

Gender Equality Plan

Faculty of Polymer Technology

Responsible person: izr. prof. dr. Blaž Nardin, Dean

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1. Introduction

Faculty for Polymer Technology - FTPO was founded in 2006 (as Visoka šola za tehnologijo polimerov/Polymer Technology College), based on the needs of polymer industry in Slovenia, which is one of the most fast-growing industries in Europe and the world. The faculty is the only one in Slovenia offering bachelor and master study programs in Polymer Technology. It is a private non-profit higher education institution. Its founders are companies from Slovene plastics industry and Industry associations/Research organisations. In research FTPO focuses on development and processing of biopolymers and (bio)composites, functional and high-performance polymers and materials for 3D printing, up-cycling of recycled material and characterization, testing of materials and failure analysis. R&D work is conducted in 5 laboratories equipped with state-of-the-art laboratory equipment: Laboratory for processing of polymers, Laboratory for mechanical characterization of polymers, Laboratory for thermal characterization of polymers, Laboratory for polymers, Laboratory for modelling and simulation.

Upon initiative of the European Commission for higher education and research organisations to consider the gender equality within the Horizon Europe programme, FTPO has conducted a comprehensive analysis and based on the results, a vision statement and an action plan for implementation.

Collected data, vision and actions will be included in the yearly plan and reports of the faculty.

The analysis was the basis for adoption of a gender equality action plan founded on:

- equal opportunities for both genders for education, employment and career advancement,
- equal and balanced gender representation on leading end decision-making positions,
- coordination of professional, educational and private life of all employees,
- consideration of gender dimension in research and teaching content,
- additional measures for prevention of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

Besides the abovementioned foundations two key elements of the plan are management and communication of the equality. The plan is an official document of FTPO, adopted by the FTPO Board and it is published on the FTPO website. The content and concrete measures will be presented within organised trainings for employees and management. Along with this, all employees will be encouraged to discuss about equal treatment and equality and about ensuring protection against discrimination.

2. Current State

2.1. Legislation and policy overview

In terms of gender equality Slovenia ranks high in international comparison. According to SDG Gender Index¹, published by the international organisation Equal Measures 2030, Slovenia was ranked 6th among 129 countries which are the best in implementing the gender equality policy in the world.

Also, according to Gender Inequality Index² (2020), published by the United Nations, Slovenia is ranked 10th among 189 countries. Slovenian legal regulation, that has mainly been systematically established

after the second world war, is in favour of women and consequently represents the foundation for a rather good position of women in Slovenian society.

Women acquired new rights and opportunities and became more and more independent, which has resulted also in a high portion of employed women. Among the OECD countries Slovenia was ranked 3rd according to Women Employment Index.

However, despite this fact, there are still signs in the Slovenian society of traditional gender-based division of roles. The latter is often expressed as unequal representation of both genders in various professions, on positions, through their social influence...

The Constitution of Republic of Slovenia (URS) in its article 14 provides that in Slovenia the same human rights and fundamental freedoms are ensured for everybody, independent of his/her nationality, race, gender, language, religion, political or other belief, material condition, birth, education, social status, disability or any other personal circumstance.

In terms of legislation the field of gender equality protection and implementation in Republic of Slovenia is governed by following general laws:

- Protection Against Discrimination Act (ZVarD)
- Implementation of Equal Treatment Principles Act (ZUNEO)
- Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act (ZEMŽM)

Besides in general legislation the principles of equality are included also in special acts:

- Employment Relationships Act (ZDR-1)
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities Act (ZZRZI)
- Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Act (ZIMI)

On the state level there is an individual state authority – Advocate of the principle of equality. Additionally for supporting the principle of equality in Slovenia there are several governmental and non-governmental institutions active. Among them it is the Commission for equal opportunities in science (within the Ministry competent for higher education), with the task of encouraging more gender-equal representation in science along with addressing some other inequalities in field of science.

3. Vision

Faculty of Polymer Technology is a Higher Education institution which enables equal opportunities for all its stakeholders independently of their personal or social background. In this way it contributes its share to creation of an equal and fair society that ensures welfare for individuals, social groups and the wider community.

3.1. Mission and equality principles

The mission of FTPO in the field of equality is set in accordance with the Gender Equality Strategy for 2020 – 2025 adopted by the European Union in March 2020. Within this framework FTPO represents

an environment where the principles of openness, acceptance of diversity, equal opportunities and inclusiveness are actively represented. The abovementioned principles are one of the foundations for achieving the general objectives of the faculty.

3.2. Influence

Besides, in the field of gender, the active policy of equality at FTPO has influence also on the following fields:

- gender identity,
- cultural, ethnic, religious affiliation,
- disabilities, illness or disorders,
- age.

The equality policy addresses all employees (management, teaching staff, researchers, experts and other staff) and has indirect influence also on the broader social environment.

