



GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY 2026-2030

ALBANIAN UNIVERSITY

Tirana 2026

Gender Equality Strategy 2026-2030



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The Gender Equality Strategy 2026-2030 at Albanian University has been developed by the Working Group established by Rector's Decisions No. 974/2 Prot., dated 21.11.2024 and No. 236 Prot., dated 24.03.2026.

1. Introduction and Purpose

Albanian University, as a higher education institution operating within both national and international contexts, is committed to promoting and implementing the principles of gender equality across all aspects of its academic and institutional activity. This Strategy aims to create an equal and inclusive environment for all members of the university community, seeking to eliminate all forms of discrimination and structural inequalities.

The objectives of this Strategy focus on establishing supportive measures for marginalized groups, in line with European Union policies and legal requirements, with the aim to:

- Prevent discrimination and promote social inclusion across all areas of university life, including recruitment practices, career progression, work-life balance, and integration into teaching and research;
- Ensure merit-based selection through transparent and consistent criteria;
- Promote gender equality in research and science;
- Enhance economic and social impact, as well as the relevance of research outputs;
- Promote diversity within academic staff and ensure a fair distribution of academic and research responsibilities;
- Strengthen administrative capacities;
- Integrate gender equality in decision-making processes;
- Support the social dimension in higher education.



2. Definitions

- **Gender Equality** refers to the equal enjoyment of rights, responsibilities, opportunities, participation, and representation by women and men, in all their diversity, across all areas of university and social life.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025 “On Gender Equality”, Article 4, point (a).
- **Gender** refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a society considers appropriate for women and men.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, point (ë); Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), Article 3(c).
- **Gender-based Discrimination** refers to any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or less favourable treatment based on gender that impairs or limits the equal exercise of rights. This includes both direct and indirect discrimination.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, point (c), and Article 6, paragraphs 1-3.
- **Intersectional Discrimination** refers to situations where gender intersects with other characteristics, such as age, disability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or other protected characteristics, resulting in specific and inseparable forms of discrimination.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, points (k) and (o); European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), “intersectional discrimination” and “intersectionality”.
- **Gender Mainstreaming** refers to the systematic consideration of gender perspectives in all planned actions, including policies, programmes, procedures, budgets, and decision-making processes at all levels of the university.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, point (f); EIGE, “gender mainstreaming”.
- **Gender-sensitive Language** refers to the use of spoken and written language that avoids gender bias and stereotypes, addresses all genders respectfully, and promotes equal representation.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, point (e), and Article 10.
- **Sexual Harassment** refers to any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal, physical, or digital, that has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, point (gj); Istanbul Convention, Article 40.
- **Gender-based Violence and Harassment** refers to any form of violence or harassment directed against a person because of their sex or gender, or that disproportionately affects persons of a particular gender.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, point (d); Istanbul Convention, Article 3(d).



- **Gender Stereotypes** refer to preconceived ideas that assign fixed roles, attributes, or expectations to women and men solely based on their gender, thereby limiting their full academic, professional, and social development.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, point (p); EIGE, “gender stereotypes”.
- **Balanced Gender Representation** refers to the equitable participation of each gender in decision-making bodies and processes, in accordance with legal standards and with the aim of achieving full gender equality.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, point (h), and provisions on representation in decision-making.
- **Gender Equality Measures** refer to general, specific, or temporary measures, including legal, administrative, organisational, or programmatic actions, aimed at accelerating the achievement of de facto gender equality, and which are not considered discriminatory when reasonable and temporary.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, point (g), and Article 3, paragraph 4.
- **Gender-disaggregated Data and Gender Indicators** refer to administrative or statistical data disaggregated by gender and measurement tools used to identify gender inequalities and monitor the progress of policies and measures under this Strategy.
Reference: Law No. 64/2025, Article 4, points (m) and (n).
- **Gender Dimension in Research and Innovation** refers to the integration of sex and gender analysis into the content, methodology, and interpretation of research, where scientifically relevant, to improve the accuracy, validity, and societal relevance of research outcomes.
Reference: European Commission, policies on Gender Equality in Research and Innovation; Publications Office of the European Union, “Gendered Innovations 2”.

