

Strengthening gender competencies in higher education processes

Recommendations from the Austrian Convention of Higher Education
Institutions – Extended version

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Because it's 2019! *

* Quote derived from the Canadian prime minister, Justin Trudeau, who responded to the question about his reason for the diverse and gender equal composition of his cabinet with **“Because it's 2015!”**.

Note on the use of gender inclusive language

The working party has chosen to use the static underline in the German version of the report, in order to depict gender plurality, f.e. Professor_innen (“Gender Gap”).

Because it's 2019!

In chapter 3.3 you can find explanations of gender inclusive wording and examples.

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Introductory Remarks

The development and strengthening of gender competencies in higher education processes aims to improve the effects of current equality measures in Austrian higher education institutions. A working party from the Austrian Convention of Higher Education Institutions has worked on this remit intensely for the span of several months. This publication informs readers about this process, about existing examples of good practice and includes concrete recommendations for Austrian higher education institutions.

Gender mainstreaming has been in use at Austrian higher education institutions for almost one and a half decades. The strategy's achievements include furthering the advancement of women by including aspects of gender equality in job contents and processes, but also through the active involvement of men in achieving and raising awareness of gender equality. It is necessary to make society more strongly aware of the fact that all people, regardless of their life situation or social circumstances, profit from social equality. Within the framework of their social responsibility, higher education institutions can make a valuable contribution to this.

In recent years, the experiences and insights gained from initiatives in the area of gender equality and diversity have suggested that a diversity-oriented equality policy that not only uses gender as a determining factor in identifying similarities or differences, but is geared towards social groups in specific life situations, for example students with children or scientists in their doctoral phase, is most effective. Therefore, on the basis of evidence and research, more and more relevant features – especially in a socio-cultural context – are being connected in order to develop effective equality measures.

The Austrian Convention of Higher Education Institutions' working party focused explicitly on gender competence, and how the wide implementation of this should allow equality policies that are already in place to develop more impact.

Austrian higher education institutions can build on a solid foundation. There is a broad spectrum of goals, instruments and examples of good practice, as the toolbox developed by the Austrian universities' Genderplattform impressively shows.

The present recommendations are the result of the joint effort of the working party "Strengthening gender competencies in higher education processes". Despite different conditions and experiences in the different institutions of the higher education sector, these recommendations were able to find a cross-sectional consensus.

Executive Summary

The development and strengthening of gender competence is essential in order to implement an effective and diversity-oriented equality policy (cf. chapter 4.2). Along with questions regarding representation and cultural shifts, it also addresses issues such as the integration and consideration of the gender dimension in research and teaching as an integral part of excellence based on appropriate frameworks and resources.

Much has already been done at Austrian higher education institutions with regard to equality and gender equality. Depending on the institution, different strategies and measures have been implemented to varying degrees and offer a solid basis on which to further develop gender competence. The recommendations offer numerous examples of good practice and stimulus for the (further) development thereof.

The working party identified four action fields for increasing gender competence: gender competent management, gender competent action in the organisation, gender competent teaching and gender competent research. For each action field, recommendations with short explanations have been compiled. These include background information and notes for further sources of information and resources.

The recommendations take into account that the sectors – not least because of diverging legislative parameters (cf. chapter 5) – portray themselves very heterogeneously where gender equality is concerned. This poses the considerable challenge of avoiding the levelling down of gender competence standards, but on the other hand, also offers opportunities to learn from one another through cross-sectoral knowledge transfer.

If the implementation of these recommendations is successful, the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Research (BMBWF) and the higher education institutions have achieved an important step towards the desired cultural change (cf. chapter 4.3.2). Those responsible for the cultural change are members of higher education institutions, whose actions shape the structures and processes in a gender competent way. It is therefore indispensable that the higher education institutions take a clear stance on the necessary change of culture and implement the recommendations to strengthen gender competence made by the Austrian Convention of Higher Education Institutions.

1 Recommendations

The aim of these recommendations is to strengthen gender competencies in higher education processes in universities of applied sciences, university colleges of teacher education, private universities and universities. The strengthening of gender competencies includes all players in higher education – researchers, teachers, management and students, as well as the administrative staff. This topic is relevant for everyone, as it is a question of justice and fairness in all areas of higher education.

Therefore, the recommendations address everybody, although the individual recommendations address different target groups. Here it is taken into account that both the target groups as well as the higher education institutions have different responsibilities and possibilities when designing gender competent higher education processes and structures. Four main action fields were identified by the working party for strengthening gender competence:

- **Gender competent management**
... means the increased implementation of gender competence in structures and processes at higher education institutions. This requires a clear position from the higher education institutions' upper management to not only go along with the cultural change for the gender equal and diversity-oriented science and research space that is being strived for, but also to actively promote this. If the upper management leads cultural change by example, it also has a positive effect on the entire university.
- **Gender competent action**
... in higher education institutions is the responsibility of individuals as well as the organisation as a whole. Each and every person should be encouraged in developing and strengthening their own gender competence. Simultaneously, everyone is required to actively shape their own field of work and working environment in a gender competent manner.
- **Gender competent teaching**
... enables and accelerates a gender competent transfer of knowledge in multiple ways: on the one hand through a stronger anchoring into curricula, on the other hand through a targeted knowledge build up and transfer from teachers to students and vice versa.

In teacher training courses, universities and university colleges of teacher education have the chance, and what is more the responsibility, to set standards for the teaching profession though good practice which is realised through gender- and diversity-oriented teaching.

- Gender competent research

... raises new research questions and provides new results in research, and monitors one-sidedness and distortion effects. Therefore, the gender dimension should increasingly be incorporated into research, as different groups of people are affected by the results from research and technology developments in different ways.

All persons at a higher education institution, as well as the organisation as a whole, profit from developing and strengthening gender competencies.

Examples of the individual and organisational use of gender competence:

- Gender competence is an integral part of social competence and therefore increases the ability to act in a professional (and private) context.
- Gender competence enables the creation of situations where exclusion, discrimination and fixed role models are avoided and the recognition of the variety of existing genders is possible.
- Gender competent organisations have learned to question unspoken assumptions about normality. This makes them more flexible, reflective, innovative and more open to innovation.
- A reflective discourse on the requirements for scientists, teachers and management, as well as all other higher education institution members, is promoted.

The following recommendations offer a starting point for a cultural change, which, through the joint effort of gender competent individuals and organisations, can be successfully exemplified and promoted. In order to avoid the danger of overlooking pertinent issues, recommendations were not developed for all possible antidiscrimination issues. Therefore, it must be especially highlighted that the recommendations reflect an intersectional understanding.

1.1 Gender Competent Management

Guiding principle: On our way to becoming a gender competent and gender equality-oriented university, we as the university management make use of and develop opportunities for change and innovation, and for quality assurance.

Recommendation 1: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions make a commitment to set targets for developing and strengthening the gender competencies of their members, and implement measures to achieve this.*

Recommendation 2: *For the development of the measures, existing strategy papers and instruments from the specific institution should be incorporated into the process. It should also be verified whether these already contain targets and implementation recommendations regarding the development of gender competence among the higher education institution's members, or whether they need to be adapted and connected with regard to content.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who profits: all university members

Explanation: The commitment to developing and strengthening gender competence can (or is) a content-related component of management tools, e.g. in development plans, statutes, performance agreements, target and performance plans. In all these central, strategic management tools, it must be specified how higher education organisational units can contribute to the overall development of the university - in this specific case, gender-competent development. A central success factor is the interlinking of measures, which are to be coordinated across faculties and departments in order to develop gender competence across the board.

Recommendation 3: *In order to optimise gender-competent higher education knowledge management, the working party recommends that, in addition to the institutions' own strategy papers and tools, available experience should also be taken into account, and attention given to how it is processed by (inter)national cross-institutional and/or cross-sectional knowledge platforms.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who profits: all university members

Explanation: Measures for the strengthening of gender competence do not always have to be developed anew by the universities. For example, with the Toolbox¹, the Gender Platform developed an online databank (online since February 2018), where instruments and measures that Austrian universities use to work on the subject of equality are made publicly available. The spectrum ranges from programmes, subsidies, measures for disadvantage compensation, arguments for gender-inclusive language, monitoring, role model information, pioneers, further education formats, events or guidelines for gender competence.

¹GENDERPLATTFORM oD. Website of the Genderplattform

There are also international examples such as "Science Europe", the "GEAR tool" or the German Research Foundation's Instrument kit, which are sources of ideas and information.²

Recommendation 4: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions entrust a member of management with the development and strengthening of gender competence and provide him or her with the necessary resources. This should also be firmly anchored in the structures of the respective higher education institution in order to provide transparency about responsibility.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who benefits: all university members

Explanation: Making visible where responsibility lies is essential for the orientation of university members. The sustainable, strategic strengthening of gender competence only has a chance of success if competencies and responsibilities are clearly assignable. The allocation of gender competence agendas is made possible, for example, in the case of the universities in the Rectorate Rules of Procedure pursuant to §22 paragraph 6 of the Universities Act 2002 or, in the case of the university colleges of teacher education, through the adoption of the Rectorate Rules of Procedure pursuant to section §15 (6) of the Higher Education Act. At the universities of applied sciences this may be specified in the rules of procedure of the college or in the statutes pursuant to §10 paragraph 3 sub-section 10 of the University of Applied Sciences Studies Act. At the private universities, a corresponding regulation could be included in the statutes in accordance with §4 paragraph 2 of the Private University Act.

The allocation of gender competence agendas to a member of the management team does not mean that the issue is no longer the work of the rectorate as a collegial body in the sense of a cross-sectional matter. All management personnel must act in a gender-competent manner in their area of responsibility.

