender equality in research organisations" funded by Horizon 2020 Programme.
3. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

In the **first section**, we provide a historical overview of the access of Italian women to higher and university studies, describing the successful profiles of various female figures who managed to obtain a degree or hold university teaching posts in the period before 1874; only from that date, in fact, were women in Italy officially admitted to universities. In many cases, they remained excluded from exercising the professions for which they had carefully prepared in the same way as their male fellow students. This historical section, therefore, aims to focus on the long and often contested path of many women towards gaining their professional, economic and personal rights, a path filled with obstacles, yet charged with hard work, strong motivation and commitment and also leading to goals finally achieved. The historical overview is also intended to heighten awareness of the challenges still to be overcome, and it is here that the basic action plan of the University GEP provides an important opportunity for improvement. For this reason, the present document includes the voices and testimony of both female and male students, doctorate students, teachers and women in top positions in the University, inviting them to tell of their gender-related experiences in their lives, studies and careers.

In the **second section** of the GEP UNICUSANO, the present gender composition of the university is analysed, which includes the student body, the teaching staff, the administrative and technical staff, and the executive personnel.

Finally, in the **third section**, the actions to be taken in 2022-2024 are explained in detail.

1. WOMEN AT UNIVERSITIES IN ITALY, PAST AND PRESENT

In Italy, women were officially admitted to Universities only after the Unification, in 1874. However, before this date, there were some women who managed to complete their education, graduate and become pioneers in university teaching, thanks to their talent, to their networks of relationships, and to a particularly enlightened family background which gave them support in fulfilling their aspirations.

1.1 The pioneers

First attempts

Although the documentary sources on their lives are scarce and sometimes confused, the first attempts by Italian women to access higher and university education date back to the late medieval era. The first woman to obtain some sort of academic recognition was, in the 13th century, **Bettisia Gozzadini**, who studied law at the University of Bologna, where she also had the opportunity to teach. We know also of the *mulieres salernitanae*, various women who studied and taught at the Salerno School of Medicine, which is considered to be the first and most important medical institution in Europe during the Middle Ages: from **Trotula de Ruggiero** (11th century) and **Abella Salernitana** (14th century) to **Costanza Calenda** (15th century).

The First Woman in the World To Graduate in Philosophy



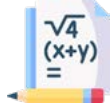
Italy holds the primacy of the first woman in the world to obtain a university degree. She was **Elena Lucrezia Cornaro Piscopia** (1646-1684), born into a prestigious family in the Republic of Venice, who supported her education in every way. Elena took her vows as a Benedictine oblate, and spent her life studying Philosophy and Theology as well as Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Spanish. She then managed to graduate in Philosophy from the University of Padua in 1678, but she was not allowed to teach or to graduate in Theology as she would have wished. However, it is worth noting that only after 1965 were women admitted to Theology faculties.

The First Female University Professor of Experimental Physics



The Bolognese **Laura Bassi** (1711-1778) is instead considered to be the first female university Lecturer. She too was supported in her love for studying by her family, and in 1732 she graduated in Natural Philosophy from the *Alma Mater Studiorum* in Bologna (which at the time was part of the Papal States) thanks also to the support of Cardinal Prospero Lambertini, the future Pope Benedict XIV. She was subsequently authorized to give some lessons, but only on specific and solemn occasions; until finally, in 1776, she was granted the chair of Experimental Physics at the Institute of Sciences of the University of Bologna.

The First Female Author of a Textbook



The first woman to write a textbook was **Maria Gaetana Agnesi** (1718-1799), who was born into a large wealthy Milanese family. From an early age she showed a talent for numbers. In 1748, when she was only 20 years old, she wrote the *Foundations of Analysis for the Use of Italian Youth*, a clear and concise textbook on algebra, geometry, and differential and integral calculus, the first systematic work of its kind. The book, in two volumes, was translated into French and English and attracted the attention of people from all over Europe. In 1750 Agnesi was appointed Lecturer of Mathematics at the University of Bologna, where her father had already been teaching for years. After his death, however, she decided to devote herself to charity by opening a hospice for sick women in her house in Milan. She lived and worked there as its director until her death in 1799 (the hospice later became the Pio Albergo Trivulzio care home).

The First Woman to obtain a Degree in Law



The first Italian woman who managed to graduate in Law was **Maria Pellegrina Amoretti** (1756-1776), born in Oneglia in 1756 and granddaughter of the natural scientist Carlo Amoretti. After being rejected by the University of Turin because she was female, she continued to study privately and then graduated in *Utroque Iure* from the University of Pavia in 1777. In her honour, her contemporary, the poet Giuseppe Parini wrote the ode *La laurea* (The Degree).

Teaching Anatomy



Anna Morandi Manzolini (1714-1774) learned to reproduce in wax some hitherto unknown anatomical parts by observing the studies and the autopsies carried out by her husband, who was Professor of Anatomy in Bologna. Anna became so expert that, after her husband's death, she was appointed as wax modeller at the chair of Anatomy at the Alma Mater University. She became renowned and sought after for her wax works throughout Europe.

1.2 After the unification of Italy: women graduates and access to professions

After the Unification of the Italian peninsula under the Savoy monarchy, women were finally admitted to universities. Between 1877 and 1900 there were 257 degrees awarded to women and 224 female graduates (because some of them obtained more than one degree). Half of these degrees were conferred in three northern universities - Turin, Pavia and Padua, which testifies to the geographical and cultural gap between the north and south of the country.