3. Regulatory Framework

The Strategy is in compliance with national and international guidelines, including:

- **The Constitution of the Republic of Albania**, in its Article 18, guarantees that all are equal before the law and that no one may be unjustly discriminated against for various reasons, including gender.
- **Law No. 80/2015 “On Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Albania”** recognizes, among the missions of higher education, the provision of equal opportunities to benefit from higher education and lifelong learning.



- **Law No. 109/2024 “On Science and Scientific Research in the Republic of Albania”** recognizes, among the fundamental principles guiding the activity of the science and scientific research system, non-discrimination of entities and gender equality in research activity (Article 4).
- **Law No. 64/2025 “On Gender Equality”** regulates gender equality as a fundamental issue in all areas of public and private life, aiming to achieve it both legally and in practice through general, specific, or temporary measures undertaken by society as a whole. Private entities also play a role in advancing gender equality in society, and in this regard, this law identifies them among the responsible authorities (Article 14).
- **The Labour Code of the Republic of Albania** allows, in particular, the adoption of temporary and specific measures by the employer, aimed at accelerating the effective establishment of equality in employment and profession, where inequality has been caused by discrimination on any discriminatory ground, and the termination of such measures once the objectives of equal treatment and equal opportunities have been achieved.
- **Law No. 11/2026 “On the Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Domestic Violence”** defines and provides measures against all forms of violence against women and domestic violence in both public and private spheres, including digital environments. In particular, it provides modern definitions of economic violence (Article 8), sexual violence and harassment (Article 9), and technology-facilitated violence (Article 10), accompanied by individualized protection measures. The implementation of this law also encourages the development of modules in higher education for the prevention and protection from all forms of violence.
- **The Code of Ethics of Albanian University** (revised), reflecting the values and principles outlined above, recognizes equality and the prohibition of all unjust discrimination as fundamental values of higher education institutions; guarantees the prohibition of discrimination on grounds such as gender (Article 1); establishes the obligation for academic staff to respect the personality of the student regardless of, among others, gender affiliation (Article 15); and for students, defines as unethical any form of harassment related, among others, to sex (Article 18).
- The recommendations of the European Commission on Gender Equality¹ in higher education and scientific research, and the strategies and acquis in this field;

¹ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-research-and-innovation/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en



- OECD guidelines for improving gender representation in academic management and scientific research², as well as ILO standards³;
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular Goal 5⁴.

4. Vision and Mission

Vision: Albanian University aims to be a model institution in upholding gender equality and preventing discrimination in teaching and scientific research, including for marginalized groups based on gender, disability, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, migration status, or any other ground of prejudice or discrimination, by promoting an inclusive and equitable culture in research and science.

Mission: This Strategy aims to create a fair and inclusive environment for students, academic staff, and administrative personnel, promoting gender equality in decision-making, research, and professional development, in line with the University's mission.

5. Strengthening Administrative Capacities

Albanian University aims to strengthen its administrative capacities by increasing the representation of the underrepresented gender in leadership and managerial positions. This initiative is closely linked to the creation of a fair and inclusive working environment, where gender equality is embedded across all institutional processes.

To achieve this, the University will develop mechanisms to ensure transparency in recruitment and promotion procedures and will establish teams responsible for monitoring and evaluating gender equality.

Progress will be measured through clearly defined indicators, such as the proportion of women and men in leadership positions and the number of training activities organized to raise awareness on gender equality. In this way, the University aims to build an institutional culture

² <https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/gender-equality.html>

³ <https://www.ilo.org/topics-and-sectors/gender-equality>

⁴ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5>



that not only respects diversity but also leverages it as a strength for its academic and societal development.

6. Integration of Gender Equality in Decision-Making Processes

Albanian University aims to strengthen gender representation in decision making bodies by ensuring that women and men have equal opportunities to participate in the governance and leadership of the institution. This approach seeks not only to achieve numerical balance, but also to foster an inclusive culture in which decision making reflects the diversity of the university community.

To achieve this, the University will establish dedicated mechanisms to encourage the participation of the underrepresented gender in decision-making processes, and will organize awareness-raising initiatives for administrative staff to increase understanding of the importance of gender equality. Progress will be measured through clearly defined indicators, such as the proportion of women and men in leadership bodies and the number of initiatives undertaken to promote gender equality in decision-making.

