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European Commission

Date

20/10/2022

Subject:

Gender Equality Odisee

Dear European Commission,

Gender equality is a fundamental value of the European Union and is one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As part of the Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025, the European Commission is committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation. This is in addition to the existing EU regulatory framework on gender equality, which applies to the entire labour market, including the research sector.

Due to the specificities of the research and innovation sector, targeted action is needed to bridge persistent gender gaps. There are still many structural barriers to gender equality in research and innovation. Odisee, the co-university college, its Executive Committee and its Governing Body explicitly recognize the importance that the European Union attaches to gender equality in research and innovation. Odisee is committed to an inclusive working environment in which all employees, regardless of their origin, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, etc., have the same opportunities and can develop as much as possible.

We recognize that gender equality improves the quality and impact of research and innovation. We therefore want to attract and retain talent of various genders and ensure that everyone can maximize their potential.

Below we provide an overview of the measures, policies and activities in the field of diversity and inclusion (incl. gender equality) of Odisee that we have already developed and implement. We are committed to perpetuating it and building on it with new, planned actions. We are confident that the existing and new actions will contribute to more diversity and inclusion (including gender equality) in research and innovation, and in Odisee in general. This plan is part of Odisee's broader diversity policy.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of Odisee.

1 What is a Gender Equality Plan (GEP)?

1.1 Definition and purpose

With the introduction of Horizon Europe, the European Commission has made a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) a basic requirement for participation to Horizon Europe. GEP is defined as a set of commitments and actions to promote gender equality in the organization through a process of structural change.

With this Gender Equality plan, Odisee aims at a sustainable transformation of organizational processes, cultures and structures in the field of research and innovation (R&I) in order to promote a diverse and inclusive education and research environment.

1.2 Public document

The research and innovation gender equality plan is a public document published on the Odisee website.

2 Allocation of resources, time, positions

Odisee guarantees the availability of resources and staff to further develop and implement the actions within the framework of the policy on (gender) diversity and inclusion.

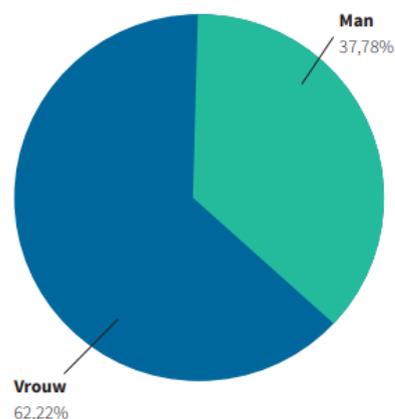
This policy is shaped by the Human Resources Department, the colleagues of Student and Talent and the Educational Development and Quality Assurance Service (DOK). In addition, in the context of inclusion as a policy focus, a specific policy officer will be made available for this theme.

3 Data collection and monitoring

Every year, Odisee draws up its annual report in line with the Flemish regulations described in the [“Besluit van de Vlaamse regering houdende vastlegging van de voorschriften voor het opstellen van het jaarverslag van de hogescholen in de Vlaamse Gemeenschap”](#).

In the 'Personnel' section, we present the number and proportion of women and men within the Administrative and Technical Staff (ATP) and the Teaching Staff (OP). Furthermore, a picture of the distribution at the level of auxiliary educational staff, visiting professors and patrimonial staff (white-collar workers and blue-collar workers) is also shown.