The First Woman to Graduate in Medicine



The first woman who officially graduated in Medicine and Surgery in Italy was a Jewish-Ukrainian woman of Russian origin named Ernestina Paper, born Puritz Manasse (1846-1926). She was from Odesa, but she moved to Zurich to study, then to Pisa, and finally to Florence, where she graduated in 1877. She opened her own Medical General Practice and specialized in treating women and children. She also became responsible for the medical care of the female employees of the Posts and Telegraph office in Florence, where she remained for the rest of her life.

Giulia Cavallari Cantalamessa - Teacher and Essayist



Giulia Cavallari Cantalamessa (1856-1935) was a teacher and writer. Among the first of Giosuè Carducci's students at the University of Bologna, she graduated in Humanities in 1882. She first taught at the female Scuola Normale in Bologna and then became the director of the professional school Regina Margherita. From 1899 and for over thirty years, she was the director of the Villa della Regina in Turin. She was one of the first major figures in the campaign to modernise the Italian school system; her greatest commitment was to support women's education and women's work as a guarantee of emancipation and dignity. She was an active promoter of cultural events, and collaborated with the magazine *The Woman* (1868-1891), founded by Gualberta Beccari, which was the leading mouthpiece of the movement for women's emancipation. Her essays *Woman in the Rebirth of the Nation* and *On the Dignity of the Woman* demonstrate the high level of her social and political commitment.

The First Italian Female Engineer



Among the female graduates of the Kingdom of Italy there was also Emma Strada from Turin (1884-1970), who was born into a family of engineers. She was the first to be awarded a degree in Civil Engineering at the Polytechnic of Turin in 1908, with full marks. She then went on to develop a series of design projects in the engineering firm led by her father, and later in others, often appearing in person on construction sites to supervise the work, in the Aosta Valley, Liguria, Calabria and other regions. In 1957 she founded the Italian Association of Female Engineers and Architects (AIDIA), which is still active, and of which she was the first president.

The First Woman to obtain a Degree in Architecture



Among Italian female architects, the name of Plautilla Bricci (1616-1705) stands out; she was one of the first women to work as a professional architect. However, the first woman who obtained an official degree in Architecture was Elena Luzzatto Valentini (1900-1983), an exponent of Italian Rationalism. Born in Ancona, she moved to Rome, where she enrolled at the Royal School of Architecture, graduating in 1925. She was from a Jewish family, and so in 1938 she changed her name to avoid the racial laws. She worked for years as a freelancer for the Technical Office of the Municipality of Rome.

From the First Female Lawyer to the Defence of Women's Rights



Even if women could now graduate, it was not easy for them to gain access to all the professions for which they had studied. A case in point is that of Lidia Poët (1855-1949) who graduated in Law and brilliantly passed the examination to practice as an attorney; but first the Turin Court of Appeal and then the Supreme Court cancelled her application to the Bar Association because of the impossibility of reconciling her 'fragile female nature' with a profession which required a 'physical and moral strength typical of the male character'. However, thanks to Law 1126 of 1919, women were finally allowed to enter several professions including that of attorney. Since then, a large number have fought in favour of women, such as

Augusta (Tina) Lagostena Bassi (1926-2008)



Augusta (Tina) Lagostena Bassi (1926-2008) who graduated in Law from the University of Genoa and began her academic career in the Chair of Criminal Law, also working as an attorney. She has been defined as 'The Women's Attorney' for her commitment to defending women's rights from the 1970s, at the same time as the first blossoming of the feminist movement. In particular, she fought for changes in the Italian Penal Code to recognise rape and sexual abuse as criminal offences against the individual instead of crimes against morality. In 1994, she was elected as a Member of the Italian Parliament and President of the National Commission for Equal Opportunity, and she signed the law against sexual violence in 1996. She supported various initiatives, including the 'Pink Phone' helpline for abused women. Among her numerous legal publications, she wrote (with the journalist Emanuela Moroli) *The Women's Advocate: twelve stories of everyday violence*, 1991.

Rosa Oliva and the Historic Judgment of 1960



Even if in 1919 women graduates were given access to several professions, they were still excluded from the public administration, and therefore from the careers of magistrate, prefect, diplomat, etc., except for the profession of teacher, which was seen as an extension of the 'educational mission of mothers' outside the home. The first to overthrow this system was Rosa Oliva, a graduate in Political Science. In 1957, Oliva turned to the Constitutional Court because she had been excluded from the public competition for the profession of prefect, which at that time was open only to men. In a historic decision, in 1960 the Court ruled in her favour, and opened public competitions for public professions also to women. In May 202 the President of the Republic Sergio Mattarella awarded Rosa Oliva the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic, the highest honour in the country.

1.3 However, there are still many challenges to be overcome

In Italy at present there is still a discrepancy in the number of women graduating in the faculties defined as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics): about 16.5% compared to 37% of male graduates. Also, in the world of work, the gender gap is evident in two areas: equal pay for the same job, and the access of women to top positions in various career structures – the so-called ‘glass ceiling’.

