

Annex No. 1 to the Ordinance No. 50/XVI R/2022  
of the Rector of Wrocław Medical University  
of 21 March 2022

# Gender Equality Plan

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for Wrocław Medical University for  
the years 2022 - 2024



**UNIwersYTET MEDYCZNY**  
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## Introduction

In November 2020, by a decision of the Rector, the Committee on Unequal Treatment Counteraction and the Rector's Plenipotentiaries for Equal Treatment were established - the foundations for the institutional system being created at the University to counteract all forms of unequal treatment among employees and students. Another element of this system is the Team for Equal Treatment, established in October 2021, which was tasked, among other things, with conducting an analysis of the University's current situation with regard to equality. The result of the team's work is the Gender Equality Plan for Wrocław Medical University for the years 2022-2024.

The previously conducted assessment showed that the University still faces many challenges on the path to building a friendly, safe, and prejudice-free working and learning environment. Some members of our community face discrimination, hurtful stereotypes, and institutional barriers that prevent them from fully realising their potential. This is detrimental to both these individuals and the entire University.

This document is, therefore, a result of earlier equality-related actions, a response to the needs signalled by the community, and the fulfillment of the task set for all universities and scientific institutions in Poland by the European Commission.

The overarching goal of the Plan and the actions to be taken based on it is to promote equality and diversity within the community of Wrocław Medical University. We believe that its implementation will contribute to a significant qualitative change at the University because it encompasses issues related to, among other things, work-life balance, gender balance in decision-making bodies, and the inclusion of the gender dimension in scientific research. At the same time, it should be emphasised from the outset that the intention of the planned actions is not to diminish the importance of the existing substantive criteria. They continue to be crucial due to the University's scientific and educational activities, which must meet the highest standards.

This document shall not constitute an incidental and one-off event, but will become a permanent part of the set of internal legal acts in force at the University, integrating all anti-discrimination and anti-violence mechanisms hitherto operating in a dispersed manner. Its implementation has been planned for three years, but it will be evaluated and monitored on an ongoing basis after each year in force. We believe that as a result, it will become a tool for long-term institutional change at Wrocław Medical University, bringing us closer to the idea of an open and innovative university that draws its potential from the diversity of its male and female members.

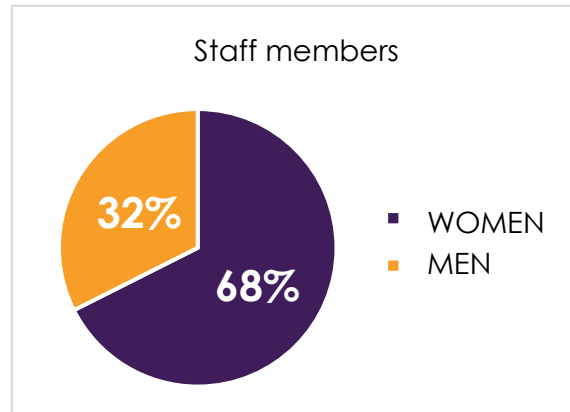


# DIAGNOSIS

## Structure

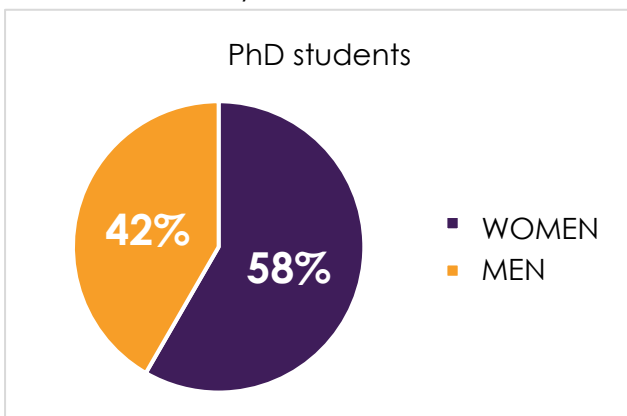
The preparation of the Gender Equality Plan for Wroclaw Medical University was preceded by a thorough analysis of the structure of the University's community in terms of the proportion of women and men in specific groups, which will be described below.

The staff analysis was based on data from September 2021 and reflects the state of the structure at the specified time. Some of the data were averaged for the purpose of the following diagnosis, i.e., data concerning the total number of students come from the years 2017-2020, while data regarding PhD students encompass the period from 2018 to 2021. This manner of presenting data enables us to observe that we are dealing with certain trends, rather than just an incidental change in a particular group.