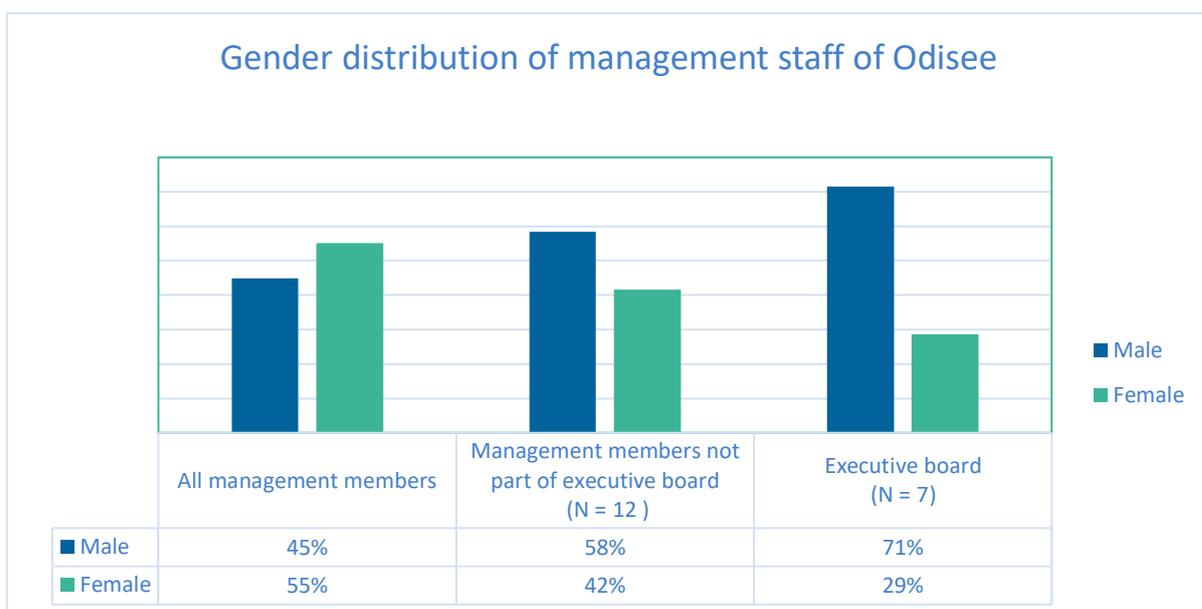
	Man	Vrouw	Totaal
Administratief en technisch personeel (ATP)	80	180	260
Hulpvoedend personeel (HOP)	1	2	3
Onderwijzend personeel (OP)	272	414	686
Gastprofessoren (GP) (WU en VZW)	93	134	227
Patrimoniumpersoneel bedienden (VZW)	70	130	200
Patrimoniumpersoneel arbeiders (VZW)	22	26	48
	538	886	1.424
	37,78%	62,22%	100%



Data from the 2021 annual report.

As we also mention in section 5.2 *Gender Equality in Leadership and Decision Making* on page 7, Odisee aims to be an inclusive and diverse institution, where employees have equal access to, and balanced participation in leadership and other decision-making roles.

The co-university strives for diverse-sensitive and inclusive leadership, with a balanced gender distribution. The report below, compiled on the basis of the current composition of managers within our current workforce, also confirms this.



This data is collected annually as part of a broader monitoring of the diversity characteristics of the workforce. We keep track of them both at the level of Odisee and at the level of the entities. They are used as a basis to formulate and monitor operational goals and actions in relation to inclusion, both at institutional and entity level.

We annually evaluate the needs and progress regarding the implementation and execution of the Gender Equality Plan and adjust this plan where necessary based on data collection and results.

4 Professionalisation and capacity building

There is active communication about the diversity and inclusion policy to all Odisee employees.

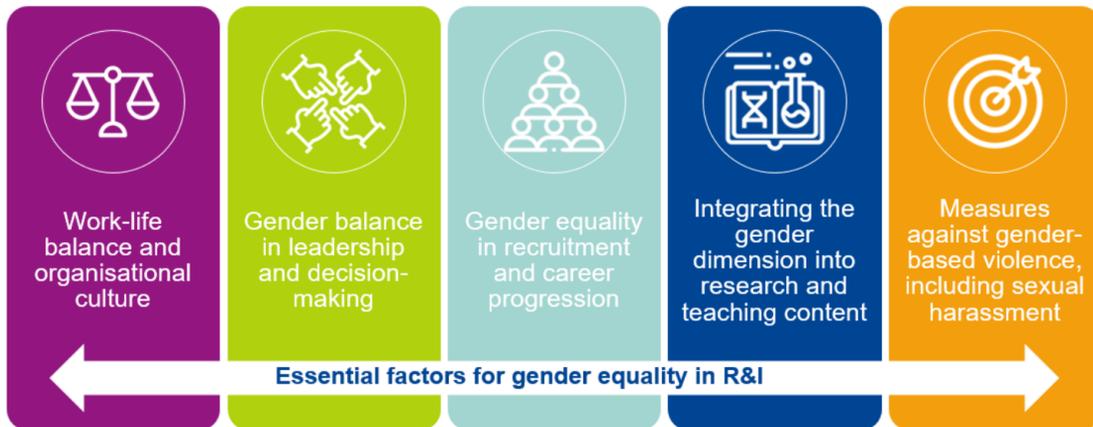
Odisee offers training opportunities to raise awareness of diversity and inclusion, of which gender equality is a part, among employees, managers and decision-makers.

