

Mersin University
2025-2028 Gender Equality
Plan
(MUGEP)

February-2025

Introduction

According to the letter of interest of the Presidency of the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey and the new conditions of the program, in which our country officially participated as an associate member in the Horizon Europe Program, which will cover the years 2021-2027, as of 28/10/2021, it was requested to prepare institutional 'Gender Equality Plans' (GEP) with certain features in order for all higher education institutions, research centers and public institutions in our country to apply and receive funding for calls closed as of January 1, 2022. In this context, with the launch of Horizon Europe, the European Commission has made Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) mandatory for participation in the research framework program. GEPs are defined as a set of commitments and actions aimed at promoting gender equality through a process of structural change in an organization (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2024). This policy instrument aims to reduce gender inequalities and promote equality by sustainably transforming organizational processes, cultures and structures in research and innovation (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2024). Consequently, Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) are a systematic and strategic tool that sets priorities and concrete objectives to be implemented to improve gender equality within organizations, based on a comprehensive baseline assessment and identifying specific measures to be implemented to improve gender equality in research and innovation (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2024). As Mersin University, we aim to achieve sustainable change in both the academic and social spheres with the Gender Equality Plan prepared according to these international standards. Through these efforts, we aim to raise awareness on gender equality and promote a truly egalitarian environment.

Mersin University has accepted gender equality as a fundamental principle. According to this principle, a comprehensive Gender Equality Plan is being implemented that aims to promote gender equality in education, training, research and innovation. For this purpose, a Gender Equality Plan Working Group was established under the leadership of Mersin University Rector Prof. Dr. Erol YAŞAR with the contributions of Mersin University Women' Studies Research Center (MERKAM) and academic staff working in the field of Gender Equality. In this process, data from the units of our university were accessed to determine the current situation, and surveys were conducted throughout the university. As a result, the scope of this plan presented aims to not only maintain diversity in the academic field at the University, but also to fulfill the responsibility of contributing to social change in terms of freedom and inclusiveness. While Mersin University undertakes libertarianism with the Gender Equality Plan (METCEP), it emphasizes its determination to revive the plan framework.

On Name of Mersin University Rectorate
Gender Equality Plan Working Group

Mersin University
2025-2028
Gender Equality Plan

Gender Equality Commission

Prof. Dr. Tuğba Yanpar

Prof. Dr. Gülçin Yapıcı

Assos. Prof.Dr. Aysun Yaralı Akkaya

Assos. Prof.Dr. Canan Dural Tasouji

Assos. Prof.Dr. Dr. Onur Uca

Asiss. Dr. Nermin Alkan

Research Assistant Dr. Özen Kurtuluş

Research Assistant Dr. Burcu Ecem Uğuz

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
BAP	Department of Scientific Research Projects
GECommission	Gender Equality Commission
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
MERKAM	Mersin University Women's Studies Research Center
MUGEP	Mersin University Gender Equality Plan
TUBITAK	The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey
TTO	Technology Transfer Office
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

Short Term Until December 30, 2025

Medium Term Until December 30, 2026

Long Term Until December 31, 2027

With the experience of the First Gender Equality Plan, Mersin University aims to prepare the Second Gender Equality Plan in 2027, which will cover the period beyond 2028, and to implement it as of January 1, 2028, covering the next period.

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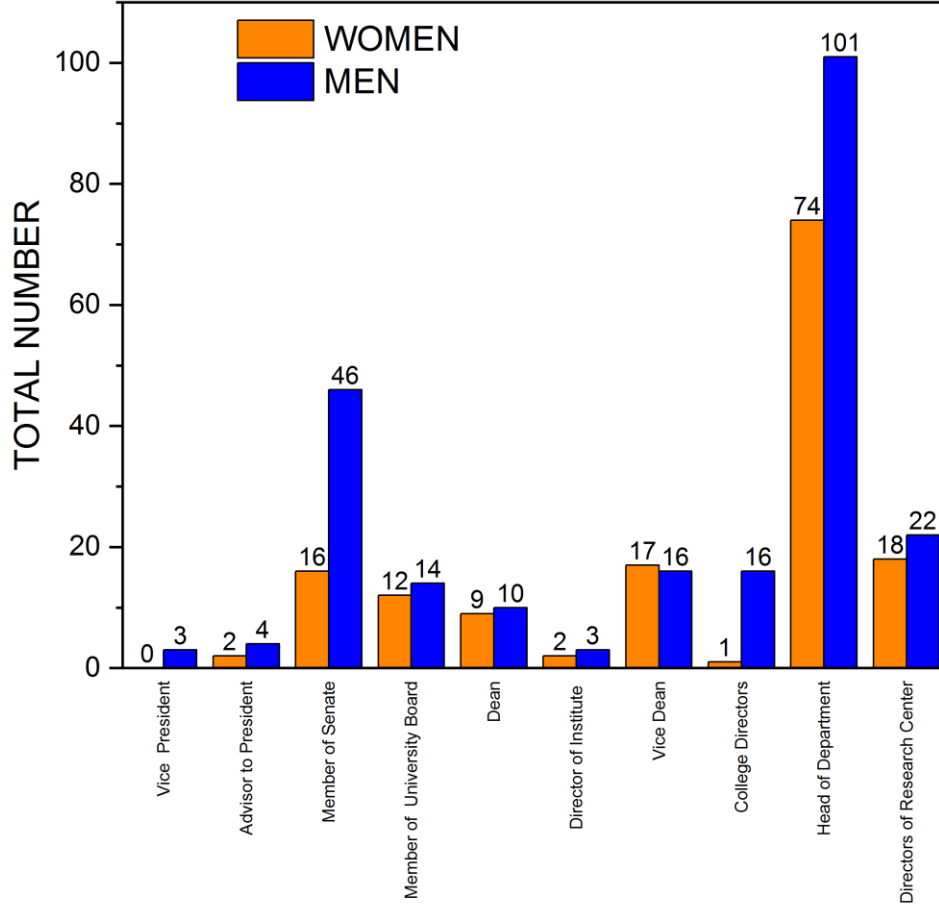
Mersin University Gender Equality Current Status Analysis

1. Gender Equality Current Status Analysis in Numbers

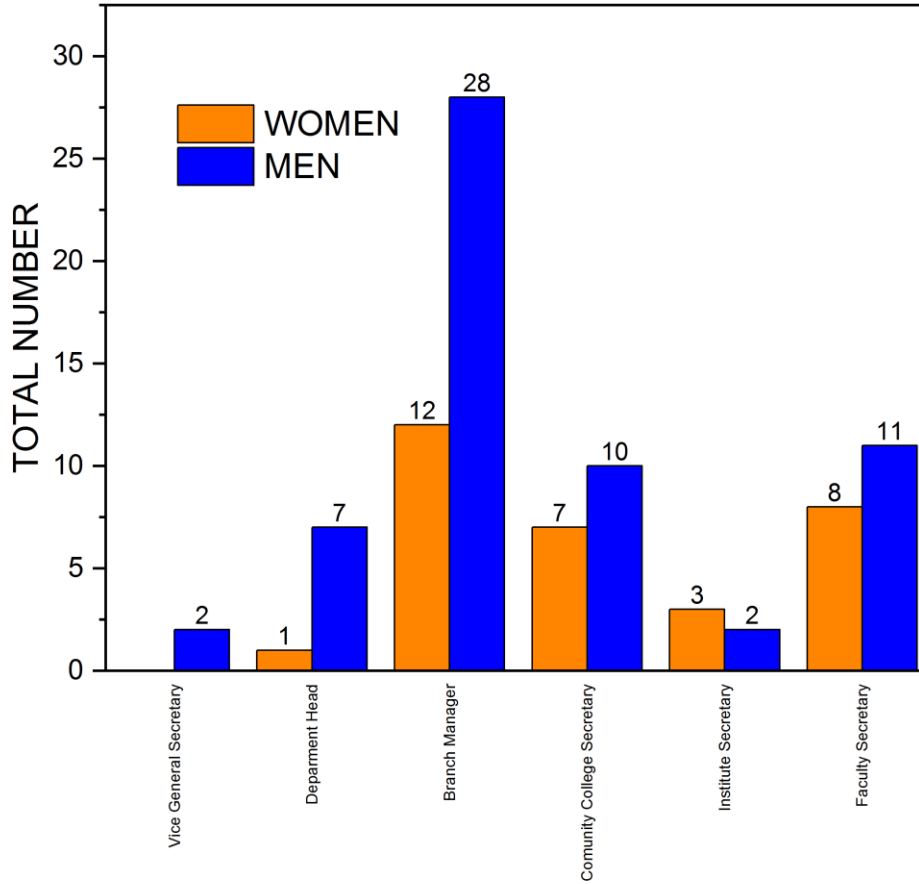
1.1. Distribution of Management and Decision-Making Mechanism Data

In this section, the distribution of managerial positions by gender was investigated. The data obtained belongs to December 2024.

Table 1. Gender Distribution of University Academic Administration and Decision-Making Committees



Currently, while there are 16 female and 49 male members in the Senato, gender equality has been achieved in the Board of Directors, which consists of 12 female and 12 male members. Additionally, in 9 out of the 19 faculties at our university, female deans are in charge. While only 2 of the institute directors are women, the number of women in the university's colleges, vocational schools is only 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Administrative Decision Makers by Gender

When we look at the distribution of the administrative functioning of our university, including management and decision-making mechanisms, the General Secretariat unit, which is the highest level position of administrative staff, consists entirely of men. In addition to this, it is seen that gender equality is ensured in department heads, branch heads and academic unit secretariats. Considering the current situation, even though the number of female administrators throughout the university has reached a considerable number, the number of women in senior management positions is lower than that of men. Especially in the final decision-making positions of the university such as vice-rectorships, consultancies and general secretariat, men are in the majority.