1.4 Stories of lives, studies and careers at Unicusano

In the specific case of Niccolò Cusano University, since its foundation we have always paid careful attention to the educational needs and well-being of our female students and the progress in their careers of the teaching and administrative staff; we have also strived to create an inclusive environment that is respectful of diversity on our main campus and associated branches.

ANNA PIROZZOLI

Full Professor of Public Law and Deputy Rector



I am Anna Pirozzoli, Full Professor of Public Law Institutions and Deputy Rector of Niccolò Cusano University. I started my academic career as a researcher in 2007 in this University, which immediately offered me the best opportunities for academic and personal growth. A University of excellence, from the point of view of teaching and research, innovative in its teaching methods and avant-garde in terms of laboratory facilities, study rooms and the library, with both face-to-face and online teaching, and capable of meeting the needs of all the students enrolled. The excellence of this University is also demonstrated in its full compliance with gender equality in every area, not least in the teaching sector to which I belong. No discrimination as a woman, no advantage as a woman: this is the equality formula that allows you to enhance the potential and resources of individuals, both women and men, and guarantee a work environment in which merit and commitment are the only yardsticks for evaluating professional growth.

FRANCESCA

Academic tutor



I'm Francesca Moretti, I'm 32 years old; I have been an academic tutor in the Faculty of Communication Sciences at Niccolò Cusano University for more than a year. I chose to work at Unicusano because after completing my PhD I wanted to work in the university sector. In my specific case, the team of tutors in Communication Sciences is unusual in that it consists of three women and only one man. It is often said that women among themselves do not know how to work as a team; but I always wonder if this narrative does not arise from the fact that, in general, they manage to access fewer positions and roles, and therefore must fight harder to break down the glass ceiling. Certainly, such competition does not exist in my group, because we cooperate in a very harmonious way, loyally supporting each other. Above all, I appreciate that the only male member, from the beginning, did not want to be a 'mansplainer' - the man who 'knows more' and explains everything to his colleagues; I am also happy that he too has put his emotional intelligence into play in his relationship with the students.

In my work group, therefore, I feel fully integrated, and I am happy when my colleagues ask me for advice on both teaching and student management, as I feel that they trust me, my judgment and my experience in the field. However, a proposal that I would like to put forward at my university is this: to organize courses dedicated to gender equality for both students and employees, educating especially the younger members, so that everyone will be able to work in an even more tranquil environment.

SERENA

Student of the bachelor degree course in Motor Sciences

I am Serena Mogano; I was born in Syracuse in Sicily and I live in a small town in the province. I am 28 years old, and I study Sports Science at Niccolò Cusano University. After talking with friends and comparing the curriculums on offer by various on-line universities, I decided to continue my education at Unicusano because it allowed me to combine work with study. Today I believe that in universities, environment gender equality has yet to be fully achieved. Most of the exam courses I took were taught by male professors, and males predominated in the upper levels of the university administration. Despite this, I must say that my colleagues and I felt fully integrated in the study group here and we were able to establish good relationships with the teachers and tutors, who have always proved to be helpful.

I think that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary condition for a prosperous, sustainable and peaceful world. Ensuring women equal access to education, medical care and decent work, as well as representation in decision-making, political and economic processes, will promote sustainable economies which can benefit society.

LUCA

Student of the bachelor degree course in Political Science



My name is Luca Pulcinelli and I am 21 years old, I live in Rome, and I am in the third year of the Faculty of Political Science. I chose to study at Unicusano as I knew some students who had had a very interesting study experience here and because three years ago, I was one of the winners of the scholarships offered annually by the university. I can say that I have seen how the environment within this university is very close-knit, balanced and accessible, both in the case of the students and the staff, where gender equality is high, especially in managerial and decision-making roles. Within my course, despite the low number of participants, we have formed an excellent group where there is a lot of mutual respect and esteem and to which I feel I belong, working with my classmates in perfect harmony. In conclusion, I think that Unicusano has worked and above all is working very comprehensibly for gender equality and I hope that it continues to do so.

VALERIO

Student of the bachelor degree course in Psychological Science and Techniques



I am Valerio Raspanti, born in Rome on 11 November 1997. I live in the seaside resort of Ostia near Rome. I enrolled at the University to increase my awareness of the issues related to psychology, since I have always wanted to understand the workings of the human mind and to help people with difficulties. I chose Unicusano because it offers its students the possibility to work and study at the same time, thanks to the online nature of its teaching programme. I opted for the 'blended' course for its flexibility, where I can choose from time to time whether to attend the courses or not. I preferred this so that I could establish a relationship with my professors despite not always being able to attend lessons. An additional incentive was the many services that our university offers us, including the gym and the university bus.

Gender equality is an issue that I have always had at heart. I have not encountered any kind of discrimination, feeling completely at ease in the university environment. I am also happy to have created friendships right from the start, which I hope will last over time. A suggestion that I would like to give to my university is to organize seminars to make students more aware of gender issues, the problem of violence and equal opportunities in the workplace.

IRENE LEA

Student of the master's degree course in Education



I am Irene Lea Mirabelli, I am 27 years old and I live in Camellino, part of the municipality of Petilia Policastro, in the province of Crotona, in Calabria. In March 2020 I obtained a 3-year degree in Education at Niccolò Cusano University. I am currently a graduate student in Socio-Legal Pedagogical Science at the same University and I am on an internship at the Dante Alighieri Comprehensive Institute in my home town.