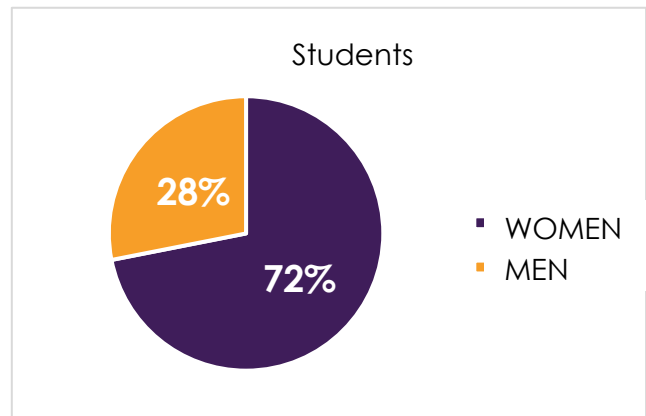


**Chart 1. Proportion of female and male staff members**

From a global perspective, women dominate the University numerically - both among the staff members and students. However, a detailed analysis of individual positions and functions shows that the numerical dominance of one gender is not proportionately reflected in every area.



**Chart 2. Proportion of female and male PhD students**



**Chart 3. Proportion of female and male students**

## University Authorities

During the 2020 - 2024 term, the position of Rector of the Wroclaw Medical University is held by a man, while there are two women among the five Vice-Rectors. Never before in the history of the University has a woman been elected to serve as a Rector.



**Table 1. Comparison of the number of women and men in key managerial positions**

|                     | total number | number of men | number of women | % share of women | % share of men |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Rector</b>       | 1            | 1             | 0               | 0%               | 100%           |
| <b>Vice-Rectors</b> | 5            | 3             | 2               | 40%              | 60%            |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>       | 6            | 4             | 2               | <b>33%</b>       | <b>67%</b>     |

There are four faculties in the University's current structure and the position of Dean is held by men at three of them. However, at the lower level of faculty authority, the function of Vice-Dean is held by seven women and three men. The total number of managerial positions at both higher and lower levels in the faculty authorities indicates a predominance of women, which is a result of the number of women holding the position of Vice-Dean.

**Table 2. Comparison of the number of women and men in managerial positions at a faculty level**

|                  | total number | number of men | number of women | % share of women | % share of men |
|------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Deans</b>     | 4            | 3             | 1               | 25%              | 75%            |
| <b>Vice-Dean</b> | 10           | 3             | 7               | 70%              | 30%            |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>    | 14           | 6             | 8               | <b>57%</b>       | <b>43%</b>     |

According to the Statute of the University, the collegiate bodies of the University are the University Council, Senate, and Discipline Councils. Below, the participation of women and men in each of these bodies is presented. However, it should be noted that membership in these respective bodies is regulated by specific provisions of the Statute and so:

- Art. 44 of the Statute specifies that members of the University Council are appointed and dismissed by the Senate through a secret ballot, by an absolute majority of votes with the presence of at least half of the statutory composition of the Senate;
- the rules for elections to the Senate are governed by Annex No. 7 to the Statute and, in accordance with Art. 53, the right to propose candidates for senators is open to every member of the University community, in one of the groups to which they belong;
- Art. 56 of the Statute specifies the conditions that an academic staff member must meet to become a member of a Discipline Council.

When analysing the compositions of the various bodies, the most significant disparity can be observed in the composition of the University Council, where there are 2 women (constituting only 22%) and 7 men (constituting 78%). In the other bodies, the participation of women hovers at a level close to 40%. An exception is the Pharmaceutical Sciences Discipline



Council, where the proportions are reversed – women dominate in this Council. When evaluating the overall compositions of all collegiate bodies, it is noticeable that there is a predominance of male representation, although the participation of women is not significantly lower. Another noteworthy fact is the structure of the division of the roles of the Chair of the Discipline Council and the Deputy Chair. In two out of three functioning Councils, women hold the position of Chair, and this applies to two Councils in which men dominate numerically (Medical Sciences and Health Sciences). Meanwhile, in the council that is the most feminised (Pharmaceutical Sciences), men hold the positions of Chair and Deputy Chair. In the other two, the role of a Deputy Chair is held by a woman in the Medical Science Discipline and a man in the Health Sciences Discipline.

**Table 3. Comparison of the number of women and men in collegiate bodies**

|   | <b>total number</b> | <b>number of men</b> | <b>number of women</b> | <b>% share of women</b> | <b>% share of men</b> |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Senate</b>                                     | 30 <sup>1</sup>     | 18                   | 11                     | 37%                     | 60%                   |
| <b>University Council</b>                         | 9                   | 7                    | 2                      | 22%                     | 78%                   |
| <b>Medical Science Discipline Council</b>         | 60                  | 36                   | 24                     | 40%                     | 60%                   |
| <b>Pharmaceutical Sciences Discipline Council</b> | 30                  | 11                   | 19                     | 63%                     | 37%                   |
| <b>Health Sciences Discipline Council</b>         | 20                  | 11                   | 9                      | 45%                     | 55%                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                      | 149                 | 83                   | 65                     | <b>44%</b>              | <b>56%</b>            |

The composition of the Committees appointed for the 2020 - 2024 term (3 Senate Committees, 4 Rectoral Committees, 5 Discipline Committees, 1 Ethics Committee), the Scholarship Committees for the 2021/2022 academic year (4 Committees) and the Bioethics Committee appointed for the 2021 - 2023 term were also analysed. In the context of Senate Committees, it should be noted that, according to § 53 of the Statute, the Senate approves the composition of a Committee through a secret ballot, taking into account the order in which each candidate receives the highest number of votes. Then, after the Senate has approved the Committee's composition, it elects its Chair and Deputy Chair by a secret ballot from among the Senate members sitting on the Committee. Senate Committees are a model example of equal gender representation, and the Ethics Committee is also close to this ratio. In the Scholarship and Disciplinary Committees, the proportions are identical, with women making up 71% of the membership. The Bioethics Committee stands out in this context, where there are 12 men and 3 women. It is also noteworthy that in the specified Committees, 15 official Chair positions were appointed, and they were held by 9 men and 6 women, respectively.