Recommendation 5: *The working party recommends that the universities of applied sciences, university colleges of teacher education and private universities create personnel and time resources to enable the development and strengthening of gender competence.*

Who is responsible: university of applied sciences, university colleges of teacher education and private university management

Who benefits: all university members

² SCIENCE EUROPE 2017. [Practical Guide to improving Gender Equality in Research Organizations](#)
EIGE 2016. [Gender Equality in Academia and Research – Gear Tool](#)
German Research Foundation 2015. [Instrumentenkasten – Gleichstellung in der Wissenschaft](#)

Explanation: A Technopolis study³ from 2014, commissioned by the BMBWF (then BMWFW) on "Gender and Diversity Policy at Universities of Applied Sciences and Private Universities" clearly shows that the structures for equality and the advancement of women at universities of applied sciences and private universities are very different and, in many cases, very few resources are available. This also has an impact on the, in parts, slow development and slow strengthening of gender competence in these higher education institutions. At the university colleges of teacher education, the resources for the working party on equality issues and the gender mainstreaming representatives are also minimal and overall conditions for their work are usually inadequate. In order to counteract these deficits, it is important to create sustainable structures.

Recommendation 6: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions include gender competence into the requirement profile for university commissions/ committees.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who benefits: commission and committee members, future applicants

Explanation: Many (personnel and strategic) decisions are made in university commissions and committees. Therefore, the commissions and committees are of central importance. Universities could, for example, offer training for the entire commission/body, explaining, among other things, gender competence and its significance and its application in appeal procedures. For example, the Vienna University of Technology offers training for commissions, and a staff member of the IST Austria (Institute of Science and Technology Austria) helped to develop the teaching video "Recruitment Bias in Research Institutes".⁴

In order to act gender-competently in commissions/committees, the relevant knowledge of the entire group is required. Recommendations of the AQA - Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria - from 2010 on university appointment procedures under the title "Qualitätsentwicklung des Berufungsmanagements an österreichischen Universitäten"⁵ reinforce this.

Recommendation 7: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions integrate gender competence into organisational development and quality management.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who benefits: all university members

Explanation: In order for a sustainable anchoring of gender competence in university structures and processes, it is important to implement gender competence into organisational

³ Tiefenthaler and Dudenbostel 2014. [Studie Gender- und Diversitätspolitik an Fachhochschulen und Privatuniversitäten](#)

⁴ Institutió CERCA 2016. [Video - Recruitment Bias in Research Institutes](#)

⁵ AQA 2010. [Qualitätsentwicklung des Berufungsmanagements an österreichischen Universitäten](#)

development and quality management. This includes among other things – for the purpose of monitoring success - reviewing (implementation) progress. Thus, internal and external measures for achieving the gender competence objectives should be evaluated at regular intervals.

Recommendation 8: *The working party recommends that the BMBWF - in cooperation with the universities – develops expertise in the creation of an index of gender competence in higher education institutions, in order to make the achievements of higher education institutions in this field visible.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who benefits: university management

Explanation: The index should be developed in close cooperation with the universities. Here, it should also be considered to what extent data already collected can be used e.g. in the case of the universities, the relevant intellectual capital statement figures, such as the proportion of women in collegial bodies, the gender pay gap, the representation of women in appointment procedures. A Gender Competence Index serves as an orientation, supports comparison and illustrates long-term development. It is conceivable that a separate index will be developed for each sector, due to the different conditions.

Recommendation 9: *The working party recommends that the Austrian Convention of Higher Education Institutions initiate a cross-sectoral networking meeting once a year, at which a moderated exchange of information and experience on current developments and thematic priorities with regard to gender competence at the university institutions takes place.*

Who is responsible: The Austrian Convention of Higher Education Institutions

Who benefits: all university members

Explanation: Sharing experiences and learning from each other are very good opportunities to further develop individual higher education institutions in a gender-competent way. It is advisable to think beyond one's own institution and sector and to organise cross-sectoral networking meetings of universities of applied sciences, university colleges for teacher education, private universities and universities, e.g. with input from international experts or in the form of organised specialist dialogues, such as the BMBWF's Diversitas workshop. One thematic focus of the networking meetings could, for example, be exchanging information about the current implementation status of these recommendations at higher education institutions.

Recommendation 10: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions should network about gender competence training for their members, and develop cross-institutional programmes.*

Who is responsible: university management, human resource management

Who benefits: all university members, especially teachers and researchers

Explanation: The cross-institutional and cross-sectoral exchange in gender competence training courses creates important synergy effects and through different experiences, understandings of the problem and methods of resolution promotes the transfer of knowledge between higher education institutions.

Recommendation 11: *The working party recommends that the universities of applied sciences, university colleges of teacher education and private universities create a platform analogous to the universities, or anchor existing platforms more firmly, in order to network and promote the sector's gender competence and expertise to achieve greater knowledge transfer.*

Who is responsible: FHK – Association of all Austrian Universities of Applied Sciences, RÖPH - Rectors' Conference of Austrian University Colleges of Teacher Education, ÖPUK - Austrian Private Universities Association

Who benefits: all members of universities of applied sciences, university colleges of teacher education and private universities

Explanation: Examples of university platforms: ARbeitsGemeinschaft GLUNA "ARGE GLUNA"⁶ - an association of the chairpersons of the equal opportunities working parties at Austrian universities; the GENDER PLATTFORM⁷, which comprises numerous institutions who are tasked, according to the University Act, to coordinate gender equality duties, the advancement of women, gender studies and teaching based on this.

A counterpart exists at the universities of applied sciences with the ERFA group, Gender Mainstreaming and Diversity Management.

However, private universities do not yet have such gender expert groups. In order to create synergy effects and stronger networking, it is therefore advisable to create and/or strengthen analogous platforms in these sectors. The platforms should regularly and across sectors exchange information with each other.

The merging of the chairpersons of the equal opportunity working parties at university colleges of teacher education into the platform "GB 3_14", which is currently being established, is a step in this direction. The gender mainstreaming representatives at the university colleges of teacher education, networked since 2008, could play a greater role in making the potential of their diverse fields of action in teaching, research and planning processes (e.g. in the development of target and performance plans) more usable for the university colleges of teacher education.

⁶ARGE GLUNA oD. [Website of the ARGE GLUNA](#)

⁷ GENDERPLATTFORM oD. [Website of the Genderplattform](#)

Recommendation 12: *The working party recommends that the university colleges of teacher education and universities' new development networks, which have been established in the context of the new teacher education programme, combine and create personnel resources in the field of gender education/gender studies.*

Who is responsible: Steering groups of the development networks

Who benefits: all network institutions (universities and university colleges of teacher education), especially teacher training students, as well as teachers and educators

Explanation: In its 6 March 2016 report⁸ to the National Council on Teacher Education, the Quality Assurance Council proposed that working units in the network regions should establish themselves as intersections with the aim of combining and developing expertise and establishing national and international co-operations.

The development and strengthening of gender expertise in the areas of science and professional orientation increases the quality of research and teaching in teacher education courses as well as in the further education and training of teachers and educators. Gender studies courses for teacher training students, training for educators, as well as gender expertise for educational research related to each field of work should be available in every development network.

Recommendation 13: *The working party recommends that the owners of universities' buildings should, in cooperation with the higher education institutions, design the infrastructure in a way that does justice to gender diversity.*

Who is responsible: building owners (e.g. the federal real estate company, BIG, for universities), university management

Who benefits: non-binary university members

Explanation: With a few exceptions, the binarity "man" and "woman" is reflected throughout university infrastructures. However, gender identities are versatile. In order to do justice to this and to avoid forcing non-binary transgender and intersexual persons to choose one of the two non-applicable categories, it is recommended that the infrastructure - also in terms of individual freedom of choice - be adapted in such a way that, for example, unisex toilets and changing rooms are offered in addition to the existing range of services. A further protection for non-binary trans- and inter* persons would be the installation of single booths in both toilets and showers, for example.

Recommendation 14: *The working party recommends that the BMBWF - in cooperation with the universities of applied sciences and the university colleges of teacher education - anchor*

⁸ QSR 2016. Bericht des Qualitätssicherungsrates für Pädagoginnen- und Pädagogenbildung an den Nationalrat

the development and strengthening of gender competence in the relevant development and financing plans.

Who is responsible: BMBWF, FHK – The Association of all Austrian Universities of Applied Sciences, RÖPH - Rectors' Conference of Austrian University Colleges of Teacher Education, heads of the universities of applied sciences and university colleges of teacher education

Who benefits: all members of universities of applied sciences and university colleges of teacher education

Explanation: While cultural change is anchored in the Austrian university development plan as system objective 8, the 2017/18 development and financing plan for universities of applied sciences does not contain any such objectives. Therefore, the forthcoming plan is a way of integrating the development and strengthening of gender competence in terms of cultural change as an objective. The same applies to the university colleges of teacher education.

Legal framework

Recommendation 15: *The working party recommends that the legislature initiate a discussion on whether, and to what extent, the development and strengthening of gender competence at universities can be legally anchored as a responsibility of the universities.*

Who is responsible: BMBWF

Who benefits: all university members

Explanation: The legal anchoring adds great sustainability to the development and strengthening of gender competence. The following paragraphs, for example, support this: Universities e.g. § 3 University Act 2002 (Universities' Duties)⁹, Universities of Applied Sciences § 8 (2) University of Applied Sciences Studies Act¹⁰ (Accreditation Requirements of the Universities of Applied Sciences), Private Universities § 2 Private Universities Act¹¹ (Accreditation Requirements of the Private Universities), University Colleges of Teacher Education § 9 (8) University Act 2005¹² (Guiding Principles of University Colleges of Teacher Education).