I chose to study at Unicusano as it allowed me to attend the faculty that interested me without having to leave my town and family. Also, thanks to the distance learning lessons and the material provided on the platform, I was able to better organize my days without having to give up my daily routine and the activities I was already involved in. What struck me most about this University is that, despite the distance learning, I have a good relationship with both teachers and classmates, and this has allowed me to fit into my study group without any problem. As far as I am concerned, the study environment that I found at Unicusano is egalitarian and does not show any kind of gender disparity. It would be nice to find such a harmonious atmosphere in any other study or work group.

GIOVANNA

Student of the master's degree course in Communication Science



My name is Giovanna Coppini and I am 40 years old; I was born in the province of Florence, and I have been living and working in Bologna for 10 years. I am responsible for a large company, listed on the stock exchange, dealing with all the personnel engagement and employer branding activities. I enrolled in April 2021 at Niccolò Cusano University, because I have always had the desire to complete my cycle of university studies, and here I can study methodically, and also independently. Working full time, I can't physically attend the campus or meet my fellow students, but during the two Honours Programmes that I followed in person, I was able to interact in a profitable way with the teachers, tutors, and study colleagues.

To improve gender equality at Cusano, I would like to point to three issues. Language: I think it would be appropriate to use a more inclusive language, aimed at overcoming the generic masculine both for official communications and in the texts of the handouts / slides and during lessons. Visibility: it would be interesting to have an increasing number of female teachers to ensure a plurality of approaches and points of view. Inclusion: I would suggest making sure that in the programmes and in the handouts, in addition to works, studies, thoughts, works by male scientists, researchers, artists and managers, space is also given to female representatives of these professions. This would make the programmes more comprehensive and help reinforce the belief that women too can be successful or aim for positions of power. It would also be interesting if Unicusano organized events for increasing awareness of the theme of equality and inclusion and how to remove stereotypes and bias. I am convinced that culture, and therefore the ability to change the world, depends above all on the language we use. Providing tools to eliminate inequalities will help create the best professionals for the future.

MARIA DOMENICA

Student of the master's degree course in Economics



My name is Maria Domenica Intini and I am 23 years old. I was born in, and live in Rome. I have a 3-year degree in business administration and management and am now studying for a master's degree in economics.

I chose to study at Unicusano because I was given a place by the scholarship scheme, which meant I could follow a rapid, practical university course free of charge, something I would never have been able to do otherwise. The environment at Unicusano is dynamic and professional, and to my mind one of its strengths is that there is gender equality within the university, at least as regards the students in my experience. I feel at home in my study group and I have never suffered discrimination as a woman, nor have I ever been valued just because I am woman, by anyone. Obviously, I feel closer to some students than others, but only for reasons of affinity and attitudes. In general, the issue of 'gender equality' at Unicusano is handled very well. To my mind, one of the things that could be done would be to provide 'neutral' toilets, specially designed for those students or employees who do not identify themselves as male or female, to make them feel more comfortable.

GIAMMARCO

Student of the degree course in Law



My name is Giammarco Guidi, I am 21 years old, and I am a scholarship student enrolled in the fourth year of Law. I was born in Rome, and I live in Ostia, on the coast. I enrolled in this University because I heard it had a good reputation. A university, as is well known, is a place of culture, teaching and training, consisting of manuals, books, dates and formulas, but it is also a school of life. At Unicusano, young people who are thirsty for knowledge and culture come together, and the resulting environment could never be a breeding ground for inequalities of any kind. Unfortunately, these still exist in society at large, but they never get past the university gates. I have never suffered or witnessed differences in treatment by gender, nor by race or religion. Female teachers enjoy the same respect as male colleagues and students receive the same treatment from professors regardless of their gender. But this does not surprise me because it is perfectly in line with what I expect from a university which literally means 'all-inclusiveness'. At Unicusano I immediately felt perfectly at home and at ease, both with my fellow students and also with the staff, teachers, and others, who were always all super-helpful.

A piece of advice for the university? That it continues as it is doing, being transparent, linear, and correct; and that it never allows itself to be influenced by outside models, such as films, advertisements or propaganda, which, with the alleged purpose of eliminating differences that do not exist, often have the opposite effect.

PAOLA

Student of the PhD course in Engineering



My name is Paola Serao, I'm from Caserta and I've lived in Rome for almost 8 years. I am 27 years old, and I am a PhD student in industrial engineering at Niccolò Cusano University. From my first years of university at Cusano, I dreamed of continuing with an academic career once I had graduated. I chose to take part in the open competition for a research doctorate at Unicusano, mainly because of the importance that the university places on research and but above all for the care it takes in the education of each individual student. I am the only woman in the office where my study station is located, but despite this I have never found any unequal treatment with respect to my colleagues, nor in the way they behave among themselves compared to how they treat me. This makes me feel fully a part of the study group. For this reason I have no specific suggestions for improving gender equality at Cusano.