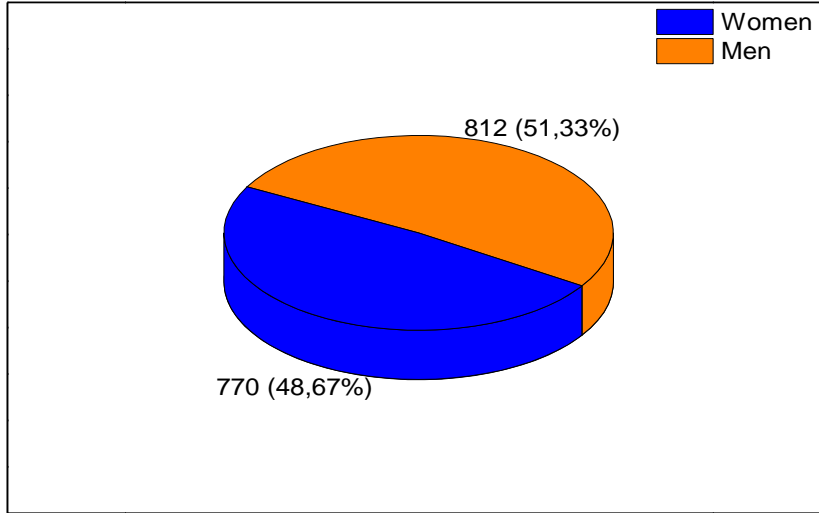
Although the number of female administrators at the university has reached a significant level, when looking at the current figures, the number of women at the top levels of the management hierarchy is lower than that of men. It is observed that women do not have enough representation in decision-making mechanisms within the administrative organization chart, and the number of female administrators among the administrative staff is limited.

1.2. Gender Based Data of Academic and Administrative Staff

When all academic and administrative staff of Mersin University are analyzed, we see that gender equality has been achieved. While a balance of nearly half is achieved in both academic and

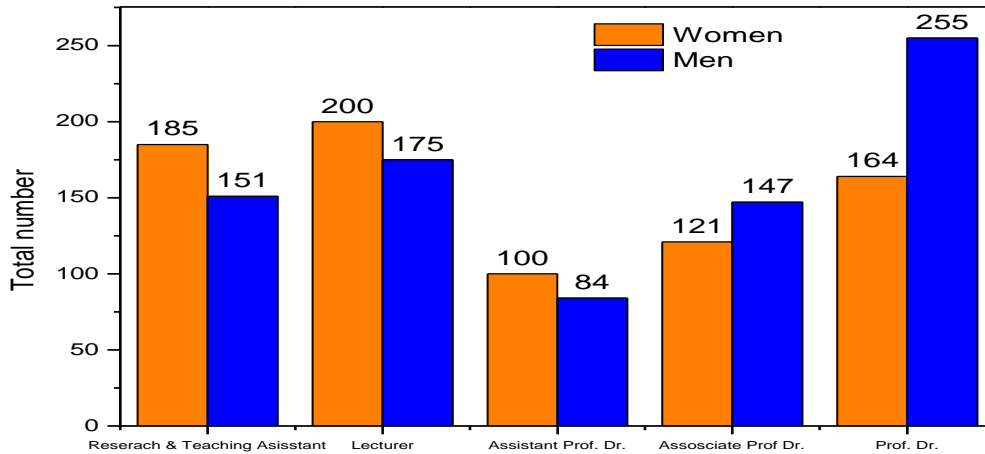
administrative staff, it is seen that the number of female employees in administrative staff exceeds the rate of male employees with a rate of 54.2% as seen in Graph 2.

Graph 1. Gender Distribution of Academic Staff at Mersin University



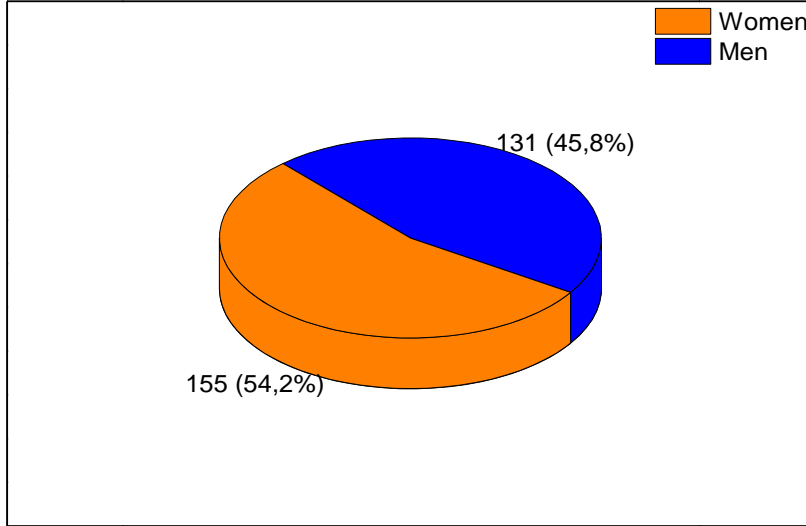
When we look at the gender distribution of academic staff according to their titles, we observe that women outnumber men in education-research assistants, lecturers and doctoral faculty members, while men outnumber women in associate professors and especially in professors when we look at the positions based on academic career progression.

Table 3. Gender Distribution According to Position and Title



As of 2025, while there are more women than men among the education-research assistants, instructors, and assistant professors at our university, it is noticeable that men outnumber women in the ranks of associate professors and especially professors.

Graph 2. Gender Distribution of Administrative Staff at Mersin University



In the unit-based distribution of administrative staff positions, the proportion of female employees is equal and higher in faculties and institutes, while the proportion of female employees is lower in colleges.

Table 4. Staff Gender Distribution According to Where They Work

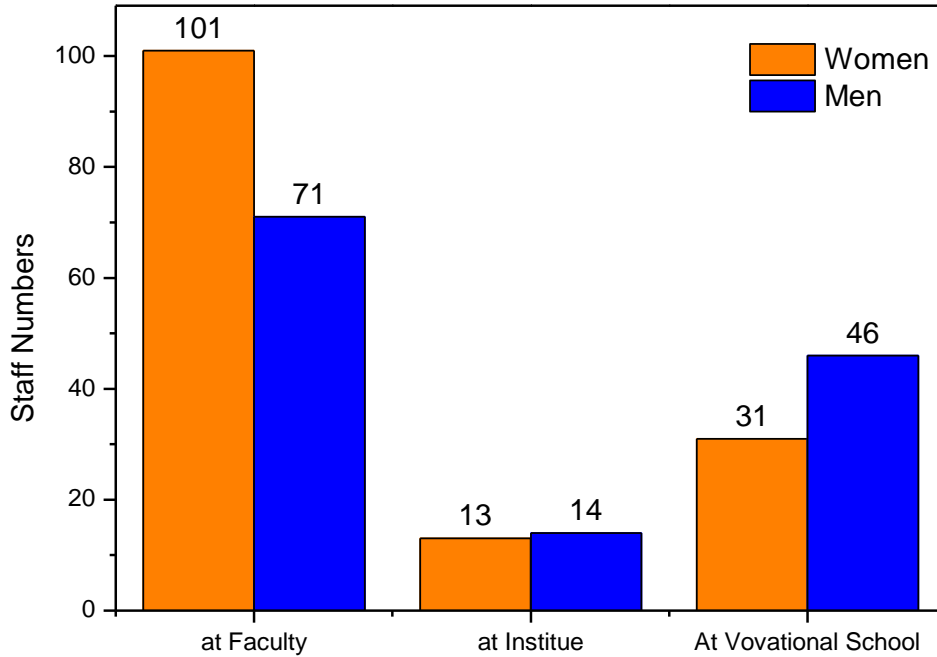
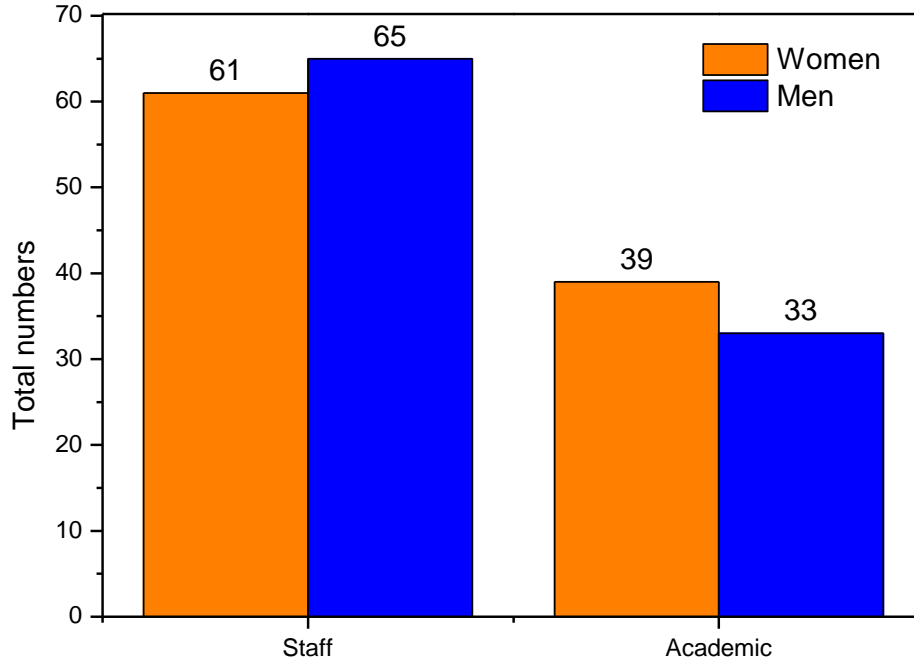
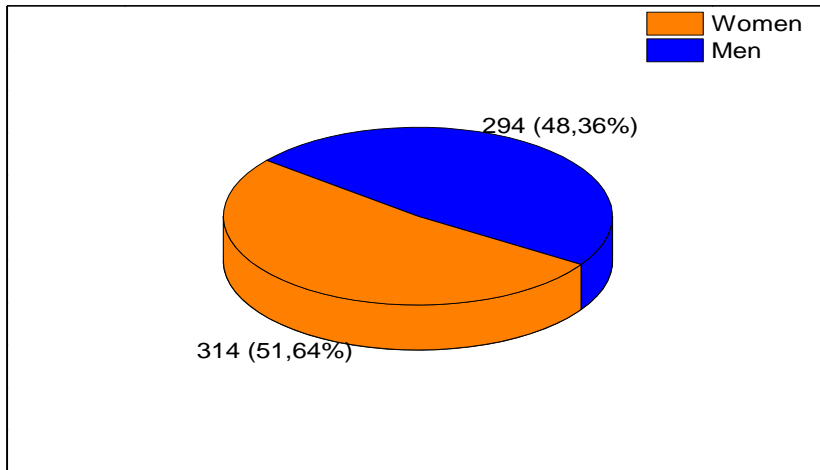