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<sup>1</sup> Single vacancy



Table 4. Comparison of the number of women and men in the composition of Committees

|                                | total number    | number of men | number of women | % share of women | % share of men |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Senate Committees</b>       | 34              | 17            | 17              | 50%              | 50%            |
| <b>Rectoral Committees</b>     | 66 <sup>2</sup> | 27            | 37              | 56%              | 40%            |
| <b>Disciplinary Committees</b> | 85              | 25            | 60              | 71%              | 29%            |
| <b>Scholarship Committees</b>  | 45              | 13            | 32              | 71%              | 29%            |
| <b>Bioethics Committee</b>     | 15              | 12            | 3               | 20%              | 80%            |
| <b>Ethics Committee</b>        | 15              | 8             | 7               | 47%              | 53%            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                   | 260             | 102           | 156             | <b>60%</b>       | <b>39%</b>     |

The structure of the top management in the administrative sector in the period under review was dominated by men in numbers, with men occupying two of the three key positions, i.e. General Director and Deputy General Director.

Table 5. Comparison of the number of women and men in key managerial positions

|                                | total number | number of men | number of women | % share of women | % share of men |
|--------------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>General Director</b>        | 1            | 1             | 0               | 0                | 100%           |
| <b>Deputy General Director</b> | 1            | 1             | 0               | 0                | 100%           |
| <b>Bursar</b>                  | 1            | 0             | 1               | 100%             | 0%             |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                  | 3            | 2             | 1               | <b>33%</b>       | <b>67%</b>     |

The next level of decision-making in the structure of Wrocław Medical University consists of the Heads of Faculty organisational units, in this case, Departments, as the superior units within the Faculty structure. In September 2021, there were 68 individuals serving as Heads of Departments, including 32 women and 36 men. One can therefore see that at this level the gender representation is close to a balanced ratio.

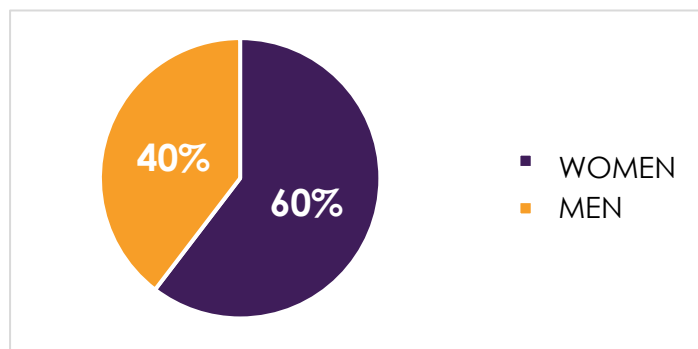
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<sup>2</sup> Two vacancies



However, in the case of middle and lower management positions in the administrative hierarchy, there is a clear feminisation of positions of Heads and Directors - numerical data related to this area have been presented in the chapter discussing non-academic staff.

## Employees - Academic Staff



**Chart 4. Proportion of women and men in the academic staff group**

The term "academic staff" refers to staff employed in research, teaching, and research-teaching positions. In the four Faculties of the University and in University-wide units, there were 1300 employees employed in the analysed period in the aforementioned groups (including 785 women and 515 men). These proportions are similar to the gender distribution structure in the overall group of employees.

When analysing the structure of the various Faculties, it can be observed that in each Faculty women make up the majority of the staff - the largest difference is seen in the University-wide units and in the Faculty of Pharmacy, and the smallest in the Faculty of Medicine, where the number of staff of both sexes is closest to an equal split.

**Table 6. Comparison of the number of women and men employed in the academic staff group by Faculty**

| FACULTY                    | total number | number of women | number of men | % share of women | % share of men |
|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| Faculty of Medicine        | 777          | 438             | 339           | 56%              | 44%            |
| Faculty of Dentistry       | 144          | 87              | 57            | 60%              | 40%            |
| Faculty of Health Sciences | 188          | 123             | 65            | 65%              | 35%            |
| Faculty of Pharmacy        | 171          | 122             | 49            | 71%              | 29%            |
| University-wide units      | 20           | 15              | 5             | 75%              | 25%            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>1300</b>  | <b>785</b>      | <b>515</b>    | <b>60%</b>       | <b>40%</b>     |

When the gender structure of the Faculty staff is compared to the gender structure of the students in the respective Faculties (as at 31 December 2020), a similar proportion is apparent - i.e. female students outnumber male students. While at the Faculty of Dentistry, the representation of both genders among employees and students is similar, at the Faculty of Pharmacy and Faculty of Health Sciences, there is a significant difference in the ratio of male and female students - male students account for 19% and 15% respectively at these Faculties. The latter two Faculties are clearly feminised - both in the employee and student groups. The



## Gender Equality Plan



proportions of female participation here are higher than the overall percentage of female participation among academic staff and students.