2. GENDER COMPOSITION AT NICCOLÒ CUSANO UNIVERSITY

2.1 Introduction

To explain how gender differences are distributed within Niccolò Cusano University, this chapter analyses the gender differences in four general areas:

- enrolled students
- teaching staff
- administrative and technical staff
- governing bodies

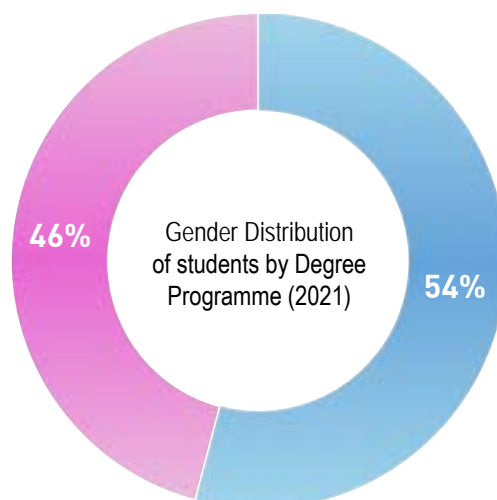
For this purpose, we used the data to be found on the MIUR data portal and the information collected by the various faculty secretary offices when students enrolled, as well as data provided by our human resources department.

Before embarking on the analysis, we give an overview which maps the overall situation as regards gender distribution in the university, to be used as a basis for the more detailed analysis.

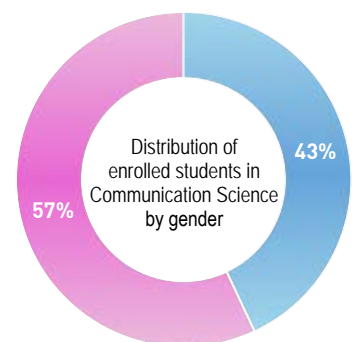
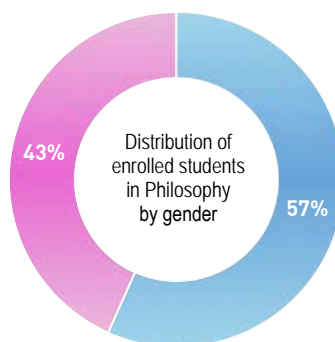
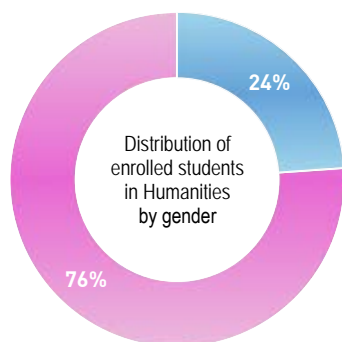
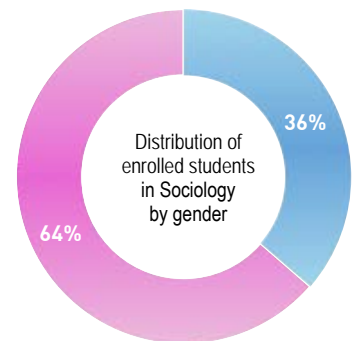
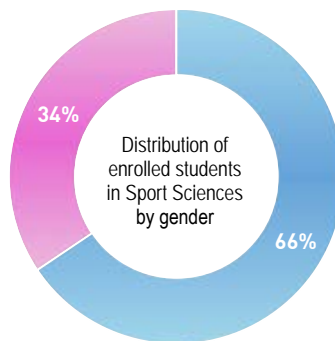
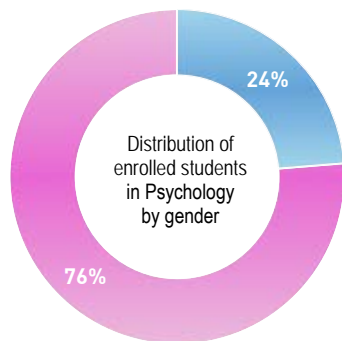
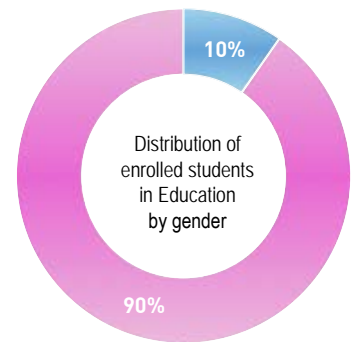
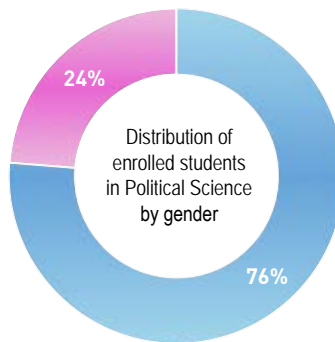
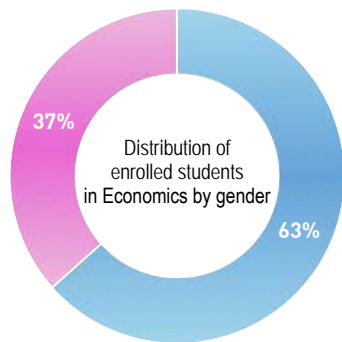
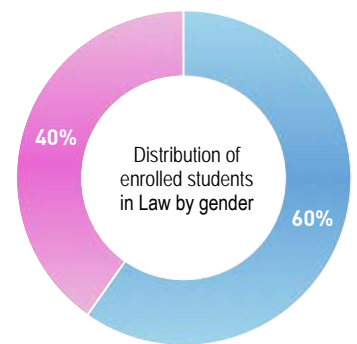
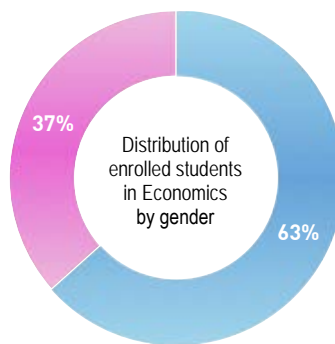
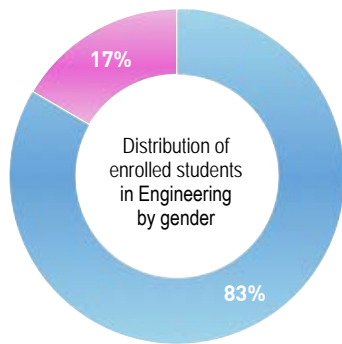
Niccolò Cusano University appears to have a balanced presence of men and women in each of the above sectors.