Recommendation 16: *The working party recommends that the legislature adapt the Students' Union Act so that at least one department responsible for gender and diversity issues must be established at each student union.*

Who is responsible: BMBWF

Who benefits: Austrian National Union of Students, students

⁹ RIS – [Universitätsgesetz 2002 idgF.](#)

¹⁰ RIS – [Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz idgF.](#)

¹¹ RIS – [Privatuniversitätengesetz idgF.](#)

¹² RIS – [Hochschulgesetz idgF.](#)

Explanation: Currently, many universities have student union departments dealing with gender issues which are referred to by different names (e.g. ÖH-Bundesvertretung "Referat für feministische Politik"; University of Vienna "Referat für HomoBiTrans*"; University of Graz "Queer-Referat"; University of Linz "Referat Frauen, Gender, Gleichbehandlungsfragen"). At some universities there are no such departments at all (e.g. University of Mining Leoben) and they should be introduced as a minimum standard.

In order to ensure that gender competence is implemented by the Austrian National Union of Students at all universities, the third section of § 36 paragraph 2 of the Students' Union Act (HSG 2014) should be amended so that a Department for Gender Issues should be established in addition to a mandatory Department for Education Policy, a Department for Social Policy and a Department for Economic Affairs (Economic Department).

Note on the implementation of Recommendations 17 and 18 (as of Sept. 2018): Work is currently underway to ensure that the Constitutional Court's ruling on the third gender is uniformly implemented throughout the country. As soon as this is available, the BMBWF will make the necessary adaptations.

Recommendation 17: *The working party recommends that the legislature and universities take into account real gender diversity – both staff and students - when collecting data.*

Recommendation 18: *It is recommended that universities design forms in such a way that gender diversity is recognised.*

Who is responsible: legislators, BMBWF, university management, Statistik Austria

Who benefits: non-binary university members

Explanation: When asking about gender, current university forms offer the categories "male" and "female". However, this does not reflect gender diversity. In addition, there are "incoming students" from third countries where there are three legally established genders. In order to do justice to real gender diversity in the collection of student data, the legislative body is proposing an amendment to the Education Documentation Act and the Student Registration Ordinance for all universities, for example offering at least a third gender option. The universities, for their part, will have to analogously update their student records.

1.2 Gender Competent Action

Guiding principle: As members of a gender-competent university, we deal with the importance of gender competence in our field of work and implement this knowledge through gender-competent actions. As a gender-competent university organisation, we ensure that

gender competence is integrated into the university's structures and processes and all our members have it.

Recommendation 19: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions make information on aspects of gender in their field of work and working environment available to all their members. Such information should be updated annually. All university members should be given easy access to this information.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who benefits: all university members

Recommendation 20: *The working party recommends that university members should obtain comprehensive information on aspects of gender related to their institution and be clear about the significance of the findings for their own field of work and working environment.*

Who is responsible: all university members

Who benefits: all university members

Explanation: Aspects of gender include, for example, gender-presence in all areas and at all hierarchical levels, the status quo of gender research at the institution, information on gender equality measures, information on compatibility, information on knowledge platforms (e.g. Genderplattform, Toolbox, ...), contact persons, etc.

Only those who are aware of aspects of gender at their own higher education institution can act in a gender competent way in their own field of action. To this end, the first step is for the university to gather information on essential aspects of gender. This information should meet several criteria: It should be easily, and barrier-free, accessible (e.g. distribution by e-mail, part of the welcome package for new members of the university, prominent placement on the website, intranet ...), and it should always be kept up to date.

Recommendation 21: *The working party recommends that higher education human resource management in particular should be able to demonstrate that they are familiar with the subject of "gender competence".*

Who is responsible: human resource management

Who benefits: all university members, potential applicants

Explanation: There are various personnel management instruments in which gender competence comes into play: gender-conscious formulation of tenders, questions in selection interviews, design of appointment procedures, design of evaluation instruments, development of flexible career planning models with a focus on compatibility, design of further education programmes with training for gender competence, etc. Human resource managers therefore have a central role in building and strengthening gender competence at universities.

Recommendation 22: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions create a framework for regular individual and joint reflection and, based on this, promote the effectiveness of processes and action situations with regard to gender competence.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who benefits: all university members, applicants

Explanation: The individual and joint processing of university micro-situations (e.g. How did the personnel recruitment or appointment procedure go? How did the appraisal interview go? How was the staff meeting? How was the course?, ...) in the course of a comprehensive reflection on gender-relevant issues helps the entire organisation (rectorate, selection committees, departments, administration, institutes, ...) to develop further in a gender-competent manner. This promotes the university as a learning institution in its entirety and can be used to optimise processes.

Recommendation 23: *It is recommended that the universities- in cooperation- develop an instrument for assessing their own position in gender competence for different target groups. It should be recommended that members of the university use this instrument regularly for self-evaluation.*

Who is responsible: university management in cooperation

Who benefits: certain groups of university members, such as teachers, researchers, managers, human resources managers

Explanation: A concrete measure for reflection is, for example, the development and use of an instrument for the self-assessment of gender competence among various groups of university members (e.g. teachers, researchers, managers, human resource managers, administrative staff, etc.). Such a tool, which can also be integrated into existing self-evaluation instruments, is a helpful contribution to support self-evaluation.

Recommendation 24: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions develop and/or provide a language guide which also reflects gender diversity appropriately.*

Recommendation 25: *It is recommended that this language guide is made easily accessible to all members of higher education institutions and that they be encouraged to use gender-inclusive language - both spoken and written - in their work and work environment.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who benefits: all university members

Explanation: Language can exclude, it can make invisible, it can discriminate. In order to counteract this and to give members of the respective university linguistic orientation, it is recommended that university institutions develop a language guide - if this is not already available. There is a wide range of options available for linguistic representation of gender

diversity, which includes other genders in addition to men and women. Examples include the Vienna University of Economics and Business with its guide "Fair and inclusive in words and pictures"¹³, the University for Continuing Education Krems with its "Guide to gender-neutral wording"¹⁴ and on an international level, the RWTH Aachen University with its guide "Gender-neutral language"¹⁵.

Note, that the Council for German Orthography has included gender-inclusive spelling in its programme and is expected to publish a comprehensive recommendation in 2018/2019.

Recommendation 26: *The working party recommends that the Austrian National Union of Students offer gender competence training to its representatives, and students who give tutorials.*

Who is responsible: Austrian National Union of Students

Who benefits: students, Austrian National Union of Students representatives

Explanation: The strengthening of gender competence knowledge should also include the representatives of the Austrian National Union of Students as an essential group at the universities. Among other things, this will enable gender-competent counselling of students. Further advantages: the possibility to pass on gender competence as a multiplier, gender-competent action in the union's own institutions (federal representation, university representatives, student representatives, ...).

Recommendation 27: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions should collect practical examples of gender-related research and teaching in specific fields (e.g. cross-sectionally all technical courses of studies) and make their content accessible to their staff.*

Who is responsible: university management in cooperation

Who benefits: teachers, researchers

Explanation: Collecting gender case studies by field is intended to facilitate and promote the transfer of information and knowledge between different universities in the same field. The focus should be on the core areas of teaching and research. Thereby university members working in a similar field can profit from the experience of their colleagues.

¹³ Vienna University of Economics and Business (ed.)2015. Fair und inklusiv in Sprache und Bild – Ein Leitfaden für die WU

¹⁴ University for Continuing Education Krems (ed.) 2015. Leitfaden für geschlechtergerechtes Formulieren - Universität für Weiterbildung Krems

¹⁵ RWTH Aachen (Ed.) 2017. Geschlechtergerechte Sprache - Handreichung der RWTH AACHEN

1.3 Gender Competent Teaching

Guiding principle: As excellent teachers, we pass on our gender competence to the students. As responsible students, we recognise the importance and relevance of gender competence.

Recommendation 28: *The working party recommends the appropriate integration of findings from gender and diversity research into the curricula of all subjects and all courses of study and training in order to demonstrate, analyse and reflect intersectional connections with gender and socio-cultural issues in the respective discipline. This is seen as essential.*

Who is responsible: collegial bodies responsible for curriculum development, e.g. the senate, the university collegium, curriculum commissions, ...

Who benefits: teachers, students

Explanation: The BMBWF (then BMWFW) conducted a survey (date 1.3.2017 - status summer semester 2017) on anchoring gender research at Austrian universities. In this survey, 12 of the 22 universities reported that they offer a relevant, compulsory course in at least one of their curricula. Only 11 percent of the curricula of these 12 universities have made such a course compulsory (94 curricula from a range of 879 courses from Bachelor to PhD). 13 universities reported that a relevant course was an elective option in at least one of the curricula offered. Nevertheless, in 20 percent of the curricula of these 13 universities, a relevant course is explicitly mentioned as an elective option (268 curricula from a range of 1366 curricula).

These figures underscore the fact that gender issues still do not reach all students. Therefore, in order to strengthen gender competencies, it is important to include gender courses in every curriculum, if necessary, on a progressive basis - Bachelor/Master, doctoral studies.

In general, the integration of findings from subject-specific gender studies should go beyond just a description in the qualification profiles and also be anchored in the course and module descriptions.

Recommendation 29: *In line with the teaching principle of "reflective gender education and equality", it is recommended that relevant gender issues be anchored in the content of AHS, BHS and NMS curricula with the aim of building gender competencies among students.*

Recommendation 30: *The working party recommends anchoring gender competence in the content of the introductory and orientation phase STEOP, if gender and related socio-cultural issues are part of an examination subject.*

Who is responsible: collegial bodies or curriculum committees responsible for curriculum development

Who benefits: pupils, students

Explanation: One of the findings of the working party is that many students come to the universities without any awareness of gender issues - knowledge deficits that should be addressed in school and at the outset of their studies if possible. This creates a solid gender-competent foundation of knowledge on which to build throughout students' further studies.

