

In accordance with Article 16 of the Law on Gender Equality (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 52/2021), the Rector of the Belgrade Metropolitan University issues the following:

## **PLAN ON ACHIEVING AND PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AT BELGRADE METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

### **General information about Belgrade Metropolitan University**

Belgrade Metropolitan University (hereinafter: the University) was founded in 2010. The work permit was issued by the Ministry of Education (No. 612-00-01098/2010-04 dated September 30, 2010). The University was registered by the Act of the Commercial Court in Belgrade (No. 1 FI No. 455/10 dated 13.12. in 2010).

The University is an independent higher education institution with the status of a legal entity with rights, obligations and responsibilities determined by the Law on Higher Education, other legal and sub-sector regulations of the Republic of Serbia, the Statute of the University and other general acts of the University.

The university carries out higher education activities at all three levels of study, implementing study programs of bachelor, master and doctoral academic studies, as well as other registered activities.

The University has fulfilled all the standards for accreditation of higher education institutions prescribed by the Rulebook on Standards and Procedures for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions, as well as the standards for accreditation of study programmes and accordingly accreditation certificates were issued. For certain study programmes, in addition to the implementation of study programmes at the institution's premises, the University also implements study programmes in a unit outside the University's campus and according to the distance study model.

The university also fulfilled all the requirements for carrying out scientific research activities prescribed by the Rulebook on the evaluation of scientific research work and the accreditation procedure of institutes, integrated universities, faculties and centres of exceptional value. The decision on accreditation for performing scientific research work was issued by the Committee for Accreditation of Scientific Research Organizations of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

All certificates and decisions on accreditation are published on the official website of the University

### ***The Internationalization Strategy of Belgrade Metropolitan University***

#### **I Introduction**

Internationalization is key to the academic development and global competitiveness of universities. In accordance with global trends in education, Belgrade Metropolitan University recognizes the importance of internationalization as an integral part of its development. This strategy aims to provide clearly defined directions and activities for improving the international presence of the university, with the objective of achieving long-term success in international cooperation, mobility of students and faculty, as well as in global academic networking.

## **II Mission and vision of internationalization**

**Mission:** The University is committed to creating a dynamic international academic community, which provides students and faculty with opportunities to participate in global research, exchange knowledge and experience, and develop skills that are crucial for success in a globalized society.

**Vision:** The University aims to become recognizable in the international academic environment, actively participating in global educational networks, while creating opportunities for students and faculty to engage in international research and projects.

## **III Objectives of the internalisation**

1. Increasing the number of foreign students:
  - Developing a strategy to attract students from different countries, with a focus on markets that show interest in specific study programmes offered by the University.
  - Promoting study programmes in English, as well as the awarding international degrees that enable mobility and recognition on the global labour market.
2. Developing academic mobility:
  - Creating new opportunities for mobility of students and faculty through programmes such as Erasmus +, as well as bilateral and multilateral agreements with foreign universities.
  - Encouraging and improving student participation in international conferences, workshops and other forms of academic mobility.
3. Strengthening international cooperation and partnerships:
  - Signing of new bilateral cooperation agreements with reputable universities and research institutions in Europe, Asia, America and other regions.
  - Active participation in international educational and scientific research networks and organizations.
4. Developing international research projects:
  - Creating conditions for international projects and cooperation in the field of research and innovation.
  - Providing financial and institutional support for participation in international research projects and competitions.
5. Improving teaching in English:
  - Increasing the number of courses and complete study programmes that will be offered in English, in order to attract foreign students and facilitate easier integration into international academic networks.

## **IV Strategies and activities**

1. Development of an international network of partners:
  - Identification of key international institutions for potential cooperation.
  - Organizing bilateral meetings and participating in international conferences to strengthen relations with partners.
  - Developing strategic partnerships with leading universities and institutions in specific areas of education and research.

2. Student and faculty mobility programs:
  - Joining international educational platforms (e.g. Erasmus +) and facilitating applications for international scholarships and mobility.
  - Increasing the number of academic and administrative mobility, supporting faculty and students in international experiences.
3. Curriculum internationalization:
  - Ensuring that all study programmes contain elements of an international context (studies of other cultures, international management, global economic issues, etc.).
  - Involvement of international experts as guest professors and lecturers.
4. Marketing and communication:
  - Developing the University's promotion strategy on international markets through the Internet, social networks, education fairs and partner institutions.
  - Increasing the presence of Belgrade Metropolitan University in international rankings and recognition in the global education sector.
5. Infrastructure for foreign students:
  - Introducing orientation and integration programmes for foreign students (information, cultural adaptation, language support).
  - Developing special services for foreign students, such as student organizations, cultural and social activities.
  - Strategy monitoring and evaluation

For the successful implementation of the strategy, it is necessary to set clear indicators for monitoring progress, including the number of international students, the number of new partnerships, the number of academic mobility programmes, participation in international research projects and engagement in global educational networks. Regular evaluation will enable the strategy to be aligned with changes in the international educational environment and the needs of students and faculty.