**Table 7. Comparison of the number of female and male students by Faculty**

| FACULTY                    | total number of students | number of women | number of men | % share of women | % share of men |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| Faculty of Medicine        | 3083                     | 1903            | 1180          | 62%              | 38%            |
| Faculty of Dentistry       | 549                      | 363             | 186           | 66%              | 34%            |
| Faculty of Pharmacy        | 1094                     | 889             | 205           | 81%              | 19%            |
| Faculty of Health Sciences | 1647                     | 1400            | 247           | 85%              | 15%            |

Despite the predominance of women among Faculty staff, only one of the four Faculties has a female Dean. At the same time, there is no male representative in the authorities of this Faculty (Faculty of Health Sciences). In contrast, there are no women in the authorities of the Faculty of Dentistry, although they account for 60% of the Faculty's staff.

**Table 8. Comparison of the number of women and men serving as Deans and Vice-Deans (by Faculty)**

| FACULTY                    | Dean |   |      |      | Vice-Dean |   |      |      |
|----------------------------|------|---|------|------|-----------|---|------|------|
|                            | F    | M | % F  | % M  | F         | M | % F  | % M  |
| Faculty of Medicine        | 0    | 1 | 0%   | 100% | 4         | 0 | 100% | 0%   |
| Faculty of Dentistry       | 0    | 1 | 0%   | 100% | 0         | 2 | 0%   | 100% |
| Faculty of Pharmacy        | 0    | 1 | 0%   | 100% | 1         | 1 | 50%  | 50%  |
| Faculty of Health Sciences | 1    | 0 | 100% | 0%   | 2         | 0 | 100% | 0%   |



## Gender Structure in the Academic Staff Group by Position

Chart 5. Comparison of the number of women and men in other positions in the academic staff group



The analysis of the gender representation by position among the group of academic staff again shows the quantitative dominance of women in positions from lecturer to assistant professor. The proportion of women is 63% in the positions of lecturer and senior lecturer, also 63% in the position of an assistant, and one percentage point less, i.e. 62%, in the position of an assistant professor. This is, therefore, an almost equal reflection of the gender proportion in the entire group of the academic staff. In contrast, a reversal of the previous trend is evident in the positions of a university professor and a professor - women are in the minority in these positions. Although there is only a few per cent difference, it is evident that in those two key positions the employment structure no longer reflects the proportions in the entire group of academic staff.

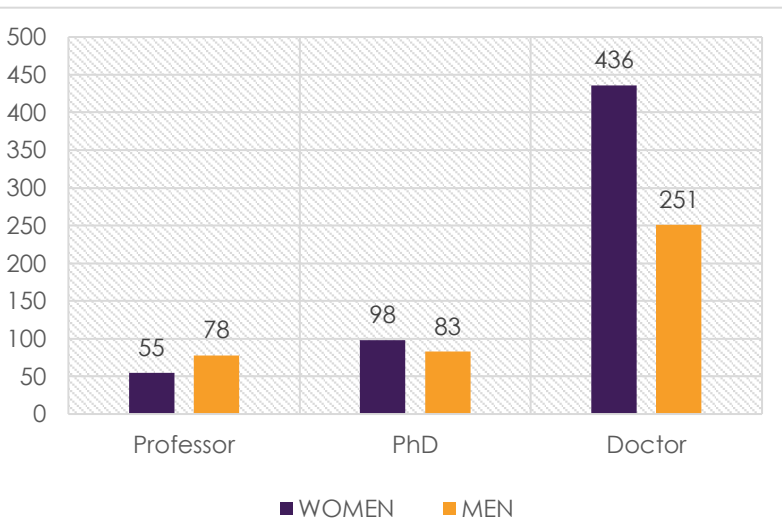


Chart 6. Comparison of women and men with academic degree

The above trend is also borne out when comparing staff by degree obtained. Among staff with a doctoral degree, women predominate (they account for 63%, which again reflects the general trend); among staff with a degree of a PhD degree the difference is not significant - women account for 54%, while among staff with a professorial degree, women already account for 41% of the total group. These results indicate that the

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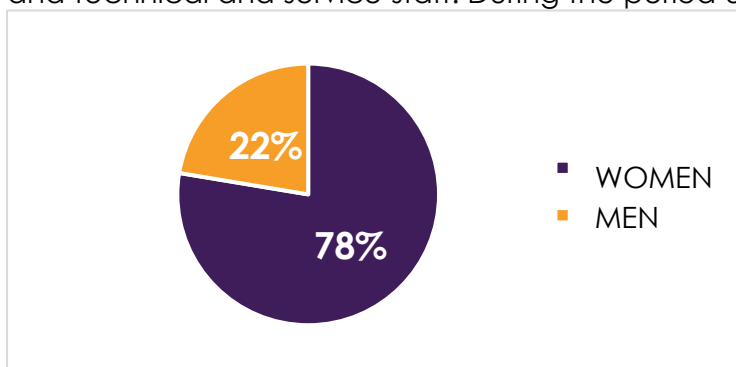


academic careers of women and men progress differently, and there is a noticeable slowdown in career development at the assistant, assistant professor, receiving postdoctoral degree, and professorial levels, resulting in women being underrepresented in the position of professor. One consequence of this situation may also be the predominance of men in the highest managerial positions.