2.2 Enrolled students

The whole student body is more or less divided equally in terms of gender, but obviously the gender distribution differs if we examine the situation in each separate degree programme, rather than looking at the aggregate data. As is the case in other Italian universities, the largest disparities can be seen in those faculties traditionally favoured by men, such as Engineering and Economics, but also to some extent in Law and Political Science. The trend is reversed in the faculties of Psychology, Education, Humanities and Sociology.

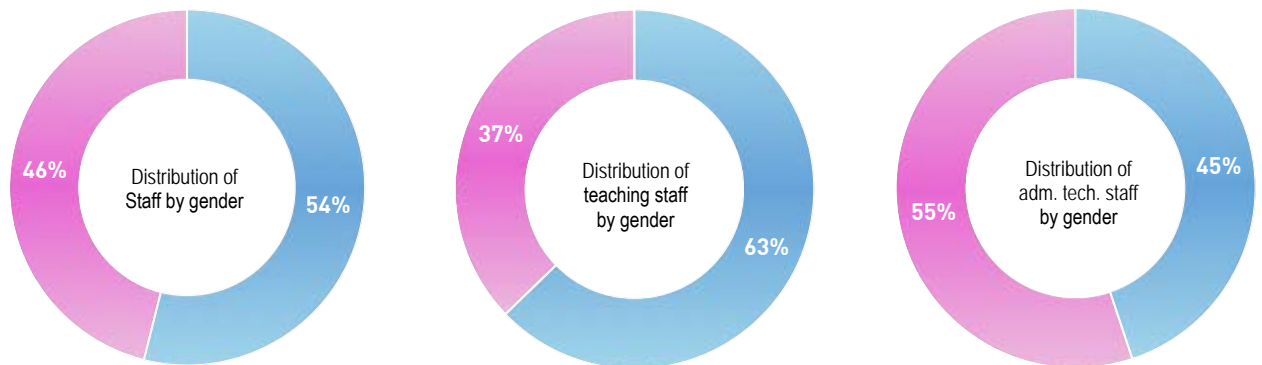


Gender Distribution of students by Degree Programme (2021)



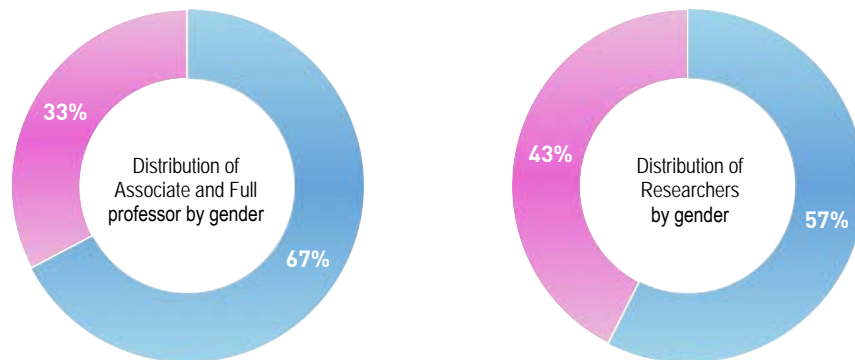
2.3 Staff

The staff as a whole is well distributed in terms of gender with a slight prevalence of males (in the first pie chart graphic). However, for a more accurate analysis, we need to separate the teaching staff from the administrative and technical personnel. This separated data, shown in the second and third graphs, reveals a higher gender inequality in the teaching staff (37% female to 63% male). The data can be further separated by role.

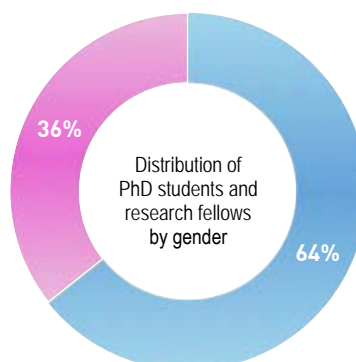


2.3.1 TEACHING STAFF GENDERS BY ROLE

The teaching staff can also be analysed by role: Researchers, Associate Professors and Full Professors. The graph shows that researchers have a 43% percentage of females compared to 57% of males, while Professors show a male predominance of 67%.



Also interesting is the data on gender distribution among new PhD students and research fellows, where only 36% is female.



2.3.2 GOVERNING BODIES AND POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The number of women in leading positions within Niccolò Cusano University can be seen in Table 1, which lists the various roles in the university governance and commissions.