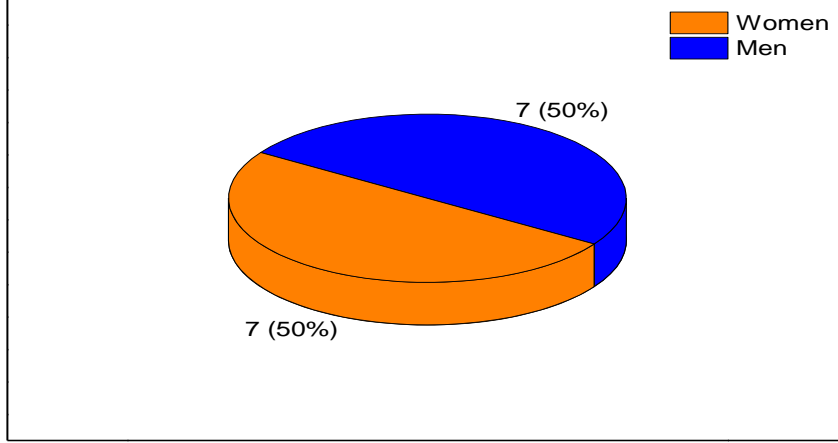
Table 5. Retired Personnel numbers by Gender (2020-2024)



Graph 3. Distribution of Recruited Personnel by Gender (2020-2024)



Graph 4. Distribution of Contracted and Other Personnel Recruited in the Last 1 Year by Gender



1.3. Student Data

When examining the current data of Mersin University, it is seen that nearly 48% of the students are women. Looking at the distribution of students across vocational schools, undergraduate, and graduate programs, the total number of registered students as of the 2024-2025 academic year is 31,733.

Graph 5. Total Students Number (Community Collage, Undergraduate, and Graduate Student)

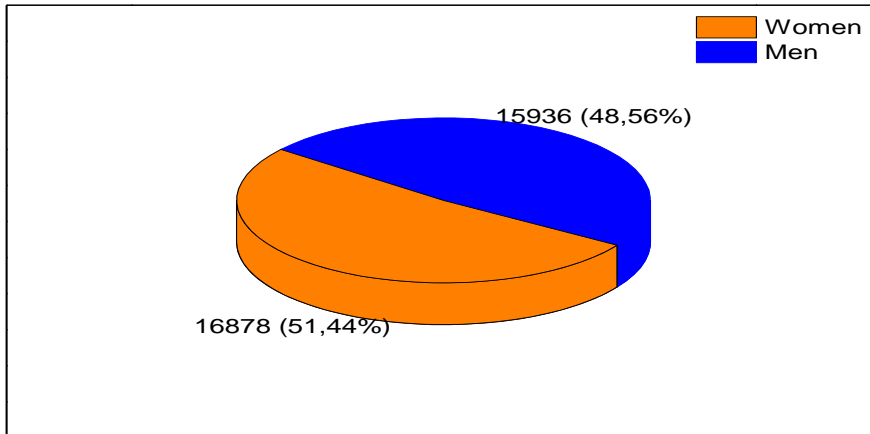
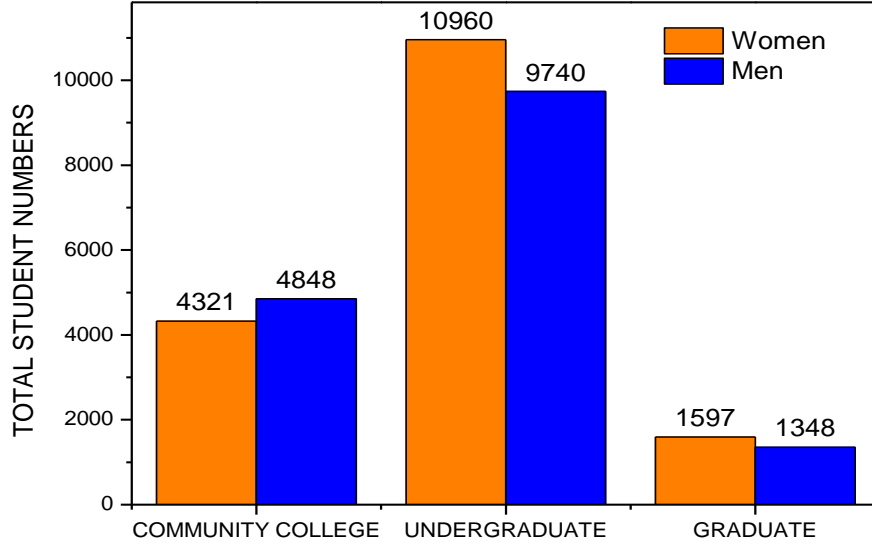
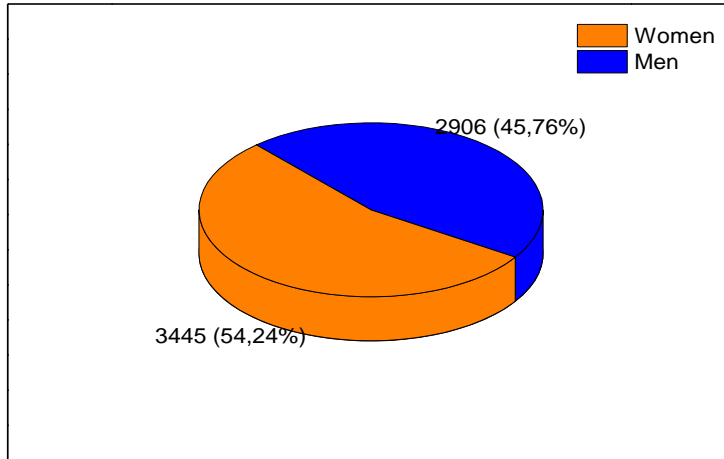


Table 6. Total Number of Students According to Higher Education Levels



Graph 6. Distribution of Total Graduating Students by Gender

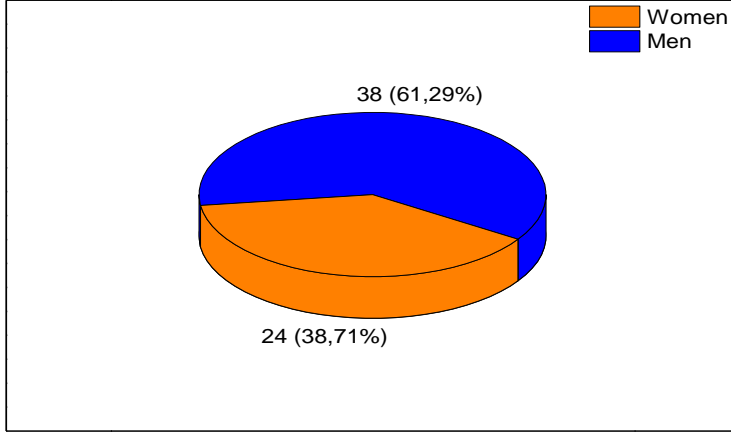


In 2023, 43% of undergraduate and four-year college graduates were women. When the gender distribution of graduates by departments is analyzed, 36% of graduates from Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry departments are women, while 40% of graduates from Social Science fields such as Education, Economics and Administrative Sciences, Tourism are women. In 2023, 52% of the students enrolled in undergraduate and four-year colleges at our university were women, and in this sense, it is seen that there has been an increase in the number of graduates in the last four years.

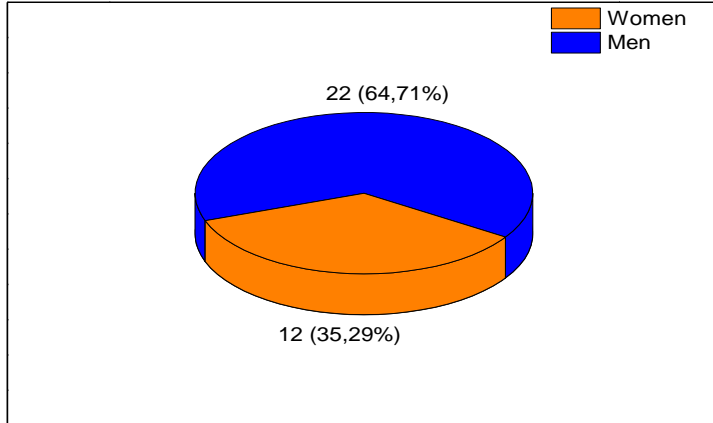
1.4. Gender Distribution in Education and Research Areas: Courses/Theses/Projects/Activities

It has been found that 38.7% of the project leaders in TUBITAK projects are women, 35.3% of the project leaders in Technology Transfer Center projects are women, and 50.2% of the project leaders in Mersin University's BAP projects are women.

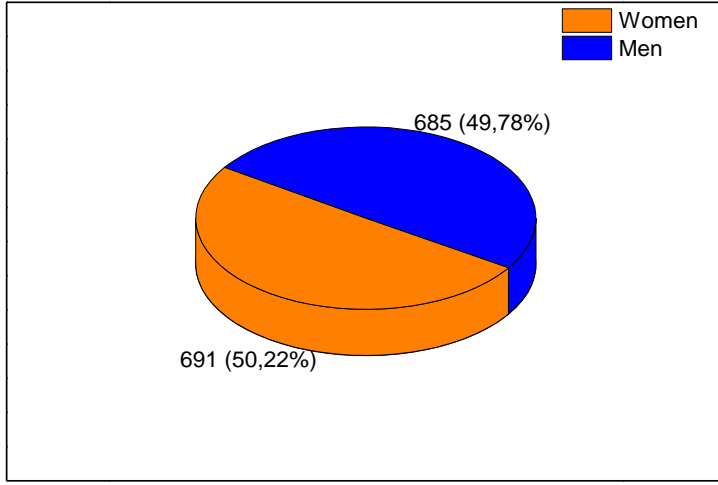
Graph 7. Distribution of Total TUBITAK Projects by Gender



Graph 8. Distribution of Projects in Mersin University Technology Transfer Office (TTO) by Gender



Graph 9. Number and Budget Amounts of Projects Supported by Mersin University BAP Unit between 2020-2024 by Gender