## **V Conclusion**

Internationalization is a key step towards achieving the global status and competitiveness of Belgrade Metropolitan University. Through the implementation of this strategy, the university will open the door to international cooperation, enrich the academic experience of students and faculty, and contribute to the creation of a global academic community based on shared values, research spirit and mutual understanding.

### ***Equal opportunities policy***

The University does not discriminate against students, faculty and employees or other persons involved in the work process on any basis, including the basis of race, nationality, religion, gender, birth, social origin, sexual orientation, political orientation, financial status, culture, language, age and mental or physical disability.

In this regard, the University strives to create and maintain an environment of equal opportunities

and a culture of equality and inclusion during study and work.

In order to achieve gender equality, the University relies on the existing national legal framework in this area, i.e. on the laws of the by-laws that regulate areas important for gender equality:

- Constitution of the Republic of Serbia,
- Law on Prohibition of Discrimination,
- Gender Equality Law
- Law on the Protector of Citizens
- National strategy for gender equality in the period from 2021 to 2030.

The principles of gender equality and anti-discrimination policies are to some extent integrated into the key document of the University - the Statute. In addition, all faculties within the University fully respect and apply the University's regulations, which, among other things, refer to the prohibition of discrimination, such as the Code of Academic Integrity in order to preserve the dignity of the profession, promote moral values, protect the value of knowledge and raise awareness about responsibilities of all members of the academic community.

### **Objective of the document**

The main objective of this document is to promote gender equality at all levels, including the consistent application of principles, main goals and central measures in this area.

### **Measures and Activities**

The University commits to undertake the necessary activities in order to create structural changes in order to achieve and maintain a higher degree of gender equality at all levels and in all areas of work and research by applying the following measures:

- Building institutional capacities for identifying relevant data and their ongoing maintenance, as well as establishing systemic procedures and information systems for improving data collection and solving the problem of lack of data.
- Strengthening the visibility of gender equality and raising awareness of the importance and benefits of appropriate gender balance at all levels,
- Promoting gender diversity within academic structures, with a strong emphasis on greater participation of women in decision-making bodies and decision-making processes, in accordance with institutional, national and other regulatory frameworks.
- Creating conditions for a more effective reconciliation of professional and family duties of employees.

In order to apply the defined measures, the actions, results, time frame of actions and responsibilities are determined, which are shown in the following table:

Objective	Activity	Responsibility	Result	Time frame
1. Building institutional capacities for identifying relevant data and their ongoing maintenance, as well as establishing system procedures and information systems for improving data collection and solving the problem of lack of data.	1.1 Adoption of the Rulebook on Prevention and Protection from Sexual Harassment and Blackmail at the University	Rector and Secretary of the University	Adoption of Rules	December 2024
	1.2. Acting in accordance with the Rulebook on Prevention and Protection from Sexual Harassment and Blackmail at the University	Person in charge of gender equality with the support of the University Management	Quality And quantitative outcome of the procedure	Permanently
	1 .3 Data collection and monitoring	The person in charge of gender equality	Data Analysis	Permanently
	1 .4 The University plan on the realization and improvement of gender equality to be published on the University's web presentation	Information system service	Transparency And information	On the date of adoption
1. Strengthening the visibility of gender equality and raising awareness of the importance and advantages of appropriate gender balance at all levels	2.1 Employees to attend trainings in order to raise the awareness about gender equality	Rector	Achieved awareness among employees about gender equality	Permanently
3. Promoting gender diversity within academic structures, with a strong emphasis on greater participation of women in decision-making bodies and decision-making processes, in accordance with institutional, national and other regulatory frameworks	3.1 . Continuation of the policy of equal representation of men and women in higher positions and in decision-making bodies	Rector	Representation gender equality in higher positions and in decision-making bodies	Permanently

4. Creation of conditions for a more effective reconciliation of professional and family duties of employees	4.1 Employees who returned to work after a long absence from work due to family duties were provided with support for the performance of work duties according to systematization and jobs.	Rector, secretary, deans of integrated faculties, administrative managers	Easier harmonization of professional duties of employees of both genders. Establishing and maintaining a work environment that especially supports employees with family responsibilities	Permanently
	4..2 Work on improving the substitutes of employees	Rector, secretary, deans of integrated faculties, administrative managers	Easier alignment professional duties of employees of both genders. Establishing and maintaining a work environment that particularly supports employees with family responsibilities	Permanently

## **Human resource commitment and expertise for gender equality**

### ***Human resources for gender equality***

This part of the plan aims to ensure the integration of the principle of gender equality in all aspects of the human resources work, thereby creating an inclusive and equal working environment for all employees and students.