Recommendation 31: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions offer further training courses in gender-sensitive didactics for teachers.*

Recommendation 32: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions offer their teaching staff individual coaching for non-gender-related courses in order to develop the gender dimension in these subjects.*

Who is responsible: human resource management

Who benefits: teachers, students

Explanation: The further education of teachers in gender-sensitive didactics is part of the basic qualification in higher education didactics. It ensures that the courses are held in a gender-competent manner. In order to combine resources, it seems sensible to cooperate to develop cross-institutional courses.

Recommendation 33: *In order to make the gender issue more visible, the working party recommends that higher education institutions award prizes for theses that are dedicated to gender research and that contribute to the dissemination of gender competence.*

Recommendation 34: *The working party recommends that higher education institutions award prizes for teachers who have anchored gender issues in their courses in a didactically gender-competent manner.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who benefits: teachers, students

Explanation: Persons who teach gender-competently or who, for example, run an academic, gender-competent blog on social media or who write gender-competent theses should be recognised and rewarded by the university institutions. This creates recognition and makes the gender issue visible. Ideally, the award will motivate and/or inspire students to focus their work the topic of gender in connection with their actual subject. Examples are the "Gender Award"¹⁶ of the Private University College of Teacher Education Graz and the prizes for women's and gender studies and the Lehreplus! prize of the University of Innsbruck.¹⁷

¹⁶ Private University College of Teacher Education Diocese Graz 2018. [Gender Award 2018 der Kirchlich Pädagogischen Hochschule Graz](#)

¹⁷ University of Innsbruck oD. [Preise für Frauen und Geschlechterforschung der Universität Innsbruck](#)

1.4 Gender Competent Research

Guiding principle: As excellent researchers, considering gender issues in our research activity goes without saying.

Recommendation 35: *The working party recommends that Austrian research policy specifically promote research projects that take account of the gender dimension within a discipline, and that are suitable for strengthening or deepening knowledge of the gender dimension.*

Who is responsible: BMBWF, university management

Who benefits: researchers, students

Explanation: The stronger anchoring of the gender dimension in research, development and access to the arts and in research-led teaching is one of the cornerstones of the BMBWF's gender equality policy, which is based, among other things, on the European Research Area ERA Roadmap. Targeted research funding is intended to enable gender research with links to various scientific and artistic-academic disciplines in order to generate new knowledge - for example, through new questions – with the aim of strengthening gender competence. Such funding would complement existing gender research funding, such as the Gabriele Possanner Awards, or by attracting European projects, for example within the Horizon 2020 programme line "Science with and for Society" (SwafS).

Recommendation 36: *The working party recommends the creation of a fully dedicated gender professorship, or the equivalent made up of several partially dedicated gender professorship. The aim would be to demonstrate, analyse and reflect on intersectional connections with gender and socio-cultural issues in the specific discipline.*

Who is responsible: university management

Who benefits: researchers, students

Explanation: The working party considers the creation of gender professorships to be expedient. Particularly with regard to the content of gender studies/gender research in teaching, a separate gender professorship would be of great importance in order to further develop gender research in the respective subject and to link it to the respective discipline.

Universities of applied sciences are an exception with regard to possibilities for implementing this recommendation: Here, professorships must fulfil the purpose of providing career-oriented teaching and research. Dedicating a full or part-time position in the area of teaching and/or research to gender competence therefore does not fulfil this objective. This does not, however, exclude the possibility that - in the sense a cross-sectional subject - projects be initiated on this topic by the universities of applied sciences, or be carried out in cooperation with universities.

According to a BMBWF survey (then BMWFW, date 1.3.2017 - as of the 2017 summer semester), 12 universities have a dedicated professorship for gender research competence. Seven universities report that they have a total of 11 permanent, and sustainably anchored, professorships which are, at least partially, dedicated to gender research. With four permanent professorships, the University of Linz has the most professorships dedicated to gender studies.

In addition, the universities named five fixed-term § 99 professorships, all of which are fully dedicated to gender studies and are found in the same three fields of study as the permanent professorships. In addition, four guest professorships in Gender Studies have been established at universities. These have a focus on interdisciplinarity or rotation between faculties – this also poses a realistic implementation opportunity, especially for smaller university institutions.

1.2 Overview Recommendations

Gender Competent Management			
Recommendation Nr.	What?	Who is responsible?	Who profits?
1	Setting targets to develop and strengthen gender competencies	university management	all university members
2	Involvement of existing strategy papers and instruments	university management	all university members
3	Consideration of knowledge platforms	university management	all university members
4	Entrusting a member of management with the development and strengthening of gender competence	university management	all university members
5	Creation of resources to develop and strengthen gender competencies	university of applied sciences, university colleges of teacher education and private university management	all university of applied sciences, university colleges of teacher education and private university members
6	Inclusion of gender competencies into the requirement profile for commissions/committees	university management	commission and committee members, future applicants
7	Integration of gender competence into organisation development and quality management	university management	all university members
8	Developing expertise to create an index for gender competencies	university management	university management, BMBWF
9	Initiating a cross-sectoral networking meeting	Austrian Convention of Higher Education Institutions	all university members
10	Networking at gender competence trainings and development of cross-institutional offers	university management, HR management	all university members, especially teachers and researchers
11	Creation of platforms to bundle knowledge on gender competence	FHK, RÖPH, ÖPUK	all university of applied sciences, university colleges of teacher education and private universities members
12	Bundling and creating human resources in the area of gender education/gender studies	Steering groups of the development networks	all network institutions (universities and university colleges of teacher education), especially students of teacher education and teachers and educators

Gender Competent Management			
Recommendation Nr.	What?	Who is responsible?	Who profits?
13	Designing the infrastructure so it does justice to gender diversity	building owners, university management	non-binary university members
14	Integration of gender competence into the development and finance plan	BMBWF, FHK, RÖPH, university of applied sciences management, university management	all university of applied sciences and university colleges of teacher education members
15	Legal anchoring of gender competencies	BMBWF	all university members
16	Austrian National Union of Students (ÖH) gender department at every university representation	BMBWF	Austrian National Union of Students, students
17	Consideration of real gender diversity when collecting data	BMBWF, university management, Statistik Austria	non-binary university members
18	Design forms based on gender diversity	BMBWF, university management	non-binary university members
Gender Competent Action			
Recommendation Nr.	What?	Who is responsible?	Who profits?
19	Preparation of information about gender aspects of higher education institutions	university management	all university members
20	Perception and processing of the information offered about gender aspects	all university members	all university members
21	Examination of gender competencies by HR management	HR management	all university members, potential applicants
22	Creation of individual and communal – also externally guided – reflection possibilities	university management	all university members, applicants
23	Development of an instrument for personal positioning determination	university management in cooperation	certain groups of university members
24	Development and/or provision of a language guide	university management	all university members
25	Low threshold access to language guide – encouraging use of language	university management	all university members
26	Trainings for ÖH- representatives and tutors	Austrian National Union of Students	Austrian National Union of Students representatives, students
27	Partial collection of practical examples	university management in cooperation	teachers, researchers

Gender Competence Teaching			
Recommendation Nr.	What?	Who is responsible?	Who profits?
28	Integration of gender research into curricula	the collegial body responsible for the curriculum	teachers, students
29	Content-related anchoring the development of gender competence into AHS and BHS plans	curriculum committee	students
30	Content-related anchoring the development of gender competence into the STEOP	the collegial body responsible for the curriculum	students
31	Further training courses on gender sensitive didactics	HR management	teachers, students
32	Individual coachings for teachers for developing gender dimensions	HR management	teachers, students
33	Prizes for theses addressing gender issues	university management	students
34	Prizes for gender competent teaching	university management	students
Gender Competent Research			
Recommendation Nr.	What?	Who is responsible?	Who profits?
35	Targeted promotion of research projects	BMBWF, university management	researchers, students
36	Creation of gender professorships	university management	researchers, students

2 Working Party

2.1 The Working Party Remit

On the initiative of the Austrian National Union of Students (ÖH), the Austrian Convention of Higher Education Institutions decided in its meeting of 29 March 2016 to commission the then Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economics (BMWFW)* to set up a working party on "Strengthening gender competence in higher education processes". The remit was to draw up recommendations for university members on how to improve gender competence and raise awareness of gender diversity. In addition to agreed objectives and problems relating to the issues, the recommendations should serve as a guide for the persons and bodies involved in higher education institutions and identify concrete, action-oriented proposals.

2.2 Composition of the Working Party

The working party was founded on 20 October 2016 with section head Dr. Iris Rauskala of the BMWFW* as chair and Mag. Gerald Rauch, staff member of the BMWFW* staff unit for gender and diversity management, as secretary. There were originally 18 participants. Following the proposal of the BMWFW* and the university colleges of teacher education, two new members joined after the second meeting.