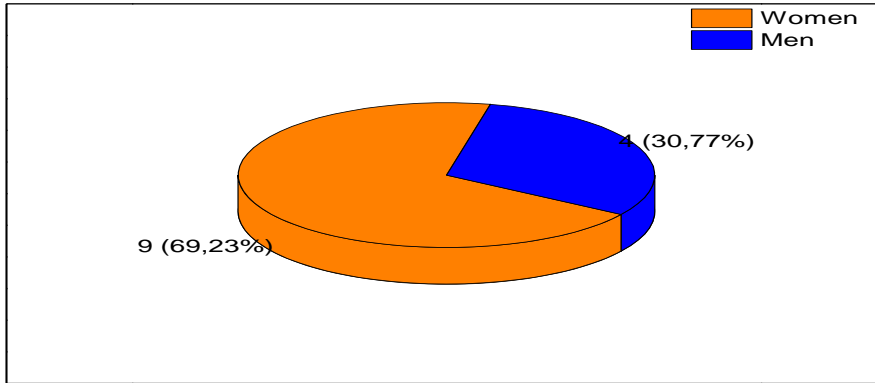


Total budget :183.634.682,96 TL

Add Budget: 16.153.313,62 TL

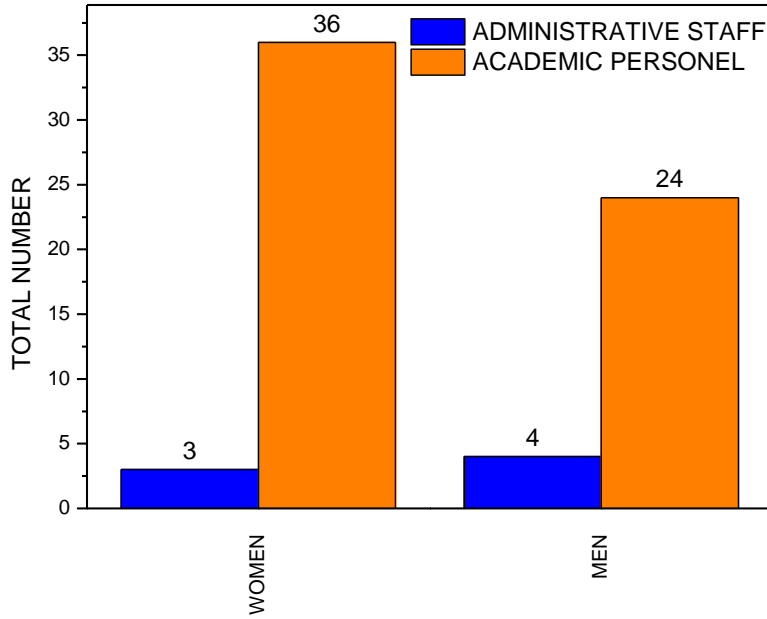
69% of the social responsibility projects and activities themed around gender equality have been carried out by women.

Graph 10. Distribution of Gender Themed Responsibility Projects and Activities Conducted at Mersin University



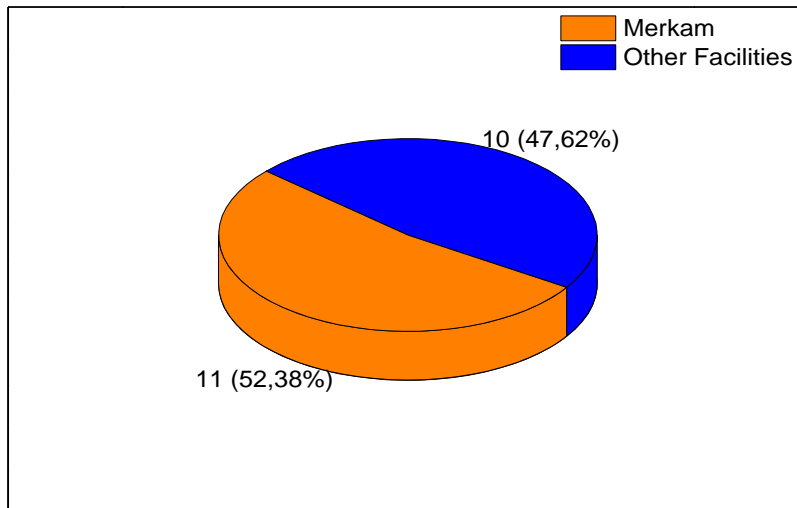
When the gender distribution of academic and administrative staff who benefited from the Erasmus Mobility Program in the last 1 year is examined, it is seen that female and male applicants benefited from the program at equal rates.

Table 7. Distribution of ERASMUS+ Mobility Program Beneficiaries by Gender 2023-2024



Mersin University includes gender equality in its education and training activities through courses. According to the 2023-2024 data, the total number of courses that include the theme of gender in undergraduate and graduate programs across the university is 27. While 16 of these courses are offered in the Department of Women's Studies under the Institute of Social Sciences, the rest are offered in different faculties and departments. In addition, the number of theses that include the theme of gender in Mersin University graduate programs in the 2023-2024 academic year is 11.

Graph 11. Awareness Raising Trainings and Activities on the Themes of Sexual Harassment and Violence Conducted by Mersin University



2. Current Status Analysis Survey Results

To conduct the current status analysis of gender equality at Mersin University, a survey was conducted among Mersin University students, administrative staff, and academic personnel. The survey forms were created by the Gender Equality Plan Preparation Working Group and administered online. As part of the survey, the opinions, suggestions, and thoughts of 128 volunteer students and 168 administrative and academic staff were gathered.

As part of the survey, students were asked for their views on education, research, and campus safety in the context of gender equality, while academic and administrative staff were asked to respond to questions framed around themes of work-life balance, recruitment and career processes, leadership and decision-making processes, equality in education and research, gender-based violence, and sexual harassment in the context of gender equality. No personal information was collected from the staff and students who participated in the survey. Therefore, it is in accordance with research ethics. The data obtained from the survey were digitally recorded in real-time, ensuring that no data loss occurred. The survey data were analyzed using SPSS and Python (Pandas, Matplotlib, Seaborn, Plotly) libraries.

Results from the analysis of the obtained data:

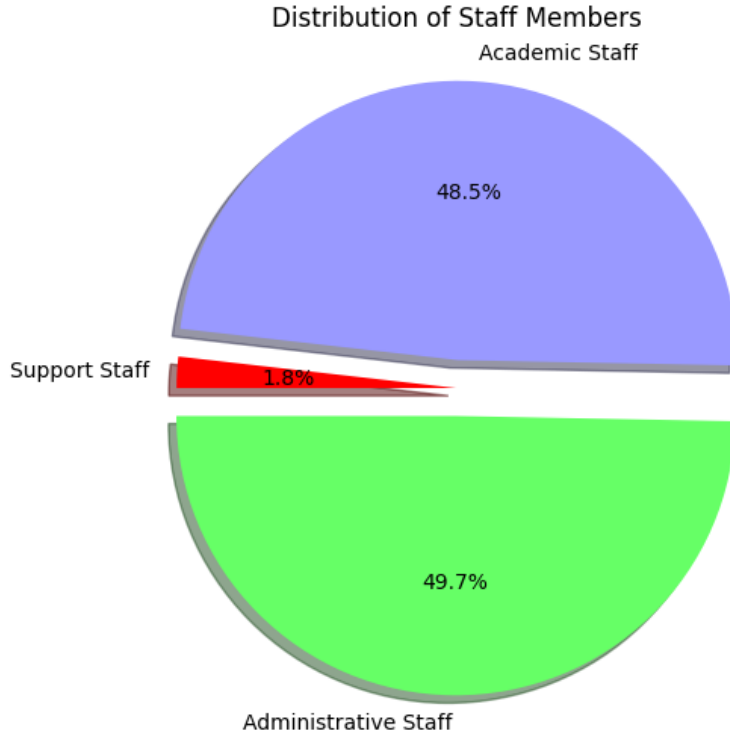
2.1. Demographic Information of Survey Participants

Table 8. Demographic Information of the Staff Who Participated in the Survey

Variable	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Women	90	53.89
Men	77	46.11
Age		
20-30 Range	8	4.8
30-40 Range	46	27.5
40-50 Range	67	40.1
50-60 Range	41	24.6
60 +	5	3.0
Education		
Doctorate	75	44.91%
Bachelor's	44	26.35%
Master's	16	9.58%
Associate Degree	14	8.38%
Secondary Education	12	7.19%
Other	6	3.59%

Year of Employment		
0-20 Years	111	66.5 %
20-30 Years	47	28.1%
Over 30 Years	9	5.4%

Graph 12. Academic-Administrative Distribution of the Staff Who Completed the Survey