#### **1. Resource language**

Human resources play a key role in implementing and promoting gender equality within the University.

The obligations and responsibilities of the human resources sector in achieving gender equality are regulated in accordance with the Law on Gender Equality and this plan.

#### **2. Employment policy, students' enrollment and selection**

The process of hiring or enrolling in studies and selections must be gender neutral, with a mandatory statement that all candidates are equal regardless of gender.

When advertising jobs and announcing competitions for student enrollment, human resources are obliged to use inclusive language and promote equal opportunities for both sexes.

In the candidate selection process, methods are applied that prevent unconscious bias and discrimination based on gender.

#### **3. Career advancement**

All employees under equal conditions have the right to advance in their career, in which case the fulfillment of the conditions prescribed by law, by-laws and general acts of the University is only relevant.

#### **4 . Development and promotion of employees**

All employees have equal access to training, seminars and professional development programmes, regardless of gender.

Human Resources is responsible for designing mentoring programs that encourage the career advancement of employees of both genders, especially in areas where there is a gender imbalance.

#### **5 . Equal income and benefits**

The organization guarantees equal income for work in the same or similar positions, regardless of the gender of the employees.

Human resources are responsible for conducting regular salary analysis in order to identify and eliminate potential gender pay gaps.

#### **6. Flexible working conditions**

Human resources are required to develop policies that allow for flexible working conditions, such as working remotely and flexible working hours, in order to enable a balance between the business and personal obligations of employees.

Special attention is paid to support for parents, including equal access to maternity and paternity leave.

#### **7. Prevention of discrimination and harassment**

Human resources conduct continuous training of employees and management on the prevention of discrimination and harassment based on gender.

The organization establishes clear mechanisms for reporting and resolving cases of discrimination and

harassment.

Employees who suffer discrimination or harassment have the right to protection and support, in accordance with the procedures prescribed by this rulebook.

## **8 . Measurement and monitoring of results**

Human resources are responsible for establishing a system for monitoring progress in achieving gender equality.

Results are monitored through key performance indicators (KPIs), including representation of women and men at all levels, equal pay and access to training.

Regular reports on the achieved results are submitted to the management of the organization and relevant bodies.

## **9. Education and raising awareness**

Human resources are responsible for organizing periodic trainings for employees and management on the topic of gender equality.

## **10 . Sanctions for non-compliance**

Human Resources is responsible for enforcing sanctions against employees and management who violate the gender equality provisions of this plan.

Sanctions include education, disciplinary measures, and in cases of serious violations, initiation of appropriate procedures.

## **Training and raising awareness about gender equality**

### ***Objectives***

Employee training and awareness-raising activities are aimed at improving the knowledge and skills of employees in the field of gender equality, eliminating gender stereotypes and promoting an inclusive work culture.

### ***University obligations***

The University undertakes to: organize trainings and workshops for all employees, including management, on topics such as: Gender equality and legal frameworks; Recognition and prevention of discrimination and harassment based on gender; Promotion of inclusive language and behavior in the workplace.

To inform employees about the importance of gender equality through internal communication channels, such as newsletters, intranet or informational meetings.

### ***Frequency and target groups***

Trainings will be organized at least once a year for all employees.

Specialized trainings for management and sectors that have a key role in decision-making will be organized as needed.

### ***Evaluation and improvement***

After each training, evaluate the satisfaction of the participants and the level of acquired knowledge.

Based on feedback and analysis of employees' needs, adapt the content and methodology of training.



### ***Responsibility***

The human resources sector is in charge of implementing this segment of the plan in cooperation with the responsible person for gender equality.

### ***Progress tracking***

The participation of employees in trainings and their application of acquired knowledge in their daily work is regularly monitored.

Reports on the implemented activities are submitted to the person responsible for gender equality no later than January 5 of the current year for the previous year.

### **Data recording, monitoring and reporting**

#### ***Recording data on achieving gender equality***

In order to monitor and achieve gender equality and report on it, the University records data classified by gender.

#### ***Monitoring the implementation of the plan for achieving gender equality***

The plan for achieving gender equality will be subject to regular annual monitoring and evaluation, and the person in charge of gender equality will deal with operationalization, while the rector will supervise the implementation of actions and the degree of achievement of results.

The person in charge of gender equality is the general secretary of the University.

#### ***Report on achieving gender equality***

The university is obliged to prepare annual reports on the achievement of gender equality, which shows data for the period from January 1 to December 31 of the year for which the report is submitted.

The report from paragraph 1 of this article is submitted to the Ministry by January 15 of the current year for the previous year.

In Belgrade, 30<sup>th</sup> of December 2024

**RECTOR**

Professor Mitar Marinović