The Austrian Convention of Higher Education Institutions' working party on "Strengthening gender competence in higher education processes" consisted of the following members (in alphabetical order):

Name	University/Institution	Nominated by
Aichinger, Dr. ⁱⁿ MSc, Regina	University of Applied Science Upper Austria	FHK – Association of all Austrian Universities of Applied Sciences
Dworczak, a.o. Univ.-Prof. ⁱⁿ Dr. ⁱⁿ Renate	Karl-Franzens-University Graz	uniko – Universities Austria
Fiegl, Univ.-Doz. ⁱⁿ Dr. ⁱⁿ Jutta	Sigmund Freud Private University	ÖPUK – Austrian Private Universities Association
Gössl, Dr. Martin	University of Applied Science Joanneum Graz	FHK – Association of all Austrian Universities of Applied Sciences

Name	University/Institution	Nominated by
Gößnitzer , a.o. Univ.-Prof. ⁱⁿ Dr. ⁱⁿ Edith	Karl-Franzens-University Graz	ARGE GLUNA – Working Group for Equal Treatment and Gender equality at Austrian Universities
Grabetz , Lucia	National delegation of the Austrian National Union of Students	Austrian National Union of Students
Hey , Dr. ⁱⁿ Barbara	Karl-Franzens-University Graz	BMWFV* as representative of the Genderplattform
Knaus , a.o. Univ.-Prof. ⁱⁿ Dipl.-Ing. ⁱⁿ Dr. ⁱⁿ Simone	Vienna University of Technology	Representatives of the Senate of the Austrian Universities
Kronberger , Dr. ⁱⁿ Silvia	Salzburg University of Education	Rectors' Conference of Austrian University Colleges of Teacher Education (RÖPH)
Kubin , Univ.-Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Dr. Gernot	Graz University of Technology	Representatives of the Senate of the Austrian Universities
Luschnig , Hannah	National delegation of the Austrian National Union of Students	Austrian National Union of Students
Mähr , Alex	National delegation of the Austrian National Union of Students	Austrian National Union of Students
Meixner , Ass.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Wolfgang	University of Innsbruck	uniko – Universities Austria
Ratzer , Dr. ⁱⁿ Brigitte	Vienna University of Technology	uniko – Universities Austria
Rauch , Mag. Gerald	Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy	BMWFV* (Secretary)
Rauskala , Mag. ^a Dr. ⁱⁿ Iris	Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy – Director of Section VI	BMWFV* (chair)
Schaller-Steidl , Dr. ⁱⁿ Roberta	Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy – Director Staff Unit gender and diversity management	BMWFV*
Schneider , Mag. ^a Christine	Federal Ministry for Education, Deputy director Gender Mainstreaming – Gender Equality and School	BMB*
Seel , Mag. ^a Dr. ⁱⁿ Andrea	Private University College of Teacher Education Diocese Graz	Rectors' Conference of Austrian University Colleges of Teacher Education (RÖPH)
Wroblewski , Dr. ⁱⁿ Angela	IHS – Institute for Advanced Studies	BMWFV*

*Today Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Research (BMBWF)

2.3 The Working Party's Working Methods

The development of the recommendations went through several stages:

- Discussion of the status quo, explanation of current findings
- Development of definitions of terms
- Defining fields of action
- Target group identification
- Elaboration of the action-oriented recommendations

Both external experts and members of the working party provided valuable input on various issues – see the calendar of meetings. In order to document the contents of the meetings in the best possible way, and with the prior consent of the working party – the meetings were recorded with a digital dictation device.

2.4 Working Party Meetings Calendar

Originally, seven meetings each lasting three hours, were scheduled for the period between October 2016 and June 2017. Due to the density of the issues, an additional eighth session was added, and the duration of the sessions was increased to four hours from the second session onwards. With the exception of the third meeting, which took place at Graz University of Technology, all meetings were held on the premises of the BMFWF. The meetings took place on the following dates:

Session	Topic	Date
Meeting 1	Constituent meeting, starting position, modalities	10.10.2016
Meeting 2	Definition of gender competence Input Dr. ⁱⁿ Angela Wroblewski (IHS – Institut for Advanced Studies): „Gendercompetence – Operationalisability and Relevance in the University Context”	28.11.2016
Meeting 3	Benefits of gender competence, goals, target groups Input Univ.-Prof.in Dr.in Sabine Köszegi (Vienna University of Technology): "Possibilities and opportunities through gender competence - practical benefits for personnel development, organisational structures & infrastructure". Input Dr.in Corinna Bath (Braunschweig University of Technology / Visiting Professor at Graz University of Technology): "Gender competence and gender expertise in technical subjects?"	16.01.2017
Meeting 4	Good practice	20.02.2017

Session	Topic	Date
	Input Univ.-Prof.inDlinDr.in Edeltraud Hanappi-Egger (Rector of the Vienna University of Economics and Business): "uLiKe: developing university performance evaluation in context" Input Dr.in Barbara Hey (Karl-Franzens-University Graz): "Practical examples"	
Meeting 5	Language, gender plurality Input Univ.-Ass.in Mag.a Dr.in Susanne Hochreiter (University of Vienna): "Gender Diversity and Language" Inputs Denise Beer, MA (Academy of Fine Arts), Hannah Luschnig, Lena Pöchtrager (ÖH): "NaGeH and Non-Binary Universities - Strengthening of trans, inter* and non-binary topics at Austrian universities"	03.04.2017
Meeting 6	Compiling of recommendations Part 1	08.05.2017
Meeting 7	(supplementary meeting) - Compiling of recommendations Part 2	29.05.2017
Meeting 8	Recommendations Part 3, Procedure Final Report	19.06.2017
Final report		By the End of 2017

3 Gender(competence) – Definitions

3.1 Definition Gender

The working party uses the internationally recognised definition of "gender". This is based on the definitions of the UNHCR¹⁸ (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and the WHO¹⁹ (World Health Organisation): "Gender refers to social gender. This is created by the attribution of gender-specific abilities and expectations to people, regardless of their gender identity. Social gender is therefore based on social dynamics and is changeable and variable within and between cultures. It defines roles, duties, constraints, opportunities and privileges."

Gender equality refers to the equal enjoyment of rights, responsibilities and opportunities such as, for example, participation. In developing the recommendations, the working party paid particular attention to ensuring that the interests, needs and priorities of all gender identities are respected.

3.2 Definition of Gender Competence

The GenderCompetenceCenter of the Humboldt University Berlin undertook the task of providing a definition of gender competence – a key skill for Sigrid Metz-Göckel & Christine Roloff²⁰: "Gender competence is a person's ability to recognise gender issues in their work and to work on them in a gender-oriented manner. Gender competence is a prerequisite for successful gender mainstreaming. At the same time, the implementation of gender mainstreaming generates new gender competence. Gender competence is composed of the elements of desire, knowledge and skills".²¹

Building on this, the working party developed a joint gender competence definition, which is based on the input from Angela Wroblewski (IHS - Institute for Advanced Studies):

¹⁸ UNHCR 2011. [UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Policy: Working with people and communities for equality and protection](#)

¹⁹ WHO oD. [WHO-Definition Gender](#)

²⁰ Metz-Göckel and Roloff 2002. [Genderkompetenz als Schlüsselqualifikation](#)

²¹ GenderCompetenceCenter 2003-2010. [GenderKompetenzZentrum – Erläuterung zu Gender Kompetenz](#)

"Gender competence comprises of the fundamental recognition of the relevance of gender attributions in one's own work and sphere of influence (knowledge). This recognition is connected with the willingness (desire) and ability to deal with these issues in day-to-day work and study life - if necessary, supported by gender experts and with knowledge from gender theories - and to take action based on this knowledge (skills). Recognition, discussion and action are subject to a constant process of reflection (reflection)."

For a better understanding, the four central gender competence dimensions - knowledge, desire, skills, reflection - as well as gender mainstreaming need to be explained in further detail. The explanations are also based on the considerations of the GenderCompetenceCenter of the Humboldt University Berlin and on the expertise of the working party.

3.2.1 Gender Mainstreaming

In 1998, the Council of Europe defined this equality policy strategy as follows: "Gender mainstreaming consists of the (re-)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of decision-making processes, with the aim of ensuring that the actors involved in policy-making take the perspective of gender equality in all areas and at all levels to be self-evident".

Gender mainstreaming

- is targeted at framework conditions and structures
- analyses the current situation based on data and aims to integrate equal opportunities into all policy areas and measures at all levels
- concerns all gender identities or defined parts of them
- also seeks short-term balance, but places its main perspective on the long-term elimination of inequality structures
- concerns all actors involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies²²

3.2.2 Dimension Knowledge

Gender knowledge means linking knowledge about the living conditions of all gender identities, or about the impact of gender norms, with the specific expertise. Gender knowledge thus becomes an integral part of specialist knowledge when the meaning of

²²IMAG GMB 2016. [Definition Gender Mainstreaming](#)

"gender" is understood in its complexity and fundamental findings from gender studies are known.²³

Gender knowledge therefore includes knowledge

- on gender as a socio-cultural structural category interacting with structural categories in specific fields of work
- on gender equality policy objectives at organisational, national and international level
- on gender theories, theories of intersectionality, queer theories, gender mainstreaming and diversity management
- about the gender relevance/dimension in a specific work context
- on gender aspects in the historical development of higher education systems
- on the importance of gender-inclusive language as an important element in changing the way we think and act²⁴

3.2.1 Dimension Desire

Desire refers to the willingness to act in a gender equality-oriented manner. The motivation exists to work towards the goal of equality and to contribute to the implementation of gender mainstreaming. This requires an individual attitude or political will to counteract potential discrimination. The willingness to stand up for equality is also publicly supported.²⁵

The dimension of desire therefore includes

- the willingness to address gender issues and gender-related power relations and structures in specific spheres of work and influence
- dealing with this debate, or actively handling resistance
- the willingness to reflect on one's own attitudes and actions from a gender perspective in specific work contexts
- the willingness to work towards more gender equality
- a positive attitude towards gender equality objectives
- the ability to identify when additional gender expertise is needed
- the willingness to question existing practices²⁶

²³ GenderCompetenceCenter 2003-2010.

²⁴ Wroblewski 2016; Pädagogische Hochschule Salzburg 2018, S.16. [Genderkompetenz in der Pädagog_innenbildung NEU](#)

²⁵ GenderKompetenzZentrum 2003-2010.