3.3. Strategic goals

Strategic goals of the gender equality policy at FTPO are:

1. Raising awareness about the importance of equality.
2. Establishment of a system of indicators and a feedback loop for measures in the field of equality.
3. Equal and balanced gender representation in leadership and decision making.
4. Gender equality in recruitment, career progression and study.
5. Work, study and private life balance within the organisational structure.
6. Meaningful integration of gender dimension in research and teaching content.
7. Improving measures for prevention of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

3.4. Management

The principles of equality are included into all FTPO activities and for this reason in terms of management structure and organisation of work, each individual, chair, department or organisational body is obliged to act in accordance with the strategy and with this equality action plan. Along with this, every stakeholder repeatedly must check and verify his actions in terms of equality principles. The Head of the Commission for quality assurance is responsible for the coordination of implementation and monitoring of the 7 strategic goals and action plan at the FTPO level. The Head of the commission for quality assurance will also be in the role of equality advocate. His tasks will be to help and advise the employees in case of discrimination, to create recommendations for the management and employees to ensure equality. The measures and persons responsible for their implementation are defined in the action plan. The implementation of the action plan will be monitored once per year, during preparation of the FTPO annual report. The existing records will be upgraded in a way that will

enable the monitoring of equality indicators. The aspect of equality will be also part of the annual employee satisfaction survey. The analysis of the collected data and identification of trends will represent the basis for possible improvement of existing or implementation of new measures.

4. Action Plan

1. Raising awareness about the importance of equality

Area	Category	Measure	Action Code	Indicator	Responsible person	Resources
Age, gender, disability, illness or disorder, cultural and ethical affiliation, religion, gender identity, gender orientation	Employees, Students, General public	Activities to raise awareness, de-stereotyping and de-stigmatisation: International Day of Woman and Girls in Science (February 11 th), Woman's Day (March 8 th), Martyrs' day (March 10 th), International day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (May 17 th), World day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (May 21 st), International Day of people with Disabilities (December 3 rd).	1.1.	Number of activities for raising awareness (events, social media posts, articles, statements...)	Career center and international office	FTPO Funds

2. Establishment of a system of indicators and a feedback loop for measures in the field of equality

Area	Category	Measure	Action Code	Indicator	Responsible person	Resources
Gender	Employees	Adding the gender dimension in the annual employee satisfaction survey	2.1.	The gender dimension questions added to the annual employee satisfaction survey	Head of employee and habilitation department	No additional resources required

3. Equal and balanced gender representation in leadership and decision making

Area	Category	Measure	Action Code	Indicator	Responsible person	Resources
Age, gender	Employees	Inclusion of gender dimension into succession planning to identify employees who show potential and ability to develop successful careers.	3.1.	Structure of employees in leadership and separable positions, by age and gender	General secretary	FTPO Funds

4. Gender equality in recruitment, career progression and study

Area	Category	Measure	Action Code	Indicator	Responsible person	Resources
Gender	Employees	Promoting the recruitment of the under-represented gender in areas with pronounced imbalance between genders*, whereby a decision in favour of the under-represented gender is only possible if competences of candidates are comparable or if the under-represented gender has better competences	4.1.	Number of employees by area and by gender	Head of employee and habilitation department	No additional resources required

5. Work, study and private life balance within the organisational structure.

Area	Category	Measure	Action Code	Indicator	Responsible person	Resources
Gender	Employees	Forms of working time adjustments, spatial flexibility and work organisation	5.1.	Number of employed parents and employees caring for the elderly in the immediate family by adjusting working time, the possibility of working remotely	Head of employee and habilitation department	No additional resources required

6. Meaningful integration of gender dimension in research and teaching content.

Area	Category	Measure	Action Code	Indicator	Responsible person	Resources
Gender	Employees, students	Updates of curricular and pedagogical process by positioning the gender dimension where it is feasible (materials using a gender sensitive approach, working in sexually diverse groups, gender balance of visiting lecturers, use of gender sensitive approach in the pedagogical process)	6.1.	Number of study courses containing gender dimension themes	Vice-Dean for Education	No additional resources required
Gender	Employees, students	Inclusion of gender dimension in all phases of research, where it is feasible	6.2.	Number of researchers involved in trainings for integration of gender dimensions in research	Vice-Dean for Education	No additional resources required

7. Improving measures for prevention of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

Area	Category	Measure	Action Code	Indicator	Responsible person	Resources
Gender, gender identity	Employees, students	Update of internal acts, guidelines and recommendations to prevent gender-based violence	7.1.	Number of updated internal acts	Head of employee and habilitation department	No additional resources required

5. Gender structure at FTPO – current state overview

5.1. Management structure

The governing bodies of the FTPO are the Management Board, the Director and / or the Dean, the Senate, the Academic Council and the Student Council.

From the founding of the faculty in 2016 till September 2016, the position of dean was held by a female dean. From September 2015 till February 2020, the professional management function of the faculty and the management function were separated. At the director's position was a female director. Since October 2016, the position of dean has been held by a male dean, who has been performing the function of professional management and management function independently since March 2020.

The FTPO Management Board has a chairman, seven male and two female members. The Senate consists of the president of the Senate, who is the Dean and eight members, one of whom is a female higher education teacher, five male higher education teachers and two female students. The Academic Assembly of the faculty currently consists of 63 members and three honorary members (of which one is a female). There are 15 female members - higher education teachers and associates and five female students (together 32% of female members). 35 are male higher education teachers and associates and eight are male students (together 68% of male members).

The FTPO also has a female Vice Dean for Education and a male Vice Dean for Research.

The Student Council of the faculty consists of eight members, of which 50% are female and 50% are male.

The organizational units (departments and the Center for Cooperation with Industry) are headed by four higher education teachers, while the head of the Career Center and International Office and the Secretariat is a female.

The structure of employees by gender shows a higher number of female than male (state of December 31st 2020), as 74% of all employees are female and 26% are male. According to the educational structure, 50% of employed teachers are female with a doctorate and 50% are male with a doctorate. In the next lower titles of higher education teachers and associates and in the positions of technical staff (laboratory assistants) the gender structure is also balanced, while administrative positions are occupied only by female employees.