This phenomenon requires a deeper analysis and commitment from the University to address the difficulties faced by women, to the extent that the identified obstacles and the framework of the University allow. Therefore, addressing this issue will be one of the actions planned for the near future as part of this document.

### Non-academic Staff

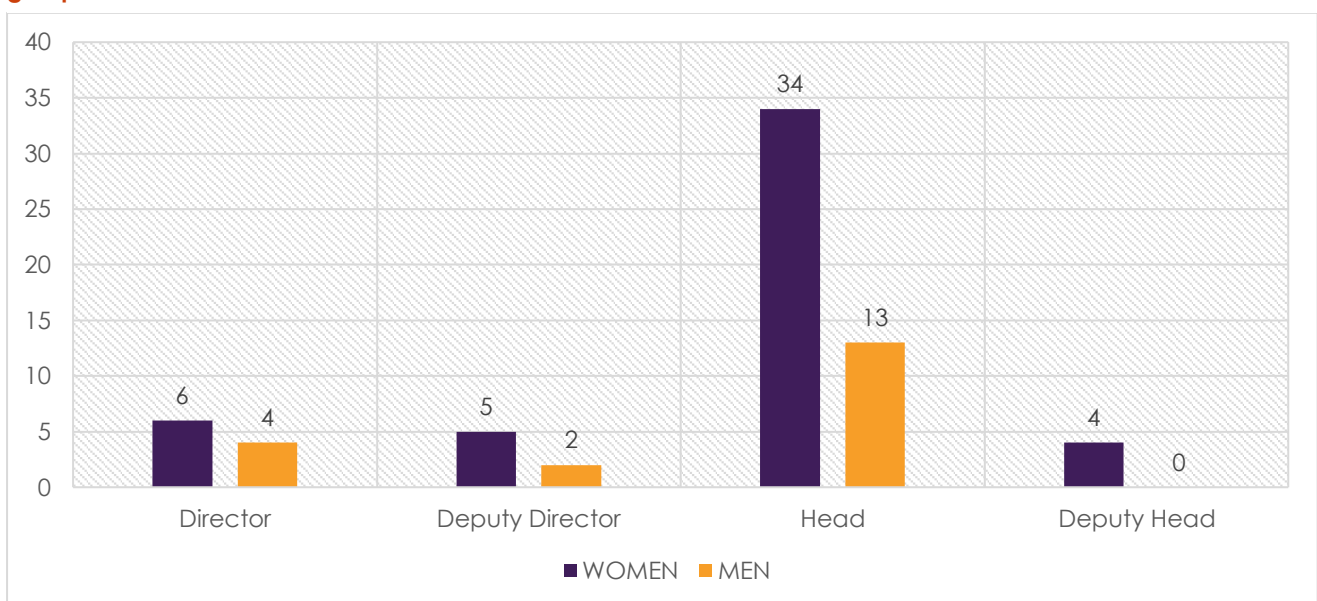
For the purposes of the diagnosis carried out, the phrase 'non-academic staff' includes staff from the following groups: administration, library staff, engineering and technical, scientific and technical and service staff. During the period under review, a total of 925 people were employed in the above groups, of whom as many as 718 were women and 207 men.



The feminisation of this employee group is also reflected in the structure of middle and lower management, with women more likely to occupy the positions of a Director or a Head. Women make up 60% of Director positions and 72% of Head positions. However, both of these figures are still lower than the percentage representation of women in the non-academic staff group, which is 78%.

**Chart 7. Proportion of women and men in the non-academic staff group**

**Chart 8. Comparison of the number of women and men in management positions in the non-academic staff group**



Such proportions in the non-academic staff group should not come as a surprise, as they reflect a trend present in all universities, including medical universities. According to data



from Statistics Poland included in the report titled "Higher Education and Its Finances in 2020,"<sup>3</sup> in universities supervised by the minister competent for health matters, women employed in the non-academic staff group accounted for 76%. However, despite this, it is worth considering potential opportunities to increase the representation of men in this group of employees and thus reduce the existing disparities.

## Project Leadership

For the purposes of the diagnosis, data on externally funded projects carried out by the staff of Wrocław Medical University between 2017 and 2021 were also analysed. Men served as project leaders in 70 cases, while women in 97. However, if we consider the budgets of individual initiatives, it will turn out that the overall budget of the 70 projects led by men is almost twice as large as the sum of the budgets of the projects led by women. Therefore, despite the frequent successful initiatives undertaken by female researchers, they lead projects with smaller budgets.