²⁶ Salzburg University of Education 2018, S.16; Wroblewski 2016.

3.2.2 Dimension Skills (Action)

The implementation of the strategy of gender mainstreaming requires skills on the part of the persons responsible, and facilitation by the higher education institutions. Implementation means that responsibilities are defined and resources, along with training and counselling services, are available to implement gender mainstreaming in one's own work context. Methods and instruments (working aids) are used to identify gender issues both in fields of action and in subject areas and to make the workplace gender-oriented.²⁷

The skills include

- the ability to activate potentials beyond stereotypical attributions
- skills necessary to perceive differences
- the ability to sharpen one's own perception
- the ability to form lines of reasoning about stereotypes
- the use of gender-inclusive language
- the consideration of the gender dimension in the methods and practices usually used in the work context²⁸

3.2.3 Dimension Reflection

The three dimensions mentioned above are closely intertwined with the dimension of reflection, since this should be a component of all three other dimensions to support continuous development. Therefore, the opportunity for reflection must be structurally anchored in order to speak of a learning organisation.

The reflection dimension includes:

- the ability to reflect on gender roles, gender images, and stereotypes in a specific work context
- the ability to reflect on one's own everyday experiences, perceptions, assessments and assumptions
- the ability to reflect on one's own experiences of socialisation²⁹

²⁷ GenderCompetenceCenter 2003-2010.

²⁸ Salzburg University of Education 2018, P.16.; Wroblewski 2016.

²⁹ Salzburg University of Education 2018, P. 16.; Wroblewski 2016.

3.3 Gender-inclusive Language Use

There is a legal basis for gender-inclusive wording. This can be found in § 10a of the Federal Equal Treatment Act - B-GlBG, which in turn is applicable to universities on the basis of § 44 of the Universities Act 2002 (UG). Apart from the legal requirements, language should create recognition and make gender diversity visible or illustrate it. Speech acts call up (consciously or unconsciously) social norms and (re-)produce them. Speech acts can also counteract social norms.³⁰

Through the use of spoken and written gender-inclusive language, all people become present and thus awareness of equality is promoted. The use of exclusively male (or female) forms, on the other hand, constitutes discrimination. A fitting quote from the German linguist Luise F. Pusch from 1990: "Men are almost always correctly classified, women rarely are, because in our language the following rule applies: 99 female singers and one male singer is 100 singers". At the same time, a double mention of male and female forms does not do justice to real gender diversity. In order to do justice to the concerns of non-binary identifying people, further consideration is needed. Discrimination can be avoided by the conscious use of language.

There are numerous ways of consciously using language³¹, such as the underscore (_) used in this report and the asterisk (*): These spellings were developed in Trans* and Queer Studies. They contribute to breaking down linguistic gender binarity, since the underscore or asterisk (gender gap) names the diversity of the sexes and thus makes it visible, e.g., Professor_innen, Kolleg*innen.³²

The Humboldt University of Berlin shows further

Linguistic Form	Substantive Singular	Substantive Plural	Personal Pronouns	Possessive Pronoun	Question Pronoun
x-Form	Studierx	Studierxs	x	xs	Wex?
-Form I	Studier	Studier**	*	*'s	We*?
Dynamic Underscore	Stu_dentin	Stu_dentinnen	s_ier	Ich_re	We_lche?

³⁰ Hochreiter 2017.

³¹ AG Feministisch Sprachhandeln 2014.

³² Hochreiter 2017; Perko 2012.

Linguistic Form	Substantive Singular	Substantive Plural	Personal Pronouns	Possessive Pronoun	Question Pronoun
Root Word Underscore	Stud_entin	Stud_entinnen	si_er	ihr_e	Welch_e?
*-Form II	Student*in	Student*innen	sie*er	ihre*seine	Welche*r?
Static Underscore	Student_in	Student_innen	xier, sie_er	xiesen, ihr_ihm	Welche_r?
Generic Femininum	Studentin	Studentinnen	sie	ihre	Welche?
I-Within	StudentIn	StudentInnen	sie	ihre, ihrE	Welche? WelchE?
Double Gendering	Studentin und Student	Studentinnen und Studenten	sie/er	ihre/seine	Welche?/Wer?
A-form (for things)	Kopiera	Kopieras	es	sein	Was?

Source: [AG Feministisch Sprachhandeln](#)

4 Gender Competence – Positioning

There are numerous international and national laws, guidelines and strategy papers in which gender equality is anchored. This is important for this report, as building gender competence and strengthening it is an essential factor for successful, sustainable gender equality. An overview of gender competence positioning in terms of gender equality is presented below.

4.1 International Gender Equality Policy

4.1.1 Global Equality Goals - Agenda 2030 and CEDAW

Gender equality is one of the central agendas and challenges worldwide. As early as 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)³³ was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The main objective of the Convention is the elimination of discrimination against women in all areas of life, such as “Education and Training”, which is dealt with in Article 10 of the Convention. The signatories - Austria signed the Convention in 1980 and ratified it in 1982 - must report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at least every four years on their implementation of the Convention.³⁴

Since then, the issue has not lost any of its global relevance, because the Sustainable Development Goals, which came into force on 1 January 2016 with a term of 15 years, also included the goal number 5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". These political goals of the United Nations (UN), also known as Agenda 2030, serve to ensure sustainable development on an economic, social and ecological level, and apply to all states.³⁵

4.1.2 Gender Equality in Tertiary Education at a European Level

While the objectives on gender equality at a global level are more general, there are more concrete ideas on gender equality in the European Union's tertiary education sector. In a July 17, 2012 communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the

³³ United Nations 1982, P.5. [Konvention zur Beseitigung jeder Diskriminierung der Frau](#)

³⁴ Federal Chancellery 2018. [CEDAW Konvention - Umsetzung Österreich](#)

³⁵ Federal Chancellery 2016. [Website BKA - Nachhaltige Entwicklung – Agenda 2030 / SDGs](#)

United Nations 2012. [UN Generalversammlung - The future we want](#)

European Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions with the subject "A stronger partnership for excellence and growth in the European Research Area", "Gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research" can be found under Point 2.4. The communication explains that research in Europe suffers from "*the inefficient use or significant loss of highly qualified women researchers*".³⁶

Also, in the conclusions of the Council of the European Commission on "Promoting Gender Equality in the European Research Area" from the 25th of November 2015, the chapter "GENDER KNOWLEDGE AND MONITORING"³⁷ contains suggestions for the Member States. They focus on the area of equality in research, innovation for greater knowledge networking, consistent data collection and -publication as well as on the development of indicators for (long-term) measurability and thus the representation of gender equality development.

4.2 Equality in the Tertiary Education Sector in Austria

4.2.1 Austrian Equality Objectives

The European Commission communication mentioned in Point 4.1.2 also forms the basis for the European Research Area Roadmap, or ERA Roadmap for short, which was adopted by the Austrian Council of Ministers on the 26th April 2016. Under Priority 4, the ERA Roadmap contains a coordinated work programme for gender equality and gender mainstreaming, which must be implemented by 2020. This includes strategic equality projects for the entire Austrian science and research area and is therefore very important for the successful national implementation of the equality goals of the European Union.

The objectives of the ERA Roadmap - Priority 4 "Gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research" for Austria:

- an increase in the proportion of women in all areas and hierarchical levels in which they are underrepresented (vertical and horizontal segregation)
- the integration of the gender dimension in structures and policies in science and research (cultural change in science and research organisations)

³⁶ Commission of the European Union, Brussels 2012, P.14. [Mitteilung der EU Kommission: Eine verstärkte Partnerschaft im Europäischen Forschungsraum im Zeichen von Exzellenz und Wachstum](#)

³⁷ Council of the European Union, Brussels 2015, P.8. [Rat der EU: Entwurf von Schlussfolgerungen des Rates zur Förderung der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter im Europäischen Forschungsraum](#)

- the embedding of the gender dimension in research content and teaching³⁸

With the introduction of "impact-oriented budgeting 2013", national equality targets were developed by the departments responsible for the first time. The gender or equality objective of the then BMWFW was defined as impact objective 4 "A balanced gender ratio in management positions". This pursues several objectives:

- the equal status of women with regard to participation in higher education institution development
- greater diversity in decision-making bodies
- the dismantling of the "glass ceiling" (the proportion of women in leading positions at universities, as well as among academic/artistic staff and students, should be reflected in the quota)

The then Federal Ministry of Education (BMB) also laid down the "improvement of opportunity and gender justice in the education system (equality goal)" in impact goal 2.³⁹

4.2.2 Steering Instruments for Equality (at universities)

The Austrian University Development Plan (gö UEP) 2019-2024 is a BMBWF strategic planning document, which lists the goals that have priority in the further development of the universities. Of particular importance in connection with the strengthening of gender competence is system goal 8 of the Austrian National Development Plan for Public Universities: "Social responsibility of the universities: Gender Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion, Responsible Science, Sustainability and Digital Transformation".⁴⁰

Another BMBWF steering instrument is the performance agreements with the universities. For the performance agreement period 2016-2018, the then BMWFW set the following strategic goals for the universities in the areas of "Gender Equality and Diversity" to promote a comprehensive understanding of gender equality

- a balanced gender ratio in all areas, hierarchical levels and decision-making bodies
- a reduction in the gender pay gap to 0
- the dismantling of structural barriers
- the integration of the gender dimension in research content and research-guided teaching

³⁸ BMWFW 2016, p. 29. [ERA-Portal Website – Austrian ERA Roadmap](#)

³⁹ Federal Chancellery 2018. [Wirkungsorientierte Verwaltung – Aktuelle Wirkungsziele](#)

⁴⁰ BMBWF 2017. [Der gesamtösterreichische Universitätsentwicklungsplan 2019-2024](#)

- legal obligations for equality will not only be fulfilled but also realised within the structures and work processes (cultural change)
- medium-term development of an active diversity management

For the performance agreement period 2019-2021, these guidelines were adapted and new priorities towards a diversity-oriented equality policy were set. In addition to the three gender equality objectives, which were newly prioritised and listed (cultural change and integration of the gender dimension in research and research-led teaching were mentioned to the representative office), there are also guidelines for a diversity-based gender equality policy: In order to promote a diversity-based gender equality policy that includes all diversity characteristics, measures to promote social awareness of a diversity-based and non-discriminatory culture at the university must be implemented. In addition, relevant strategies and higher education policy debates on diversity must be taken into account.