	F	M
Board of Directors	1 (14%)	6 (86%)
Rector	-	1 (100%)
Vice-Rector	1 (100%)	-
Pro-Rector	-	1 (100%)
Academic Board	1 (14%)	6 (86%)
Administrative Director	1 (100%)	-
Deputy Administrative Director		1 (100%)
Quality Committee	3 (50%)	3 (50%)
Evaluation Group	1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Heads of Degree Programmes	2 (10%)	17 (90%)
Faculty-Student Joint Committee (faculty members)	10 (42%)	14 (58%)

Table 1 – Distribution of leading positions by gender

3. ACTION PLANNING

The present action plan describes the initiatives to be undertaken by Niccolò Cusano University to improve gender equality, taking into consideration the five areas of action advocated by the European Commission (EIGE, 2016) and taken from the CRUI Vademecum for the elaboration of Gender Equality Plans in Italian Universities (CRUI, 2021). The GEP UNICUSANO thus involves the following areas:

1. Organisational culture and work/life balance
2. Leadership and decision making;
3. Recruitment and support for career advancement;
4. Incorporating the gender element into the content of research and education;
5. Combating sexual and gender-based harassment

For each area there are multiple goals with different actions to be taken, and the necessary timing and responsibility for implementation are also indicated. Particular attention is paid to the extent to which the actions conform to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provided for in the UN 2030 Agenda.

5 GENDER
EQUALITY



Gender Equality

All actions taken are in line with Goal 5 of the Gender Equality Plan of the 2030 UN Agenda.

The goals of the GEP UNICUSANO correspond with: Goal 5.1: 'End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere'. 5.5: 'Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life', 5.6 'Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights' as agreed in the Action Programme of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and subsequent documents issued following their review conferences, and 5.c 'Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation to promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels'.

4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



Quality of Education

Improving the quality of education at all levels means improving people's quality of life and achieving sustainable development. The goals that the university plan aims to achieve are:

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of young people and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in at risk situations

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, by means of education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



Decent Work and Economic Growth

In many countries having a job does not guarantee the possibility of escaping poverty. The slow and unequal progress involved requires us to reconsider and reorganise our economic and social policies to eradicate poverty. Economic and sustainable growth requires companies to create conditions that allow people to have quality jobs, which stimulate economies and at the same time do not harm the environment. Also, job opportunities and decent working conditions are needed for the whole working-age population. The targets of this goal include:

8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



Reducing inequality

There is growing consensus that economic growth is not enough to reduce poverty if it is not inclusive growth and if it does not involve the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental. To reduce inequality, policies should be universal and focus attention on the needs of disadvantaged and marginalised populations. Among the goals to which the university GEP can contribute are:

- 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.
- 10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce existent inequalities by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action.
- 10.4 Adopt special fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

Area: Organisational culture and work-life balance

In this area the actions of the University GEP are in line with the goals of the SDG 5 and 8.

Goal: Adoption of a gender-oriented approach in organisational culture.
Creation of an inclusive study and work environment.

Action 1

Description: Establishment of a Gender Equality Permanent Committee, with the remit of monitoring the implementation of the actions of the plan.

Based on: Rector decree.

Timeline: 2 months.

Implemented by: Academic Board.

Action 2

Description: Circulation of the Gender Equality Plan to the technical-administrative-library staff, professors/researchers and students (for example by publication on the university's public web site).

Based on: Web page on the university web site.

Tempistica: 3 months.

Implemented by: Gender Equality Permanent Committee, Webmaster Office.

Action 3

Description: Establishment of a gender monitoring centre (collection of quantitative and qualitative data by gender; monitoring of existent measures).

Based on: Rector decree.

Timeline: 6 months.

Implemented by: Academic Board.

Action 4

Description: Development of Gender Balance (a document detailing the gender distribution in all sectors of the university and the participation of women and men in leadership, monitoring actions in favour of gender equality, and also assessing the impact of the actions and policies on women and men).

Based on: Development and publication of the report on the university web site.

Timeline: Annual frequency.

Implemented by: Gender Equality Permanent Committee, E-learning Office, Personnel Office.

Action 5

Description: Proposals of further changes to the University Strategic Plan.

Based on: Approval and publication of the new University Strategic Plan.

Timeline: 6 months.

Implemented by: Academic Board, Board of Directors.

Goal: Reduction of gender preconceptions and stereotypes.

Action 6

Description: Educational activities and initiatives to counter preconceptions and stereotypes.

Based on: Provision of educational activities.

Timeline: 6 months.

Implemented by: Gender Equality Permanent Committee, Academic Board.

Goal: Reconciling work and child care activities.

Action 7

Description: Initiatives such as agreements with summer centres and feasibility assessments of nurseries and child-friendly spaces, based on the requests of the staff.

Based on: Proposals submitted to the Board of Directors.

Timeline: 6 months.

Implemented by: Personnel Office, Board of Directors.

Area: Leadership and decision making.

In this area the actions of the University GEP are in line with the goals of the SDGs 5, 8 and 10.

Goal: Increasing the participation of women in leadership positions and decision making.

Action 1

Description: Activities to support the candidature of women in university positions such as: coordinators of 3-year and master course committees, members of the faculty-student joint committees, the research committee, education committee, university quality committee, student representations.