## Male and Female Students

As mentioned earlier, women also outnumber men among students (72% to 28%). This trend is also evident when considering the Faculty structure at Wrocław Medical University (Table 6). However, it is still worth noting the gender structure across the various fields of study.

**Table 9. Comparison of female and male students in selected fields of study**

| FIELD OF STUDY | total number of students | number of women | number of men | % share of women | % share of men |
|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| Medicine       | 3083                     | 1903            | 1180          | 62%              | 38%            |
| Dentistry      | 549                      | 363             | 186           | 66%              | 34%            |
| Physiotherapy  | 328                      | 221             | 107           | 67%              | 33%            |
| Pharmacy       | 874                      | 692             | 182           | 79%              | 21%            |
| Nursing        | 508                      | 463             | 45            | 91%              | 9%             |
| Obstetrics     | 272                      | 271             | 1             | 99.6%            | 0.4%           |

Among the leading fields of study indicated, there is not a single one in which students are in the majority. The gender distribution structure for field of medicine and dentistry almost mirrors the proportions of doctors and dentists currently practising their profession, i.e. according to statistics made available by the Supreme Medical Chamber, women currently account for 62% of the total group<sup>4</sup>. However, the greatest disproportion can be seen in fields such as nursing and midwifery, professions traditionally pursued by women. This is also confirmed by data collected by the Supreme Chamber of Nurses and Midwives<sup>5</sup> - in

<sup>3</sup> <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/edukacja/edukacja/szkolnictwo-wyzsze-i-jego-finanse-w-2020-roku,2,17.html> retrieved on 16 December 2021

<sup>4</sup> [https://nil.org.pl/uploaded\\_files/1638392136\\_zaloznica-2021-zestawienie-nr-03.pdf](https://nil.org.pl/uploaded_files/1638392136_zaloznica-2021-zestawienie-nr-03.pdf) retrieved on 16 December 2021.

<sup>5</sup> <https://nipip.pl/liczba-pielegniarek-poloznych-zarejestrowanych-zatrudnionych/> retrieved on 16 December 2021.

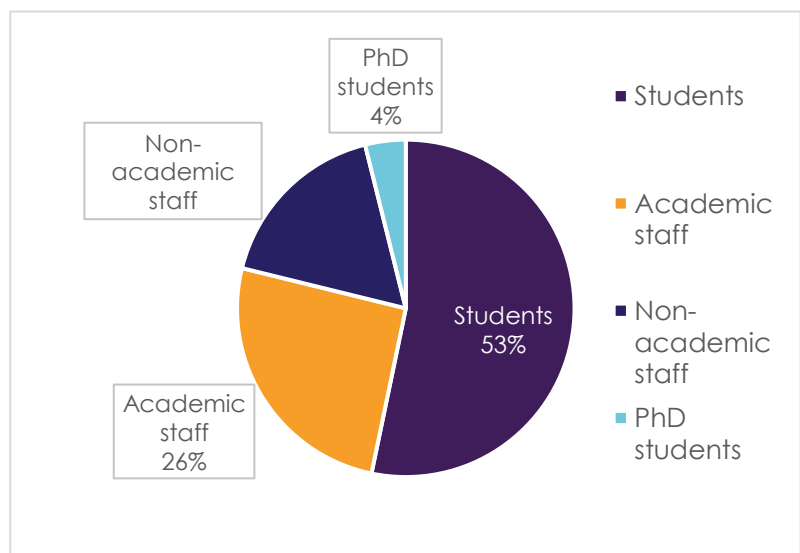


December 2020, there were only 75 men practising midwifery and 7640 nurses, representing 0.2% and 2.5% of the entire professional group respectively. The above data clearly indicate that the low representation of men in these professions is a systemic phenomenon, but this does not exempt universities from trying to take measures aimed at promoting these fields of study among representatives of the under-represented sex on the one hand, and on the other, at providing the greatest possible comfort of education to students who have decided to develop their careers in professions traditionally associated with women.

### Questionnaire

A further element of the diagnosis was to conduct a survey exploring experiences of gender inequality and perceptions of the issue. The overarching aim of the survey was to find out the experiences and expectations of the whole University community in the area of equality. In November 2021, a link to the survey in the form of an anonymous questionnaire, together with an explanation of what the results would be used for, was sent to all staff, PhD students and students to their University email addresses. The survey was also translated into English and sent to English speakers. In addition, the survey was made available on the Wroclaw Medical University website and the request to complete it was sent again with the university newsletter.

As a result, 567 completed questionnaires were received: the largest number of responses (302) came from the student group(s), the next largest group of respondents were academic staff (145), followed by non-academic staff (98), while the smallest number of responses came from PhD students (22).



**Chart 9. Percentage of responses provided by representatives of each group**

The questions included in the survey were primarily based on the experiences of people working and studying at the Wroclaw Medical University and their knowledge of situations of unequal treatment that occurred in their work or study environment.