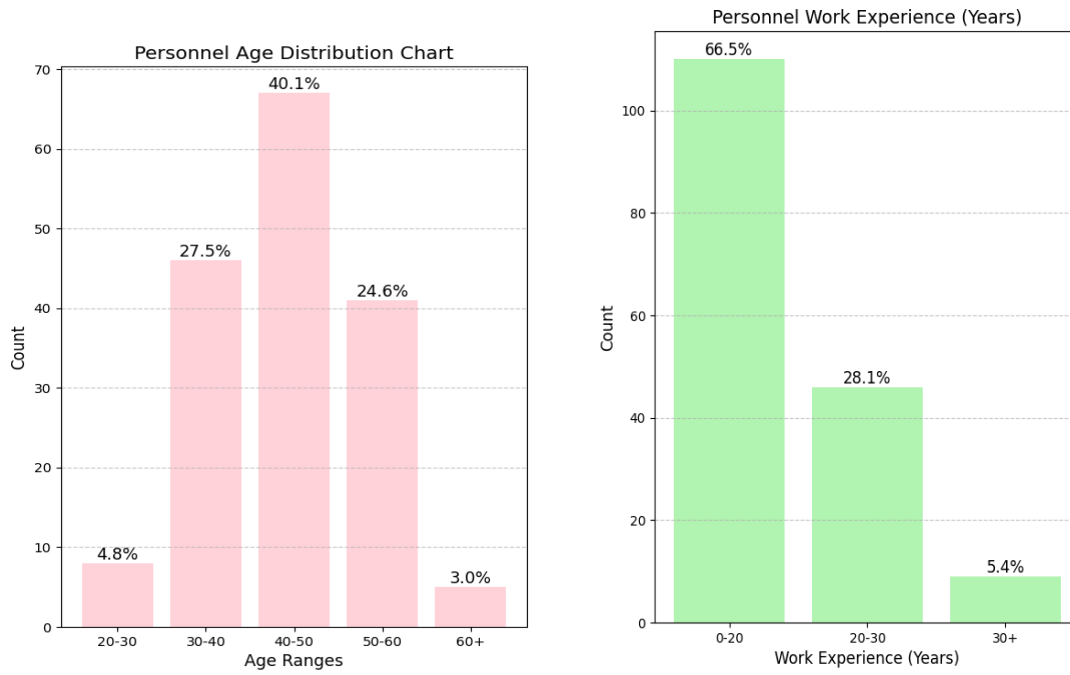
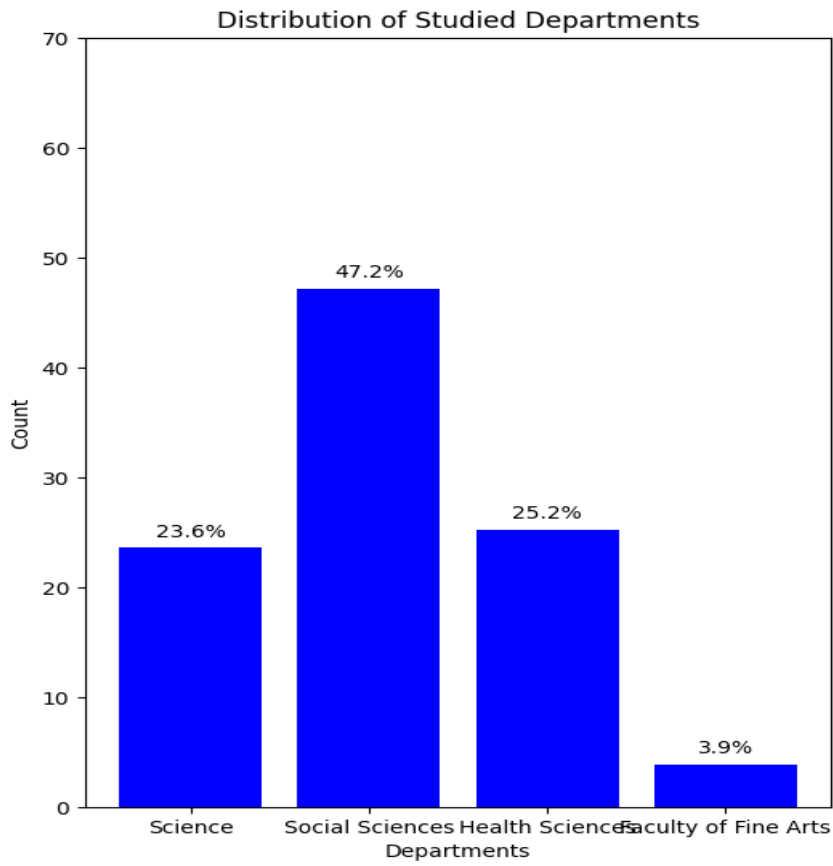
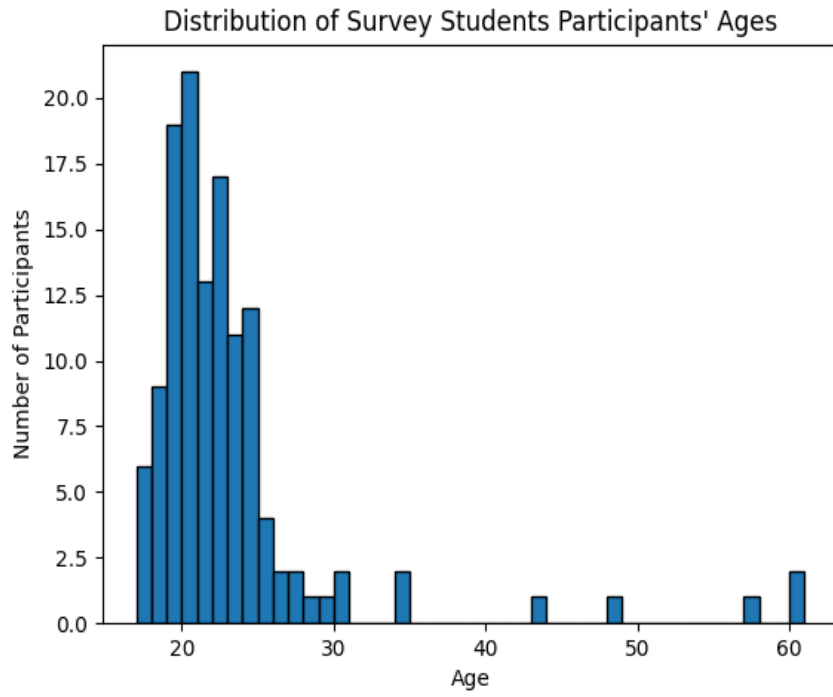


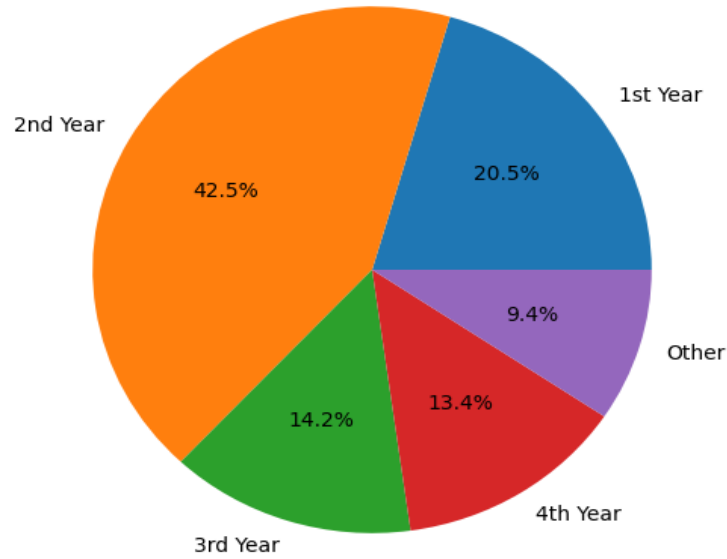
Table 9. Demographic Distribution of the Students Who Completed the Survey

Variable	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Women	79	62.2
Men	48	37.8
Department		
Social Sciences	60	47.2
Fine Arts	5	3.9
Health Sciences	32	25.2
Natural Sciences	30	23.6
Class		
1st year	26	20.5
2nd year	54	42.5
3rd year	18	14.2
4th year	17	13.4
Other	12	9.4



Graph 13. Class Distribution of Students Participating in the Survey

Distribution of Participant Students by Class



2.2. Analysis of Survey Results

The data from the surveys conducted in line with the 5 thematic areas defined under the Gender Equality Plan were analyzed using SPSS and Python (Pandas, Matplotlib, Seaborn, Plotly) libraries.

In Thematic Area 1, the responses to the survey questions on "**Work-Life Balance and Gender Equality in Organizational Culture**" have been analyzed. A survey was conducted to assess the current situation regarding work-life balance. In response to the survey question, "**Do you experience difficulties in your work life due to responsibilities in your non-work life?**" **63.5%** of the participants answered "**No**," while **36.5%** answered "**Yes**." These results indicate that, in general, the majority of employees do not face difficulties related to non-work life responsibilities. However, the 36.5% rate suggests that workplace conditions and support policies should be reviewed more carefully to better address employees' needs.

According to the survey results, **childcare responsibilities** have emerged as the most challenging area for participants. This can be considered one of the most common factors negatively affecting work-life balance. The fact that **59.02%** of employees experience difficulties due to childcare indicates that parents, in particular, struggle to maintain work-life balance and need support for childcare. In addition to childcare, **caregiving responsibilities for other family members** also pose a challenge. This may include family responsibilities such as caring for elderly family members, illness, and disability. The **24.59%** rate indicates that these responsibilities create a burden for employees.

The **97.01%** "No" response to the survey question about **the use of our university's support mechanisms** indicates that the majority of employees do not use the existing support services,

while the **2.99%** "Yes" response reveals that only a very small portion of employees benefit from these opportunities. These results suggest that employees may face difficulties in accessing the existing support services due to factors such as limited access hours, lack of information, low awareness of available support, or complex application processes. This highlights the need for improvement in these services.

The concept analysis derived from the open-ended survey questions reveals the following concept cloud:

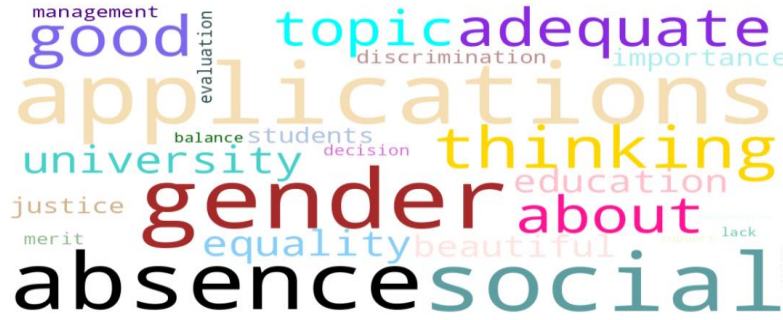


Figure 1. Work-Life Balance and Corporate Culture Survey Result Word Cloud

In Thematic Area 2, following the analysis of the data on **Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression**, the survey administered to the staff included the question: **"Do you think our university is an institution that observes Gender Equality in its recruitment and promotion processes? Please explain why.** When the responses were analyzed, **55.09%** of participants answered **"Yes,"** **32.9%** answered **"No,"** and **11.98%** answered **"I don't know."** The results indicate that there is a need to provide training to staff on gender equality practices in recruitment and career processes. It is also necessary to clearly communicate to the staff how gender equality policies are applied in the recruitment and career stages, as well as what actions are being taken to improve the process. When looking at the common points among the **55.09%** who answered **"Yes"** to the question, they believe that the recruitment and promotion processes are fair, report having positive experiences and observations, do not see any issues with gender equality, and believe that equal opportunities are provided. On the other hand, looking at the common points among the **32.9%** who answered **"No,"** they observe that gender equality is not evident in the recruitment and promotion processes, believe that a male-dominated structure prevails, and think that opportunities for women in key roles are limited.