Through these efforts, the University aims to develop a governance system that is more balanced, equitable, and representative.

7. Gender Equality in Research and Science

The objective of Albanian University regarding Gender Equality in Research and Science, based on the European Commission document "*Gender Equality in Research and Innovation*", is to promote equal opportunities and gender balance in research participation, access to funding, and academic career development. This objective is implemented in alignment with the European Commission framework on Gender Equality in Research and Innovation, through clearly defined indicators, targets, measures, and performance indicators.

Albanian University is committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable research environment in which individuals belonging to the underrepresented gender are actively encouraged and supported to participate in all aspects of scientific activity. In this context, the University aims to increase the participation of the underrepresented gender in research projects and scientific publications by promoting equal access to research opportunities, funding schemes, and



collaborative initiatives. This commitment is essential to ensure that the full range of available talent contributes to the advancement of knowledge and innovation.

At the same time, the University will promote the gradual integration of gender analysis in research fields where this is relevant and scientifically justified.

8. Measures

To achieve these objectives, Albanian University will implement a set of structured measures. Training programmes will be developed for researchers belonging to the underrepresented gender, particularly at early stages of their careers, with the aim of supporting their professional development.

An important element will be the encouragement of the integration of the gender dimension into research design and methodology, where this is scientifically relevant. Furthermore, the University will promote the participation of the underrepresented gender in international research networks and in European Union funded programmes, such as Horizon Europe, COST, and Erasmus+.

9. Monitoring

The implementation of these measures will be continuously monitored through institutional databases that include data on research projects, publications, and funding. Reporting will be carried out by the Research Office in collaboration with the relevant faculties, ensuring the integration of gender-disaggregated data into research performance reports.

The evaluation process will begin with the development of an Action Plan aimed at analyzing the current state of gender equality during 2026, and will continue through periodic assessments aligned with the strategic framework and accreditation requirements of Albanian University. In addition, continuous feedback will be collected from various academic and administrative units, and current data will be compared with data from previous years in order to assess progress and continuously improve the policies and measures implemented.

The Strategy will be implemented through a dedicated institutional group composed of representatives from the Career and Alumni Office, the Research Coordination and Academic Publications Office, the Department of General Psychology, and the Human Resources Unit, which will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the progress of its implementation.

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10. Timeline of the Action Plan

The 2026-2030 timeline outlines a structured and progressive approach to the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy in research and science at Albanian University. It begins with the establishment of a baseline and the development of monitoring mechanisms in 2026, followed by the active implementation of measures and increased participation during the period 2027-2030, and progressing to the consolidation and evaluation of results in the period 2029-2030.

This process is supported by continuous data analysis, the collection of feedback from relevant units, and the ongoing improvement of policies, with the ultimate aim of institutionalising gender equality practices and ensuring their sustainability within the University's long-term policies.

The implementation of this Strategy will be operationalised through a detailed Action Plan, which will be developed and approved following the adoption of the Strategy. This plan will include specific measures, timelines, measurable indicators, and a clear allocation of institutional responsibilities, in line with the strategic priorities of Albanian University and the requirements of the European framework on gender equality.

The framework below presents the main areas of intervention and the key indicators for monitoring progress during the period 2026-2030 (Table 1).



Table 1: Action Plan Timeline Framework

<i>Strategic Area</i>	<i>Key Measure</i>	<i>Performance Indicators (KPIs)</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Units</i>
Baseline Assessment	Development of a gender database and assessment, establishment of baseline and targets	% of gender representation in the leadership positions	September 2026	Career and Alumni Office; Research Coordination and Academic Publications Office; Department of General Psychology; Human Resources
Research	Support for participation in research projects and scientific publications	% participation in projects; number of publications	2026-2030	Research Coordination and Academic Publications Office (ZKKSHBA); Faculties
Funding	Incentives for projects led by the underrepresented gender	Number of funded projects; allocated funding	2026-2030	Rectorate; Finance Office
Awareness and Training	Gender equality and bias awareness training	Number of trainings; number of participants	Annual	Human Resources; Academic Units
Monitoring and Reporting	Collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data	Annual evaluation reports	End of September each year (2026-2030)	Career and Alumni Office; Research Coordination and Academic Publications Office; Department of General Psychology; Human Resources



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