They also referred to the respondents' opinions and assessments of Wroclaw Medical University's activities to prevent unequal treatment.

### Results of the Analysis of the Survey Responses

Among the fourteen discriminatory behaviours listed in the survey, three appear most frequently in the responses and have been experienced by more than half of those completing the survey – these are: comments or jokes relating to gender stereotypes (68%), different (better or worse) treatment or judgement based on gender (51%), comments or jokes with sexual overtones (51%).

Further experiences indicated by respondents(s) were: being approached in an inappropriately intimate manner (38%), having one's competence questioned on the basis of gender and being discouraged from taking on new challenges (35%), inappropriate



comments on appearance, dress (32%), being attributed professional success by others (31%).

Approximately 1/4 of those surveyed faced unwanted violations of personal space (24%), scheduling of work meetings or trips outside of regular work time that interfere with parental/family responsibilities (23%), questioning the possibility of combining work and family care (22%).

A few percent of the responses related to negative comments about sexual orientation (15%), opinions suggesting that someone is unsuitable for a management position because of their gender (14%) and unwanted attempts to contact them about private matters (12%). The least frequently indicated experience was sexual advances (3%). At the same time, 3% of people indicated that they had never experienced or witnessed unequal treatment at Wroclaw Medical University.

In conclusion of the above results, it can be said that experiencing unequal treatment and being confronted with discriminatory behaviour is a fairly common phenomenon in the Wroclaw Medical University community. Many responses indicate that many stereotypical beliefs are rooted in the area of verbal communication, hence there are numerous indications of comments, jokes, remarks relating to gender, sexual orientation, appearance. This points to the need to sensitise those who use such discourse and to introduce new standards of communication. Another equally important group of responses suggests frequent breaches of work-life balance, which also marks an important area for change at Wroclaw Medical University.

In the case of male and female students, the incident of unequal treatment signalled in the questionnaire most often occurred during classes (81% of responses in this group), affected the students themselves (80%), and was perpetrated by the lecturer(s) (67%) or another student(s) (42%).

In contrast, in situations where staff and PhD student(s) experienced or witnessed unequal treatment, the perpetrator was most often the direct supervisor (58%), but just as often a person of comparable status (54%) and a person high up in the hierarchy (50%). The situations indicated most often occurred in work premises and during work meetings.

A comparable group of respondents did not react or chose not to react when witnessing or experiencing unequal treatment, i.e. 17% reacted every time, 39% occasionally and 44% did not react.

As a reason for not reacting, as many as 60% cited fear of the consequences of their potential reaction to unequal treatment, 43% admitted that they had no knowledge of how to behave in such moments, while 40% described the situation as too trivial to react. These responses clearly indicate the need to equip the University community with the knowledge and skills to effectively act when confronted with discriminatory behaviour. The last result is also worrying – 40% of people did not respond because they assessed the situation as too trivial, although they had previously defined the same situation as unequal treatment.

For the group claiming to take a reaction, more than half indicated that they chose to directly approach and support the victim. The second most common response was to reprimand the perpetrator. Only 8% indicated that they had contacted the appropriate person at the Wroclaw Medical University dealing with acts of unequal treatment.



Respondents were also asked to identify the appropriate person within the University structure to whom they thought acts of unequal treatment should be reported. Unfortunately, the vast majority of people did not answer or explicitly indicated that they did not know who they should contact. A small group (24 people) indicated the Rector's Plenipotentiaries for Equal Treatment and the Committee on Unequal Treatment Counteraction (often confusing its name). There were also responses suggesting that, in such circumstances, those selected would choose to contact their immediate supervisor, dean, year supervisor or the Student Ombudsman. Also running through the responses given are indications of a lack of confidence in an institutional procedure to resolve issues of the nature discussed. Some of the statements explicitly indicate a fear of consequences for the person reporting, or a lack of belief that reporting the matter to the appropriate authority can make a difference. These free statements of the interviewees clearly outline the need to educate the academic community about the existing mechanisms and instruments and to analyse the effectiveness of the processes adopted so far.

It is also worth recalling the results of the question on the evaluation of the University's activities in addressing gender inequality: only a dozen percent of those surveyed agreed with the statements that Wroclaw Medical University is addressing gender inequality issues and is committed to promoting gender equality.

Those completing the survey also had the opportunity to share their experiences or perceptions of gender bias. The free statements that emerged can be grouped into a number of thematic areas most frequently addressed.

Both women and men reported difficulties in reconciling their private and professional lives due to the high expectations of their superiors, often requiring them to work overtime or organise meetings at times that disrupted employees' private lives. The voice of women returning to work after a break due to maternity is also important - they emphasise that they did not receive enough support from their employer during this difficult period, and were immediately confronted with expectations at the same - or even higher - level than those of employees who were present at work. Aware of these difficulties and the lack of systemic support, other women postpone the decision to become mothers for fear of losing their job or their current position. These fears and anxieties, coupled with a sense of lack of support from the employer, take a toll on the psychological wellbeing of female workers.