As part of the survey administered to the staff regarding recruitment and career, the question **"What are your suggestions for the implementation of Gender Equality in our university's recruitment and promotion processes?"** was asked. The responses commonly included the words **"merit," "justice," "equal opportunity," "transparency,"** and **"monitoring.** It is suggested that if the staff progresses based on these concepts emerging from ensuring gender equality in recruitment and career, gender equality will be achieved in the recruitment and promotion processes. In this context, it is important to ensure that the recruitment processes are transparent, that all authorities managing the process are subject to oversight, and that the person being hired demonstrates their qualifications and competence.

The word cloud graphic created from the responses is shown below.



Figure 2. Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression Word Cloud

Another theme measured in the current situation analysis surveys is **Gender Equality in Management and Decision-Making Mechanisms in Thematic Area 3**. As seen from the surveys conducted across Mersin University to analyze the current situation, there is a positive outlook on gender equality in managerial positions. Nearly 80% of the participants believe that gender equality has been achieved in this area at the university. The participants view this as positive for the university. However, there are also those who argue that gender equality is not fully present, especially in senior management levels and decision-making mechanisms. Even if women are in managerial positions, the fact that the final decision-makers are men shows that women are not sufficiently influential in university management decisions. Additionally, when analyzing women in managerial positions, it is evident that women are not the final decision-makers in areas of crisis. According to the feedback surveys from our university's students, there is no awareness among students regarding gender equality in decision-making mechanisms and management levels. It has been noted that students are not aware of the Gender Equality course offered across the university by MERKAM and lack sufficient knowledge on this subject. It has also been observed that female students are less willing to be involved in management and decision-making mechanisms. Therefore, it is necessary to expand women's leadership training in a way that also includes students. In addition, providing guidance and counseling services to young female students regarding career choices could also strengthen their leadership capacity. Ensuring that female leaders are more visible will help female students embrace the campus and take them as role models.

Another topic measured alongside the surveys is **Gender Equality in Education and Research**, which falls under **Thematic Area 4**.

Table 10. Students' Responses on the Implementation of Gender Equality in Education and Research Opportunities

	I don't know	Yes, it is being implemented	It is partially being implemented	No, it is not being implemented
Gender				
Women	9	54	5	11
Men	7	35	4	2
Department Group				
Social Sciences	8	46	2	4
Fine Arts	0	2	0	3
Health Sciences	4	25	1	2
Natural Sciences	4	16	6	4
Class				
1st Year	1	0	0	0
2nd Year	3	20	1	2
3rd Year	8	38	2	6
4th Year	0	11	3	3
Other	4	20	3	2

In the survey administered to students, **68%** of women and **73%** of men answered "**Yes, it is being implemented**" to the question, "**Is a gender equality perspective applied in education and research opportunities at our university?**" The presence of courses related to gender equality in the educational process at our university is seen as an important step in this area. However, there are opinions that these courses should be extended to all departments and made

mandatory. It is important to raise awareness about gender equality among students not only in specific disciplines but across all academic fields. The survey emphasized that not only students but also academic and administrative staff should receive training on gender equality and biases. It is also mentioned that the number of seminars, conferences, and awareness-raising activities organized within the university should be increased. It has been emphasized that events highlighting women's contributions in fields such as science, art, and literature should be organized, and the importance of introducing leadership figures who will inspire students in these areas has been underlined. These events will raise awareness among students and academics regarding the topic, helping to create an equal environment in academia.

Gender equality should also be considered in academic research and academic career processes. In the survey administered to staff, **71.5%** responded "Yes" to the question, **"Is our university sensitive to gender equality in every stage of the research process and in research areas?"** About one-third of the survey participants believe that gender equality is not fully achieved in the academic field. The survey results indicate that female academics think they participate less in research and development projects, are not sufficiently supported in research processes, and have less visibility compared to their male colleagues. It is emphasized that both female and male researchers should be equally represented, and female leaders should be encouraged. To address this issue, there are opinions that positive discrimination should be applied to female researchers, special scholarships and funding should be provided, mentorship programs should be established, and support mechanisms should be developed to help female academics advance their academic careers. It is suggested that the representation of women in workshops, projects, and committees should be made mandatory. Additionally, practices such as flexible working hours and childcare services have been listed as factors that facilitate the continuation of academic life for female academics and students. It is suggested that gender equality is not sufficiently established in research, and that research on gender equality, women's rights, and gender-based inequalities should be encouraged. Additionally, it is recommended that researchers from different disciplines come together to develop projects on gender equality issues. In addition to all these points, it has been emphasized in the survey responses that university educational materials should be reconsidered from a gender equality perspective. Course contents prepared without sexist language will help students develop an egalitarian outlook from an early age. As a result, a comprehensive approach should be adopted to ensure gender equality in universities. Practices such as the development of educational content with an egalitarian understanding, supporting female academics, and strengthening institutional mechanisms will contribute to creating a fairer and more equal academic environment. The effective implementation and continuous evaluation of these policies will help the university achieve a more inclusive structure. Increasing initiatives that raise awareness among students and academics will lay the foundation for an egalitarian transformation not only within the university but also at the societal level.

The Word Cloud visual created from the collected responses:



Figure 3. Word Cloud of Gender Equality Surveys in Education and Research

Another **thematic area** examined in the survey results is related to measures against **gender-based violence and sexual harassment**. Within the framework of the survey applied to staff regarding gender-based violence and sexual harassment, when asked “**Have you witnessed any gender-based discrimination, violence, or harassment at our university?**” **87.3%** of the participants answered “**No**”, while **12.7%** answered “**Yes**”. These results initially suggest that the majority of employees have not experienced any violence, discrimination, or harassment. However, due to the nature of harassment and violence, those who have encountered such situations often avoid disclosing their experiences, or there is difficulty in addressing such issues when brought up. The structural dynamics of harassment and violence make it difficult not only for victims but also for witnesses to speak out about such incidents. Witnesses may be concerned about potential retaliation against the victim, social exclusion, or not being taken seriously by authority figures. Additionally, the institutional and societal culture of silence may reduce the likelihood of witnesses reporting such incidents. Furthermore, there may be a lack of knowledge among participants about 'what constitutes violence and harassment and what does not fall into this category. When student responses to the same question were examined, 5.06% of female students and 8.33% of male students answered 'I don't know. 26.58% of female students answered 'yes' to the question, while 6.33% answered 'partially' and 62.3% answered 'no.' As for male students, 18.75% stated that they had witnessed gender-based violence, harassment, or discrimination at our university, 16.67% said they had partially witnessed it, and 56.25% indicated that they had not witnessed it. When these rates are considered based on gender, the proportion of female students who believe there are issues related to sexual harassment, sexual violence, and security at the university is higher than that of male students. This may indicate that women are more affected by such incidents or perceive these issues as more visible. The fact that the 'I don't know' response is more common among male students than female students also supports this analysis. Although the majority of both staff and students answered 'no,' suggesting that a relatively safe environment has been created at the university for most, considering the 'yes' responses, there is a clear need to review working conditions, support policies, and preventive measures in the fight against gender-based violence, harassment, and discrimination.

In order to assess the adequacy of the university's physical facilities, spatial structure, and security measures on staff and students, the question '**Have you experienced any security concerns within the university campus regarding physical facilities, space, and security measures?**' was asked. A large portion of the staff who responded to this question and expressed security concerns on campus stated that these concerns were due to isolation, darkness, and dogs. 6.30% of the students who answered the question '**Do you think there are**

issues related to sexual harassment, sexual violence, and security at our university?' stated that they had no information. The percentage of students who answered 'yes' is 23.62%, the percentage who answered 'no' is 59.84%, and the percentage who answered 'partially' is 10.24%. Among female participants, the percentage of those who answered 'Yes' (%26.58) is higher than that of male participants (%18.75). This may indicate that women experience or notice more issues related to sexual harassment, violence, and security at the university. Among male students, however, the percentage of those who answered 'Partially' (%16.67) is higher than that of females (%6.33). This might suggest that male participants may have preferred to answer 'partially' rather than fully acknowledging the issues. The higher percentage of 'Yes' responses among female participants suggests that specific strategies need to be developed to ensure women's safety. To measure the awareness of support mechanisms available in case of sexual harassment and assault at the university, the question **'Are you aware of the units at our university where support can be sought in cases of sexual harassment and assault?'** was asked.

To this question, 54.22% of the staff answered 'Yes' and 45.78% answered 'No.' This is the highest negative response among the questions. The findings regarding students show that their knowledge of what to do when faced with issues related to sexual harassment, sexual violence, and security is inconsistent and lacking (Figure 1).

The word cloud visual created from the responses is as follows:

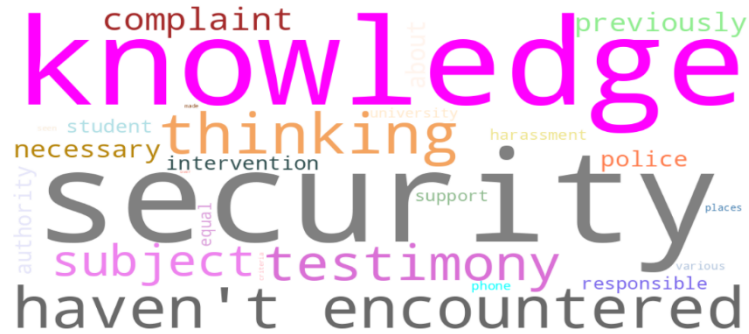


Figure 4. Word cloud about Awareness of Support Mechanisms in University Student

The survey results reveal that the level of awareness about support mechanisms available within the university in cases of sexual harassment and gender-based violence is not sufficiently high, even among the staff. The responses from both staff and students indicate that the awareness and effectiveness of universities' official procedures and practices on this issue is an area that needs improvement.

MERSİN UNIVERSITY
2025-2028
GENDER EQUALITY
PLAN
(MUGEP)

THEMATIC AREA 1: WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

A key component in transforming an organization's culture to advance gender equality is work-life balance (European Commission, 2021). Work-life balance applies to both women and men, and involves providing the necessary support for all employees to balance their careers with personal responsibilities outside the workplace, including caregiving obligations (European Commission, 2021). Among the most effective tools for improving individuals' quality of life and achieving gender equality are work-life balance practices such as support for caregiving responsibilities, parental leave, flexible and remote working options, career transition support, stress management programs, and workload management initiatives.