Based on: Increase in women's share in each university body (annual monitoring).

Timeline: 3 months.

Implemented by: Committees of Bachelor and Master Programmes, Deans, Academic Board.

Area: Recruitment and support for career advancement

In this area the actions of the University GEP are in line with the goals of the SDGs 4, 5 and 8.

Goal: Reduction of the percentage loss to women in career advancement

Action 1

Description: Mentoring programmes to support career advancement. Mentoring programmes are widely used to develop female leadership in universities and firms, where the establishment of a relationship between junior and senior researchers provides the younger with help in meeting the challenges of their academic career.

Based on: Decrease of the Glass Door Index (number of grant holders + RTDa + RTDb researchers divided by number of RTDb researchers) and Glass Ceiling Index (number of RTDb researchers + Associate Professors + Full Professors divided by number of Full Professors) (annual monitoring).

Timeline: 3 months.

Implemented by: Teaching Staff.

Action 2

Description: Monitoring the career advancement of technical-administrative-library staff and of Professors and Researchers.

Based on: See action 1 of this area; similar indices will be used for technical-administrative-library staff.

Timeline: Annual frequency.

Implemented by: Gender Equality Permanent Committee, teachers on a voluntary basis, nominated technical-administrative-library staff.

Goal: Reduction of horizontal segregation and gender disparities in certain disciplines, in particular STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics).

Action 3

Description: Female researchers will be advised to participate in networks and international scientific groups that are concerned with gender equality, in conferences, etc.

Based on: Number of networks, number of scientific groups, number of conferences in the year.

Timeline: 3 months.

Implemented by: Deans, Academic Board, Rector.

Action 4

Description: Orientation activities towards STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) for female students in secondary schools.

Based on: Provision of orientation days.

Timeline: 1 year.

Implemented by: Permanent Committee on Gender Equality, Incoming Orientation Group.

Goal: Reduction of gender disparities in academic recruitment.

Action 5

Description: Recommendation to include a gender quota in competitive exam evaluation committees.

Based on: Quotas in each competitive exam evaluation committee.

Timeline: 3 months.

Implemented by: Rector, Academic Board.

Area: Incorporating the gender element into research and education

In this area the actions of the University GEP are in line with the goals of the SDGs 5, 8 and 10

Goal: Incorporating the gender element into the content of research and teaching programmes

Action 1

Description: Activities to support the candidature of women in university bodies: Coordinators of 3-year and master course committees, members of the faculty-students joint committees, research committee, education committee, university quality committee, student representations.

Indicator: Increase of the women share in each university body (annual monitoring).

Timeline: 3 months.

Involved bodies: Committees of Bachelor and Master Programmes, Deans, Academic Board.

Area: Gender mainstreaming in research and teaching programmes

In this area the actions of the University GEP are in line with the goals of the SDGs 5, 8 and 10

Goal: Inclusion of gender equality issues into teaching material

Action 1

Description: Creating incentives to include gender equality issues into research projects and teaching programmes, including possible dissertation subjects. Incentives could take the form of prizes.

Based on: Number of dissertations and research projects, and amount of teaching material with content that includes gender equality (annual monitoring).

Timeline: 3 months.

Implemented by: Gender Equality Permanent Committee, Academic Board, Board of Directors.

Action 2

Description: Advice on participating in open competitions for research projects on gender studies

Based on: Number of applications (annual monitoring).

Timeline: 3 months.

Implemented by: Deans, Academic Board, Rector.

Action 3

Description: Organization of a 'Women Researchers Day' to increase the visibility of women involved in research in the university.

Based on: Event.

Timeline: 2 years.

Implemented by: Gender Equality Permanent Committee, Academic Board, Board of Directors.

Action 4

Description: Provision of 'soft skills' (cross-sectoral and person-related features).

Based on: Teaching material provided.

Timeline: 1 year.

Implemented by: Gender Equality Permanent Committee, Committees of 3-year and Master Programmes, Deans, Academic Board.

Goal: Raising awareness on sexual and gender-based harassment.

Area: Combating sexual and gender-based harassment

In this area the actions of the University GEP are in line with the goals of the SDG 5.

Action 1

Description: Provision of educational activities for technical-administrative-library staff, Professors, researchers and students on how to combat gender-based harassment; information on emergency telephone numbers against gender-based harassment (1522).

Based on: Activities provided.

Timeline: 6 months.

Implemented by: Gender Equality Permanent Committee, Academic Board, Board of Directors.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The present Gender Equality Plan, GEP UNICUSANO, was drawn up by the University GEP Working Group, composed of:



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With their different academic backgrounds, the members of the working group were able to offer a broad range of input to the plan, and to devise a well thought-out selection of actions to be taken, which will be forwarded to the governing bodies of the university.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the Rector and the university governing bodies who supported the initiative. A special thanks goes to the Vice Rector Professor Anna Pirozzoli, Andrea, Francesca, Giammarco, Giovanna, Irene Lea, Maria Domenica, Luca, Serena, Paola, Valerio who with their stories and ideas helped give this first edition of the GEP UNICUSANO an interesting and more personal touch.

Which goes to show that the Plan is, above all, for all the individual people who are engaged in the life of the university and feel themselves an essential part of it.

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