On the part of men – both employees and students – there are also perceptions that they are treated in a stereotypical and therefore hurtful way. Employees emphasise that they face expectations that, as men, they can work longer and more because they do not run the household, as this is the role of a woman-wife. In contrast, students in highly feminised fields of study face comments and jokes referring to beliefs about stereotypical male and female jobs.

A large number of people (mainly students) pointed to what they perceive as fairly common language (again: comments, jokes, ridicule) used by lecturers (especially staff, referred to by respondents as "old-school" professors) characterised by discriminatory language against non-heterosexual people. There is also a clear allegation that the University is not taking sufficient action to make those who identify with the LGBTQ+ community feel recognised and safe. One example is the lack of procedures, but also of good practice, in relation to transgender people in the process of gender transition. In this group of comments, there is a strong sensitivity to the difficulties faced by people from the LGBTQ+ community and the consequences that reflect negatively on the psychological well-being of this group. There is





a noticeable expectation from the University authorities to improve the current situation as soon as possible.

It is also worth noting the voice of those who question the existence of the problem of gender inequality and therefore the need to deal with such a topic. These individuals indicate that they have not observed such incidents in their immediate work environment and that the University, in their opinion, should not interfere within the system in relations between employees. Some of the people in this group accept the existence of a discrimination problem, but see it as a secondary issue, indicating other important areas that the University authorities should address first. Inappropriate jokes or comments based on hurtful stereotypes are interpreted as an expression of confidentiality towards the interlocutor, the peculiarity and "charm" of the person making these comments, or possibly as an expression of a lack of personal culture.

### Conclusions

Summarising the entire diagnosis, both in terms of the analysis of the figures and in terms of the answers given to the questions posed in the survey, it is possible to outline a few key conclusions that formed the basis for extracting the objectives and actions of the Gender Equality Plan.

Firstly, it must be acknowledged that gender stereotypes and consequently the roles assigned to men and women are widespread at the Wroclaw Medical University as a place of learning and work. Such thinking manifests itself above all in language characterised by prejudice and distrust of what is foreign and unknown. It is primarily students and those who identify with the LGBTQ+ community who are impacted.

There is also a lack of systemic support in the University for employees (but also students) in combining work and private life especially for those providing care. Female and male employees signal their exhaustion and perceived pressure and do not obtain support mechanisms from the employer in return.

Another important conclusion is connected to this aspect - female researchers' careers decelerate at certain points, which stops them at a certain level of career progression. This is reflected in the analysis of the gender representation of positions in the academic staff group and in the analysis in terms of the academic title held.

The under-representation of women in some areas of the University's operations, despite the fact that women are in the majority in the organisation as a whole, points to another area requiring activity on the part of the University authorities. Within the top management structure, women do not have proportional representation, although it should be borne in mind that the ratio at many levels is close to the expected 40% female representation and increases as the level of decision-making decreases. It is worth emphasising here that the proposed demand for increasing the representation of underrepresented groups in various positions or roles does not replace, in any way, the merit-based criteria. Transparent and publicly accessible merit-based criteria will still be crucial, while gender balance mechanisms will serve as a supportive element in decision-making in the case of candidates with comparable profiles.

Following this line of thought, it is also essential to remember the underrepresentation of men in some areas, such as the administrative staff and in certain fields of study traditionally associated with women.





The above-mentioned issues formed the basis for proposing the five objectives of the Gender Equality Plan for Wrocław Medical University for the years 2022-2024. Some of the diagnosed areas require further investigation by the University to precisely identify the sources of the problems. Therefore, as part of the actions aimed at bringing Wrocław Medical University closer to achieving these objectives, measures have also been indicated to further collect data on the issues of interest.

### **Objectives of the Gender Equality Plan for Wrocław Medical University for the Years 2022 – 2024:**

- 1. Increasing the community's awareness of the principles of equal treatment, raising awareness of discrimination and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity, and actively counteracting any manifestation of discrimination*
- 2. Facilitating work-life or study-life balance*
- 3. Supporting sustainability in scientific careers*
- 4. Balancing gender representation at all positions and decision-making levels and among students*
- 5. Integrating the issue of gender into research and education content*

### **Implementation and Monitoring of the Plan**

The coordination of activities undertaken under the Gender Equality Plan shall be the responsibility of the Rector's Plenipotentiaries for Equal Treatment, with the support of the Team for Equal Treatment and the Committee on Unequal Treatment Counteraction.

To ensure the smooth implementation of activities, in addition to human resources, financial resources are also necessary. Therefore, the University shall allocate the necessary funds for the implementation of the planned initiatives and the administrative support of the Team and Committee.

Although the Plan covers the period 2022 - 2024, in order to effectively monitor its implementation, the University shall adopt the principle of annual validation of its accomplishments. The Plan shall be a dynamic document, responding to changing circumstances and needs, and it is therefore assumed that it can be updated to serve the overarching goal of creating a learning and working environment at Wrocław Medical University that is free of prejudice and discrimination to the greatest extent possible.