In the university's gender equality plan, which emphasizes the importance of work-life balance as the first of our thematic areas, the goal is to enable academic and administrative staff to successfully manage both their work and personal lives. To achieve this, supportive policies such as flexible working hours, telecommuting, daycare facilities, parental leave, and care services are being developed. Additionally, the plan aims to create a work environment where everyone has equal opportunities by addressing gender roles and stereotypes that negatively impact work-life balance. The Gender Equality Plan seeks to foster a culture that supports work-life balance within the university, thereby boosting employee motivation, enhancing productivity, and revealing talents.

Table 11. Goals and Action Plans to Strengthen the Work-Life Balance of University Employees

Goals	Actions	Responsible Units	Time	Observations
Flexible working hours	Flexible working hours for employees with childcare responsibilities Offering flexible leave and working hours for eldercare or illness Reorganizing working hours Developing leave and rest policies	Presidency Department of Personnel Deans Head of Departments MERKAM Department of Health, Culture and Sports Related units	Short Term	Reporting flexible working hours practice at the end of the year
Improving care support	Preparation of policies to reduce the burden of care labor Supportive programs that offer guidance and	Presidency Department of Personnel Deans	Medium Term	Reporting on the progress of initiatives to improve care support

Goals	Actions	Responsible Units	Time	Observations
	<p>resources for family caregiving</p> <p>Increasing the number of care rooms and improving accessibility</p> <p>Facilitating workplace adaptation of female staff returning from parental leave</p> <p>Providing support to employees to ease childcare responsibilities (e.g., daycare assistance, discounts on care services)¹</p>	<p>Head of Departments</p> <p>MERKAM</p> <p>Department of Health, Culture and Sports</p> <p>Related units</p>		
Strengthening work-life balance through enhanced support services	<p>Providing regular information and guidance services to make the university's support mechanisms more accessible and understandable</p> <p>Expanding and continuously improving support services for employees' various needs, incorporating feedback for enhancement</p>	<p>Presidency</p> <p>Department of Personnel</p> <p>Deans</p> <p>Head of Departments</p> <p>MERKAM</p> <p>Department of Health, Culture and Sports</p> <p>Related units</p>	Medium Term	Reporting on the support mechanisms provided by the university
Facilitating workplace adaptation by strengthening	<p>Strengthening the social bonds of employees</p> <p>Organizing various activities and programs to</p>	<p>Presidency</p> <p>Department of Personnel</p> <p>Deans</p>	Medium Term	Reporting of activities to strengthen institutional belonging

¹ There are 2 kindergartens throughout the university, one in Çiftlikköy Campus (1100 m2) and the other in Yenişehir Campus (1250 m2). The number of baby care rooms is 7, 6 of which are located in the hospital and 1 in the Mediterranean Culture and Congress Center.

Goals	Actions	Responsible Units	Time	Observations
institutional belonging	enhance employees' corporate belonging (e.g., social events, teamwork, award programs)	Head of Departments MERKAM Department of Health, Culture and Sports Related units		
Increasing the motivation and well-being of employees	Providing training and resources on topics such as stress management, healthy living and personal development Implementing reward and recognition programs to increase employee motivation and job satisfaction	Presidency Department of Personnel Deans Head of Departments MERKAM Department of Health, Culture and Sports Related units	Medium and Long Term	Reporting on practices that support employees' mental and physical well-being
Improving Work-Life Balance by Enhancing Communication and Information Sharing	Regularly informing employees about university policies, support mechanisms, and other important issues Establishing effective channels for collecting and evaluating employee feedback	Presidency Department of Personnel Deans Head of Departments MERKAM Department of Health, Culture and Sports Related units	Medium Term	Reporting on practices that ensure effective communication and information sharing

THEMATIC AREA 2: GENDER EQUALITY IN RECRUITMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION

Another important component of the changing of an organization's culture to advance gender equality is “recruitment and career” policies. Recruitment and career goals should be equitable for all genders. For this purpose, it is very important that the language used in job advertisements and job descriptions should be prepared according to gender equality. The language used in job advertisements should be organized in a way that does not discourage women candidates from applying for a job and does not imply one gender (UNDP, 2020). It is important to avoid sexist questions in interviews (e.g., “Are you planning to have children?”), and to make it clear that women's rights arising from relevant laws and regulations will not be hindered and that promotion opportunities in the workplace will be equal. It is important for the peace and success of the organization in terms of recruitment and career goals to select female candidates from male and female candidates with the same characteristics, especially in units where the proportion of female employees is low, to encourage men to work in jobs that are seen as specific to women, to inform that the salaries of male and female candidates will not be different during recruitment, and to make gender distribution balanced in lower middle and senior management positions.

Table 12. Goals and Action Plans to Strengthen the Recruitment and Career Development Processes of University Employees

Goals	Actions	Responsible Unit	Time	Observation
Commitment to comply with gender equality in the university's recruitment and career processes	Adding a relevant article to the relevant regulations committing to gender-sensitive recruitment processes	Presidency Department of Personnel Head of Departments	Short Term	Gender analysis control of the recruitments made during the year
Raising staff awareness on recruitment and career processes	Raising awareness on gender equality and preventing discrimination in recruitment and career processes	Presidency Department of Personnel GE Commission Related Units	Short and Medium Term	Controlling and checking that personnel training is provided by the GE and relevant units
Continuous publication of personnel data on how and on what grounds recruitment and career	Regularly recording the number and distribution rates of female and male administrative, academic and auxiliary personnel in all units of the university, both in terms of number and position/roster,	Presidency Deans Head of Departments	Short and Medium Term	Controlling the compatibility between the applicants for job and staff vacancies and the

Goals	Actions	Responsible Unit	Time	Observation
advancement processes are carried out	and informing the personnel. Upon request, immediately presenting the reasons why the relevant career advancement was realized	Data Processing Research and Application Center Related Units		Qualifications of the job
Recording the gender distribution of graduate students, graduate programs and job applicants	By recording the gender of the people who want to be students and staff in the units, investigating the reasons for unequal applications and ensuring that the necessary arrangements are done to make the units attractive for all genders	MERKAM GE Commission Related Units	Long and Medium Term	Obtaining the gender distribution of applicants and trainees from relevant units
Acting in accordance with gender equality in the recruitment and promotion processes of academic and administrative staff and using gender-equitable language	Teaching relevant personnel that recruitment and promotion processes should be carried out according to gender equality principles, and preparing the advertisements of jobs in line with this objective. Monitoring compliance with the target during promotion and recruitment. Ensuring gender equality in promotions to lower, middle and upper management positions	Presidency MERKAM Related Units	Short and Medium Term	Continuously checking that the texts used in job advertisements, interviews and written exams comply with gender equality
Encouraging managerial staff who considers gender equality in recruitment and career advancement processes	Recognizing and announcing within the organization those executive personnel who apply gender equality in recruitment and career advancement processes, and preparing facilitating processes for career advancement to whom balancing gender equality.	Department of Personnel Related Units	Long and Medium Term	Identifying and facilitating the promotion of personnel who implement gender equality and announcing this situation

THEMATIC AREA 3: GENDER EQUALITY IN MANAGERIAL POSITIONS AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Under this theme, the rate of Mersin University members in managerial positions and the decision-making mechanisms of the university are evaluated in terms of gender equality. First of all, in order to formulate the goals and strategies for this theme in the GE Plan, the current situation of Mersin University in numerical terms was assessed and the available data was analyzed. Accordingly, the distribution of women-men ratios in the senior management of the university and the existence of equal representation in decision-making mechanisms, especially in the Senate, and similar topics were examined. Since the establishment of our university, 5 rectors have served and all of them are men. Among the vice-presidency, there has been only 1 female vice-presidency so far. In the current situation, the president and Vice president are all men. There are currently 2 female advisors among the Advisors to the Rector. In addition, in terms of participation in management processes, it is seen that gender equality balance is tried to be implemented in the boards of directors, especially in the Senate. In numerical terms, even though the number of female administrators at our university has reached a considerable number, the number of women at the top of the hierarchy is less than that of men. In the administrative organization chart, it is seen that women are not sufficiently involved in decision-making mechanisms and that equality in this regard is moving away from equality. However, there are various steps that need to be taken and continuously observed in order to achieve and maintain this equality. With the realization of these goals, it will be possible to ensure gender equality in decision-making processes, while at the same time ensuring a balance in the access of female academics and administrative staff to managerial positions.

Table 13. Goals and Practices to be Developed to Strengthen Gender Equality in Managerial Positions and Decision-Making Processes

Goals	Actions	Responsible Unit	Time	Observation
Identifying, monitoring and evaluating the current and future positions of women academics in management positions	Setting up a commission to monitor GE equality across the university and providing appropriate support mechanisms in the institution	GE commission Department of Personnel	Short, Medium and Long Term	Establishment of GE commission and commission assignments
	Data unit collects and publishes GE sensitive data	All Academics Units MERKAM		Annual reports of the GE commission Submission of GE commission reports to the Senate and publication on the website
	Providing GE trainings for university academic and administrative staff	Data Coordinatorship		
	Analyzing gender equality practices in national and international standards			Examination of Quality Commission reports
	Monitoring and analyzing the performance evaluations of university			

	staff on the basis of gender			
To increase the representation of women in the administrative board of the University by considering the principle of merit	Ensuring a balance between men and women in the composition of the board of directors	Presidency General Secretariat	Medium and Long Term	Monitoring the applicability of gender equality quota at management levels in all academic and administrative units Leadership programs for women academics Reporting in assignment and promotion processes Monitoring the management structure and activities of student organizations according to gender equality
	Supporting women academics in managerial positions	Department of Personnel		
	Observing the principle of gender equality in the appointment and promotion of academics	All Academic Units MERKAM		
	Creating incentives and organizing leadership programs that will enable women academics to take a role in management	GE Commission All Administrative		
	Holding position for women and positive discrimination	Departments Women's and Gender Studies		
	Supporting women employees in administrative positions to take managerial positions and providing in-service trainings to increase their managerial skills	MA and PhD Program Officers		
	Ensuring gender equality in positions where students are represented			
	Conducting programs to increase the awareness of student community advisors on gender equality			