For example, the management of Odisee organized a live session on inclusion for the entire workforce, followed by a workshop on the importance of inclusive communication by Sana Sellami (Inclusion & Diversity Specialist) and on how communication can (unconsciously) exclude people.

We are committed to inclusive recruitment of teachers and staff and to create an inclusive workplace. Therefore, three colleagues from the HR department are following professional training on Inclusive recruitment, Inclusion in executive positions, and Active tackling discrimination, ableism and racism. Based on this training, we plan to adapt our inclusive personnel policy in a well-founded way.

The HR employee with focus on Welfare will also focus on supporting colleagues with extra needs, so that they experience fewer barriers in carrying out their job.

5 Essential elements of a Gender Equality Plan ¹



Source: How to prepare a successful proposal in Horizon Europe: Horizontal Aspects, presentation by Pepin, A., European Commission, 21 April 2021, Icons - © Flaticon

5.1 Work-life balance and organizational culture

In addition to leave schemes, we also offer employees the option of working contractually less for a limited period of time or indefinitely. This is always done in consultation with the manager and also gives employees who are not eligible for a leave system the opportunity to free up time for family, training, etc.

We support all employees with a broad, preventive well-being policy in which our Odisee values and our vision of autonomy-supporting leadership are central.

Based on trust, we are committed to hybrid working, in which employees can alternate between working on campus and working from home (or another chosen location). Within this framework of hybrid working, we give our employees autonomy and ownership to plan their work themselves and fill in their job in an authentic way.

5.2 Gender equality in leadership and decision-making

Odisee strives to be an inclusive and diverse-sensitive institution, where employees have equal access to, and balanced participation in, leadership and other decision-making roles.

The co-university aims to pursue a diverse -sensitive and inclusive leadership. Woman are already well represented in our management positions.

We use decision-making methods such as consent decision-making, which aim to gather diverse opinions and to make the strongest possible use of collective wisdom. Four colleagues followed external training on this topic, and they have since disseminated the acquired expertise to a

¹ Source: How to prepare a successful proposal in Horizon Europe: Horizontal Aspects, presentation by Pepin, A., European Commission, 21 April 2021, Icons - © Flaticon

large number of additional colleagues. The aforementioned methodologies are also frequently used in fora (largely) consisting of board members.

We base further operational goals with regard to inclusion, and prioritization thereof, on research findings, quantitative and qualitative data. We monitor our strategy at least on the basis of the data mentioned above.

5.3 Gender equality in recruitment and career development

Odisee adheres to the legislation in the field of equal treatment and pay for female and male employers.

We offer flexible and family-friendly working conditions and arrangements promoting work-life balance for both women and men. We do this through an extensive package of holidays (10 weeks per year), public holidays (at least 11 days per year), an extensive range of leave systems and a policy on hybrid working.

We ensure transparent and inclusive recruitment processes where we nurture every talent and value the diversity of employees. We select candidates based on their competencies, regardless of age, cultural background, gender or disability.

We are committed to inclusive recruitment of teachers and staff and to an inclusive workplace. As mentioned above, three colleagues from the HR department followed training in order to be able to tackle this policy in an even more substantiated way.

We are developing a 'profile of the Odisee employee', which includes elements related to inclusion. We align this profile with the Odisee-wide core values. Once ready, we will use this in recruitment and selection. Simultaneously, our HR staff is developing a checklist to support managers in recruitment in line with this profile.

In the revision of the Career Management Regulations, we explicitly state that evaluations and career movements are always based on talent and competencies and are therefore independent of age, gender, cultural background or disability. In this way, we explicitly anticipate an inclusive career policy aimed at gender equality.

5.4 Gender mainstreaming in research and education

We conduct our own research on gender, diversity and inclusion in general.

We ensure that, if individuals are research participants in a project, gender, where relevant, is included as a variable to be studied.

We conduct our own research into gender and inclusion, for example into gender equality on management boards, into methods to strengthen the teacher to practice democratic skills in a super-diverse classroom.

5.5 Measures against gender-based violence/discrimination, including sexual harassment

Odisee offers internal and external support that employees can use in case of a need for psychosocial support, or in case of gender-based violence/discrimination, including sexual harassment or transgressive behaviour. The support-lines are widely publicized. The confidential counsellors, but also the psychosocial prevention advisers, among others, are put forward as possible support lines. Complaints are handled in a safe manner.