The following objectives apply here:

- the implementation of the university equality plan and monitoring of progress
- the further development of diversity management: the identification of relevant target groups and measures, and the monitoring of progress

4.3 Gender Competence as a Double Pillar of the Tripartite Equality Policy

All these (inter)national agreements, strategy papers and steering instruments result in a tripartite equality policy which the BMBWF is pursuing:

- Fix the numbers - creating balanced gender relations in all areas and at all hierarchical levels (vertical and horizontal segregation)
- Fix the institution – the sustainable anchoring of the gender dimension in the structures, processes and policies of science and research – the keyword being cultural change
- Fix the knowledge - anchoring the gender dimension in research and research-led teaching

This tripartite approach is currently in operation and whilst at individual universities the approach “Fix the numbers” has been achieved to a high degree, it has not yet produced the desired effects in the cultural change towards more gender equality. This makes the recommendations developed by the working party for the strengthening of gender

competence all the more important, since they can both accelerate and strengthen cultural change at university institutions.

4.3.1 Fix the Numbers - Representation

With regard to increasing the proportion of women in management positions and decision-making bodies, significant progress has been made in the field of equality at Austrian universities, particularly in the last decade. For example, Austria's first female rector of a public university only took office in October 2007. In the meantime (cut-off date 31.12.2016) 8 out of 22 public universities are headed by a female rector.

Since the 14th of January 2015, at least 50 percent of the members of each university's collegial body and committee must be women. This is stipulated in the individual regulations of the respective collegial bodies and committees. The rectorates of the public universities are now on average 48 percent female. It is useful to compare this to the equivalent in companies - the board of directors or management board: here the average proportion of women in the management boards of the 200 companies with the highest turnover in Austria in 2017 was 7.2 percent.⁴¹ The proportion of women in the rectorates of public universities is therefore almost seven times higher and the visibility of women has become the rule rather than the exception.

In contrast, there is still a leaky pipeline among the academic staff at the universities. Women are still clearly underrepresented among professors and in those career positions which are particularly sought-after by young academics: in 2016, the proportion of female professors was 22.6 percent and the proportion of women in career positions 33.8 percent (both cut-off dates 31 December 2015).⁴²

A similar picture emerges at the universities of applied sciences: In the academic year 2015/16, 34.4 percent of the entire teaching staff were female, with the proportion of female course leaders being slightly lower at 33.7 percent. Among other teaching assistants at the universities of applied sciences, the proportion of women was 41.9 per cent, whereby this was particularly due to the high proportion of women (63.7 per cent) in the personnel category Academic Services for Students (Academic Support).⁴³ At private universities, the proportion

⁴¹ Chamber of Labour Vienna 2017, P.16. [AK Wien - Frauen.Management.Report.2017](#)

⁴² unidata 2017. [Personal Universitäten nach Verwendung](#)

⁴³ unidata 2017. [Personal Fachhochschul-Studiengängen nach Verwendung](#)

of women in teaching and research was 42.5 percent (full-time equivalents) in the 2015/16 academic year.⁴⁴

4.3.2 Fix the Institution - Cultural Change

Gender competence is an important pillar with regard to cultural change at universities. The more individuals act in a gender-competent manner and the more applied gender competence is anchored in the structures, the higher the chances of a successful, long-term cultural change. This is supported by a conscious attitude to ensuring that higher education institutions are gender equitable. The universities are faced with the task of doing justice to a greater diversity of people with their diverse life-realities. This requires orientation towards gender equality in the thinking, knowledge and actions of all university players, so that equality and equal rights no longer have to be debated and legitimised but are a matter of fact. This means raising awareness, and the willingness to establish new forms of cooperation in higher education organisations.⁴⁵

The then BMWFW took up the cultural change towards equality in science and research begun by the European Union (ERA Roadmap) and initiated a discussion at national level. Consequently, in 2014 a study was commissioned on the topic of "Cultural change for a gender-equitable science and research landscape in 2025". The aim of this study was to present visions of a deliberate cultural change towards gender equality in Austria's science and research landscape. It focused on considerations as to how existing measures, structures and instruments could be strengthened in order to achieve national and European equality goals.

The result was the formulation of short-, medium- and long-term recommendations for action which were addressed to several players. These recommendations included:

- the further development of the existing BMBWF policy mix
- making existing measures more binding
- the further development from a purely female focus to the consistent consideration of further diversity characteristics
- the creation of a model for gender- and diversity-appropriate science and research in Austria with the aim of achieving a new understanding of science
- the introduction of a gender-sensitive management structure
- the development of new career models or alternative scientific careers to traditional academic careers

⁴⁴ unidata 2017. [Personal Privatuniversitäten](#)

⁴⁵ Wroblewski and Buchinger 2014; BMWFW 2017.

- the consistent qualitative and quantitative development of gender monitoring

In September 2014, the 8th European Conference "Gender Equality in Higher Education" took place in Vienna. More than 380 scientists from 36 countries participated in this expert conference in order to move closer to the long-term goal of a common European strategy for gender equality. In the course of the conference, national advisory board scientific policy recommendations were developed.⁴⁶ These also make an important contribution to cultural change.

4.3.3 Fix the Knowledge - Anchoring and Disseminating Knowledge

With "Fix the knowledge", gender competence is also part of a further pillar in the tripartite equality approach, because the BMBWF is currently working on an extension to "Fix the knowledge", and, consequently, to the concept of knowledge. This is being done on the basis of the findings of the Cultural Change Study by the Institute for Advanced Studies and on the basis of the follow-up study by Technopolis on the creation of a cross-sectional gender equality model. This area has so far concentrated on implementing the gender dimension in research and research-led teaching. Both areas are also addressed by the recommendations in this report. However, gender-competent knowledge does not end with research and teaching but is relevant to all university members. For this reason, correlating recommendations have been developed to strengthen gender knowledge in general, not only in the academic, but also in management and administrative fields.

Gender competence is thus a central factor in the BMBWF's equality policy in two respects. The inclusion of the gender dimension in research increases its excellence and can make a decisive contribution to solving social challenges. The BMBWF is concerned with making the social and economic contribution of gender-specific issues in research and research-led teaching visible. Corresponding guidelines are anchored in central BMBWF steering instruments and strategic national and European documents (the Austrian National Development Plan for Public Universities, Performance Agreements, Intellectual Capital Report for the universities, Horizon 2020, ERA Roadmap).

One measure to make this visible are the Gabriele-Possanner-Awards. Every two years, the BMBWF awards the Gabriele Possanner State Prize as well as two sponsorship prizes for academic achievements that contribute to gender research in Austria. The State Prize is

⁴⁶ National Advisory Board 2014. [Wissenschaftspolitische Empfehlungen des nationalen Beirats zur 8th European Conference on Gender Equality in Higher Education](#)

endowed with € 10,000, and the two sponsorship prizes have been endowed with € 12,000 each since 2017. Since 2013, the lifetime achievement award has also been awarded.

A further objective of the BMBWF is to link science and practice more closely in order to use the scientific findings of gender-specific university research for the development of effective gender equality and diversity measures at universities in order to build up or further strengthen gender competence. A transfer of knowledge from which all university members will benefit in the future.

5 The Legal Basis for Equality

To round off, the last chapter provides an overview of the legal basis for equality at universities (with the exception of the university colleges of teacher education).

5.1 Universities

All provisions on equal opportunities relevant to the universities can be found in the Universities Act 2002 (UG). This Act created the legal prerequisites for numerous equal opportunities institutions as well as the advancement of women and equal opportunities plans.

The Universities Act contains a set of legal protection instruments (Working Party for Equal Treatment Issues, Arbitration Commission) and instruments for the advancement of women aimed at reducing structurally induced inequalities, along with legal organisational frameworks for the continuation of established institutions, such as the Coordination Offices for Women's and Gender Studies, or the Children's Offices. An important equality instrument is the obligation of the autonomous university to issue a plan for the advancement of women and an equality plan.

In the Universities Act, the equality between women and men and the compatibility of studies or work with care obligations for children and relatives in need of care are anchored as guiding principles in § 2 sub-section 9, 13. The equality of women and men and the advancement of women are defined as tasks in § 3 sub-section 9. Similarly, under § 19 paragraph 2 sub-section 6, the statutes of each university stipulate that a plan for the advancement of women and the establishment of an organisational unit to coordinate gender equality responsibilities must be made. The advancement of women and gender studies (§ 19 paragraph 2 sub-section 7). § 41 of the Universities Act regulates the advancement of women, § 42 the rights and duties of the Working Group for Equal Treatment Issues, § 43 the Arbitration Commission, and § 44 the application of the Federal Equal Treatment Act (B-GlBG).

Since January 14, 2015 at least 50 percent of the members of each university collegial body and committee must be women. This is provided for in the individual provisions of the respective collegial bodies and committees. This gender-equitable composition of collegial bodies and committees is based on § 11 paragraph 2 sub-section 3 of the B-GlBG, which provides for the mandatory application of a specific quota of women. Since the amendment of

the B-GIBG by the Federal Act, Federal Law Gazette I No. 140/2011, the women's quota must be 50 per cent.

§ 21 paragraph 13 of the Universities Act regulates the annual reporting obligations of university councils. This annual report shall include, among other things, a report on measures taken in connection with the gender-equitable composition of the university collegial bodies and, if applicable, a justification for not achieving the 50 percent women's quota.

5.2 Universities of Applied Sciences and Private Universities

Gender equality and the advancement of women, which are anchored in the University Act as guiding principles and duties of a university, are a socio-political mandate for all universities. Equality and the advancement of women are therefore essential goals for all universities and thus also for tenders under private law. Accordingly, the Quality Assurance Framework Act (Federal Law Gazette I No. 74/2011) also included gender equality and the advancement of women in the provisions for universities of applied sciences and private universities, in order to initiate a gender-equitable reform process in these areas of higher education too. The objectives, mission statements and activities of the individual private universities with regard to gender equality and the advancement of women must be anchored in their statutes. The statutes must be published in an appropriate form. This should create transparency and draw attention to the diverse activities of private universities.

While for public universities the highest governing bodies and other bodies must fulfil a 50% quota, which is explicitly anchored in the Universities Act, in the universities of applied sciences and private universities "a balanced ratio of women and men must be striven for". (§ 4 paragraph 5 PUG, § 2 paragraph 5 FHStG). Furthermore, universities of applied sciences that are organised as legal entities under private law, must observe the provisions of the Equal Treatment Act (Gleichbehandlungsgesetz - GIBG) as amended. The same applies to private universities.

The Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQA) - a public-law corporation - has the statutory task of accrediting universities of applied sciences and private universities and/or their courses of study on the basis of a formal and transparent quality inspection procedure based on defined criteria and standards. Such accreditation leads to state recognition of the university and/or the courses of study.

5.3 University Colleges of Teacher Education

The Higher Education Act 2005 HG contains guiding principles under § 9. These are aimed at strengthening social competence (including the ability to impart social, moral-ethical and religious values as well as gender and diversity competence) in paragraph 6 sub-section 8, and at equal treatment and equality of women and men in sub-section 12. § 9 paragraph 8 of the Higher Education Act also states: "In fulfilling their duties, university colleges of teacher education shall apply the strategy of gender mainstreaming and take into account the results in the field of gender studies and gender-sensitive didactics.

In the Higher Education Act 2017, the Appendix to § 74a paragraph 1 sub-section 4 contains

"Framework requirements for the assessment of curricula by the Quality Assurance Council for Teacher Education: The Quality Assurance Council [...] orients itself [...] within the framework of the curricula assessment procedures to the curricula of teacher education courses to the following framework requirements for course organisation: The curricula of Bachelor's and Master's courses for the teaching profession must be designed to be competence-oriented. They have to take into account the development of professionally-oriented competencies, such as general and specific pedagogical competencies, subject-related and didactic, inclusive, intercultural, interreligious and social competencies, diversity and gender competencies and professional understanding, and to promote a comprehensive understanding of the educational remit".

Plans for the advancement of women and equal opportunities are also provided for in the HG as part of the statutes, cf. § 31a.(1). The two plans serve the implementation of the constitutional provisions on actual gender equality pursuant to Article 7.2 and 7.3 of the Federal Constitution Act and the Federal Act on Equal Treatment in the Federal Area - B-GIBG, Federal Law Gazette No. 100/1993, with regard to the Federal Act's provisions on Equality and Equal Treatment of Women and Men. In addition to the plan for the advancement of women pursuant to §11a of the B-GIBG, a separate equality plan regulates the areas of compatibility (§ 2 sub-section 13) of the Universities Act 2002 - UG, Federal Law Gazette I no. 120/2002) and anti-discrimination (second main section of Part I of the B-GIBG) in particular.

Further legal bases relevant to university colleges of teacher education with regard to equality/gender competence:

- Federal School Supervision Act/School Teaching Act Federal Law Gazette I No. 28/2011 and Federal Law Gazette I No. 29/2011 of 20 May 2011

- Contractual Employee Act 1948, Service law amendment 2013 – Educational service, BGBl. I No 211/2013, Annex 2 to §38 paragraph 2 (Development of Diversity and Gender in the Course of Teacher Education)
- existing curriculum ordinances and the teaching principle of "education for equality" (basic decree GZ 15.510/60-Präs.3/95 of 15 November 1995)

5.4 Council of Ministers Decisions on Gender Mainstreaming

- **Council of Ministers Decision of July 11th 2000** on the establishment of the Interministerial Working Party on Gender Mainstreaming (IMAG GM)
- **Council of Ministers Decision of May 2nd 2001** on the use of gender-inclusive language in all departments
- **Council of Ministers Decision of April 3rd 2002** establishing a work programme for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the coming years
- **Council of Ministers Decision of March 9th 2004** on promoting the application of gender mainstreaming, in particular the formulation of meta-goals, a voluntary commitment to set up gender mainstreaming working parties and the implementation of gender mainstreaming projects in all ministries
- **Council of Ministers Decision of March 5th 2008** on the application of guidelines for gender mainstreaming in legislation and for gender budgeting to integrate gender mainstreaming into routine administrative procedures
- **Council of Ministers Decision of September 6th 2011** on the sustainable implementation of gender mainstreaming in five key areas: structural anchoring; gender-specific data collection; legal affairs; promotion, procurement; training and information

List of Abbreviations

AG – working party

ARGE GLUNA – Working group for Equal Treatment and Gender Equality at Austrian Universities

AQA – Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria

BIG – Federal real estate company

BMB – Federal Ministry of Education

BKA – Federal Chancellery

BMBWF – Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Research

BMWFV – Federal Ministry for Science, Research and Economy

FHK – Association of all Austrian Universities of Applied Sciences

FHStG – University of Applied Sciences Studies Act

GEECCO – Gender Equality in Engineering through Communication and Commitment

GIBG – Equal Treatment Act

HG – Higher Education Act

HSG – Students' Union Act

HSK – Austrian Convention of Higher Education Institutions

ISTA – Institute of Science and Technology Austria

NaGeh – my NAME, my GENDER, my HIGHER EDUCATION

ÖH – Austrian Nation Union of Students

ÖPUK – Austrian Private Universities Association

PUG – Private Universities Act

QSR – Quality Assurance Council for Teachers and Teacher Education

RÖPH – Rectors' Conference of Austrian University Colleges of Teacher Education

SwafS – Science with and for Society

UG – Universities Act

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNIKO – Universities Austria

WHO – World Health Organization

Glossary

Advancement of women: The advancement of women aims to increase the opportunities of women in specific areas where they are still underrepresented or discriminated against, compared to men. Such discrimination based on gender constitutes unjustified unequal treatment or disadvantages. Therefore, temporary preferential treatment based on sex may be given (affirmative action). This is only permissible if it serves the goal of achieving factual gender equality. Instruments for the advancement of women are, for example, quota regulations, targeted further education offers, scholarships for women, plans for the advancement of women, and measures to improve the compatibility of family and career. Concrete guidelines for the federal government can be found, for example, in the Federal Equal Treatment Act and in the Federal Ministry's plans for the advancement of women.

Diversity: Diversity means "difference" and refers to the heterogeneity or diversity of a group. The term is used with the view to the potential it holds and focuses on responsible behaviour and non-discrimination in the areas of gender, age, religion, world view, ethnicity or sexual orientation. Mindful handling of diversity is the starting point for equal opportunities.

Gender: Gender refers to social gender. This results from the attribution of gender-specific abilities and expectations to people, regardless of their gender identity. Social gender is therefore based on social dynamics and is changeable and variable within and between cultures and accordingly is not just limited to two options. It defines roles, duties, constraints, opportunities and privileges.

Gender competence: Gender competence comprises the fundamental recognition of the relevance of gender attributions in one's own work and sphere of influence (knowledge). This recognition is connected with the desire (willingness) and ability to deal with these issues in everyday work and study - if necessary, supported by gender experts and with knowledge from gender theories - and to take action based on this knowledge (skills). Recognition, discussion and action are subject to a continuous process of reflection (reflection).

Gender equality: Gender equality measures aim to create a level playing field and equal conditions for all populations. An instrument for equality is, for example, gender mainstreaming.

Gender identity: Gender identity is to which gender a person feels they belong. This does not always have to coincide with the physical characteristics that are innate and the gender assigned at birth.

Further information, etc.:

Wikipedia - Gender identity

Website gender neutral - non-binary gender identities

Gender mainstreaming: Gender mainstreaming consists of the (re-)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of decision-making processes, with the aim of ensuring that the actors involved in policy-making take the perspective of equality in all areas and at all levels as self-evident. Factors that favour inequalities (e.g. gender, ethnicity, religion, world view, age, sexual orientation, disability, etc.) must therefore be taken into account in all policies and measures at all levels and at all stages.

Intersectionality: The term intersectionality is derived from the term intersection. Intersectionality is the overlapping or interaction of several forms of discrimination (e.g. gender, social milieu, origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, ...) in a person. The intersectional approach takes into account, examines and shows the effects of these overlaps on power, domination and normative relationships.

For further information, etc.:

Website Gender Planet: Intersectionality

Portal Intersectionality: Intersectionality - an introduction

Non-binary: The word "binarity" (lat. two) stands for the dual-system of the sexes, female and male, which is widespread in our society. It strongly influences the way of thinking and is reflected very strongly in all areas of society. Non-binary gender identities are those that do not perceive themselves as either male or female but locate their gender identity outside of this system. Non-binary is not to be confused with intersexuality, which refers to the unclear physical identification to the male or female sex. Intersex people can live as men, women or non-binary people.

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