<p>To ensure that the institutional structure and corporate culture of the university adopts a GE-sensitive identity</p>	<p>Undertaking internal control to ensure equitable representation in decision-making mechanisms in the areas of representation of the university</p> <p>Ensuring that the University's Strategic Plan is based on the principle of gender equality</p> <p>Making university budget planning and practices sensitive to gender equality</p> <p>Transforming the committees established for the issuance of regulations within the university or for regulations related to the institutional structure concerning the management into GE-sensitive</p> <p>Considering the balance of men and women in the establishment of commissions based on merit.</p>	<p>Presidency</p> <p>General Secretariat</p> <p>Legal Consultancy</p> <p>Quality Commission</p> <p>Strategy Development Department</p> <p>Department of Health, Culture and Sports</p> <p>GE Commission</p> <p>Quality Unit</p> <p>Department of Personnel</p> <p>All Academic units</p> <p>MERKAM</p>	<p>Medium and Long Term</p>	<p>Monitoring Strategy Plan and Budget</p> <p>Implementation in the annual reports prepared by the Gender Equality Commission</p> <p>Monitoring rate of gender equality in legislation and regulation committees</p> <p>Monitoring and reporting gender distribution in decision-making mechanisms from each unit</p>
<p>Raising awareness to promote gender equality in the executive positions and decision-making mechanisms of the university</p>	<p>Providing trainings to prevent the language used in the university's institutional culture and communication opportunities from being gender-blind</p> <p>Preferring neutral terms such as candidate or personnel in job postings and correspondence</p> <p>Raising awareness of academic and administrative units of the university staff to ensure</p>	<p>Rectorate</p> <p>All Academic Units</p> <p>Department of Personnel</p> <p>Press and Public Relations Branch</p> <p>Directorate</p> <p>MERKAM</p>	<p>Short, Medium and Long Term</p>	<p>Providing gender equality trainings in correspondence and daily language in administrative units and reporting the number of trainings</p> <p>Reporting of awareness-raising activities for ensuring equality</p>

	<p>gender equality in language in official correspondence and daily life</p> <p>Holding in-house meetings for the development and implementation of strategies on gender equality within the units</p> <p>Emphasizing gender equality in the mission and vision goals of all academic units</p> <p>Providing trainings for women managers in university administration and decision-making mechanisms to raise awareness on GE</p>	<p>Women's and Gender Studies MA and PhD Program Officers</p>		<p>in decision-making mechanisms in Academic Units</p> <p>GE commission annual monitoring reports</p>
<p>Encouraging women's leadership at the university and creating support mechanisms</p>	<p>Organizing management (leadership) programs for women academicians</p> <p>Organizing management (leadership) programs for female administrative staff</p> <p>Planning mentoring programs with women role models</p> <p>Organizing experience sharing meetings with women in managerial positions at the university</p> <p>Implementing rotational management models in units for women academics to gain managerial experience. Adding the principle of positive discrimination for women administrators in appointment and promotion criteria</p>	<p>Presidency</p> <p>Department of Personnel</p> <p>All Academic Units</p> <p>MERKAM</p> <p>Women's and Gender Studies MA and PhD Program Officers</p>	<p>Long and Medium Term</p>	<p>GE Commission Annual Reporting</p> <p>MERKAM Annual Report</p> <p>Numerical Data of Academic Units</p>

	Organizing women manager meetings with students. Planning women leadership trainings			
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THEMATIC AREA 4: GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Ensuring gender equality in research and education at universities is vital for increasing academic success and creating an inclusive learning and working environment. According to Horizon Europe's gender equality guidelines, taking a gender perspective into account in academic research leads to more accurate and comprehensive scientific outputs. In order to create an academic environment that is sensitive to gender equality, universities are recommended to consider the gender dimension in their research projects and to expand courses on gender equality in their curricula. Universities are one of the most important institutions for achieving and promoting gender equality. Ensuring gender equality in all areas of education and academic life enables students and academics to work and develop in a more equitable environment.

Table 14. Goals and Action Plan to Strengthen Gender Equality in Education and Research

Goals	Actions	Responsible Units	Time	Observation
Commitment to integrate gender equality into research and education content	The University's Strategic Plan and related documents include that Gender Equality is integrated into research and education contents	Rectorship GE Commission	Short Term	Review of the strategic plan and related documents
Providing gender equality training to academic and administrative staff	Creating modules to provide Gender Equality training to academic and administrative staff	MERKAM GE Commission	Short and Medium Term	Number of individuals participating in the gender equality training module for academic and administrative staff (annual)
Supporting gender equality themed research and projects	Funding research, projects and theses on Gender Equality Organizing meetings and workshops where studies on Gender Equality will be presented Encouraging interdisciplinary studies on Gender Equality Requiring project coordinators to participate in Gender Equality Training in	BAP All Academic Units Library and Documentation Department	Short and Medium Term	Number of projects supported by BAP on Gender Equality (annual) Number of research studies and theses on Gender Equality (annual) Number of workshops on Gender Equality (annual) Number of BAP project coordinators participating in

	Gender Equality-themed projects supported by BAP			Gender Equality Training (annual)
Integration of gender equality into associate and undergraduate curricula	<p>Offering compulsory/elective courses on gender equality in all associate and undergraduate education programs of the university</p> <p>Compulsory “Gender Equality Awareness in Higher Education” course for freshmen students</p> <p>Reviewing and updating textbooks, curricula and educational materials with a gender equality perspective</p> <p>Creating training modules for academic staff to integrate a gender perspective into course content</p> <p>Gender equality and social equality were included in the Student Satisfaction Survey. adding questions on gender-sensitive language and inclusion</p>	<p>All Academic Units</p> <p>Elective courses coordinatorship</p> <p>Department of Student Affairs</p> <p>MERKAM</p> <p>GE Commission</p>	<p>Long and Medium Term</p>	<p>Number of courses on gender equality (annually)</p> <p>Number of students taking courses on gender equality (annually)</p> <p>Reviewing textbooks, curricula and educational materials from a gender equality perspective</p> <p>Special evaluation of gender equality questions of the Student Satisfaction Survey (annually)</p>
Awareness events	<p>Organizing seminars, panels and workshops on gender equality for academic, administrative staff and students</p>	<p>BAP</p> <p>Technocity</p> <p>Technology Transfer Office</p> <p>Faculties and Institute</p>	<p>Short, Medium and Long Term</p>	<p>Number of trainings on gender equality (annually)</p> <p>Number of people participating in training (annually)</p>

	<p>Organizing a project competition on gender equality</p> <p>Ensuring wide participation by announcing the competitions organized on gender equality</p> <p>Supporting social responsibility projects of student organizations on gender equality</p>	<p>Health, Culture and Sports Department Presidency</p> <p>Student Communities</p> <p>MERKAM</p>		<p>Number of projects participating in the competition (annually)</p> <p>Number of awards offered and granted (annually)</p> <p>Number of projects organized by student societies on gender equality (annually)</p>
Visibility and information	<p>Using the University web page and social media tools to disseminate the results of the seminars, panels and workshops organized</p> <p>Sharing informative notes on the University's website to raise awareness on gender equality</p> <p>Placing posters about Gender Equality in visible areas on campus</p> <p>Strengthening accessibility of academic staff and students to resources on gender equality</p>	<p>Press and Public Relations Branch Directorate</p> <p>Library and Documentation Department</p> <p>MERKAM</p> <p>GE Commission</p>	<p>Short and Long Term</p>	<p>Number of announcements of studies, panels and events on gender equality on the university website and social media accounts (annually)</p> <p>Number of resources on gender equality added to the library collections (annually)</p>
Support mechanisms for women students and researchers	<p>Mentoring program to support the careers of women academics and students</p> <p>Organizing interviews with female leading figures who will inspire students in</p>	<p>Rektörlük</p> <p>BAP</p> <p>Academic Units</p> <p>Health, Culture and Sports Department Presidency</p>	<p>Short, Medium and Long Term</p>	<p>Number of mentoring programs for women students and researchers (annually)</p> <p>Number of interviews with inspiring women</p>

	<p>fields such as science, art, literature and sports</p> <p>Providing training to female academic staff on project development and execution in order to encourage project applications</p> <p>Providing special scholarships/funds for female academic staff to conduct research</p>			<p>leaders for students (annually)</p> <p>Number of trainings given to female academic staff on project preparation (annually)</p> <p>Number of female academics participating in trainings (annually)</p> <p>Number of research projects conducted by female academic staff (annually)</p> <p>Amount of special scholarships/funds provided to female academic staff for research (annually)</p>
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THEMATIC AREA 5: MEASURES AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The European Commission identifies sexual harassment and gender-based violence as one of the biggest barriers to gender equality and emphasizes that such situations should be prevented in educational institutions. In this context, in order to develop a gender equality action plan at our university, surveys were conducted to understand the experiences of students and staff regarding violence, sexual harassment and campus safety. This report aims to analyze the survey findings and provide recommendations for our university's gender equality policies.

Table 15. Goals and Strategies to Prevent Gender-Based Discrimination, Violence, and Harassment in the University Environment

Goals	Actions	Responsible units	Time	Observations
Providing a free academic research, education and working environment based on mutual respect and free from sexual harassment, sexual assault, gender-based violence and discrimination	<p>Strengthening Institutional Policies and Guidelines</p> <p>Awareness and training programs for students and staff</p> <p>Strengthening support mechanisms against sexual harassment and violence</p> <p>Maintaining confidentiality and security principles</p> <p>Increasing campus security measures</p> <p>Cooperation with relevant public institutions and non-governmental organizations</p> <p>Creating anti-discrimination academic and social policies</p>	<p>Presidency and Faculty Administrations</p> <p>Mersin University Support Unit Against Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault</p> <p>MERKAM</p> <p>GE Commission</p> <p>University Legal Consultancy</p> <p>Psychological Counseling and Guidance Center</p> <p>Other related units</p>	<p>Medium and Long Term</p>	<p>Awareness Surveys</p> <p>Support mechanisms for victims effectiveness</p>
Increasing the publicity of Mersin University Support Unit against Sexual	<p>Informing about the unit to students and staff</p> <p>Introducing the unit to academic and</p>	<p>Mersin University Support Unit Against Sexual</p>	<p>Medium Term</p>	<p>Monitoring the change in the number of applications to the unit</p>

Harassment and Sexual Assault	administrative managers	Harassment and Sexual Assault MERKAM GE Commission Related Units		Surveys to measure how much students and staff know about the unit
For students, lecturers and administrative staff to learn about their rights in the context of preventing non-consensual sexual behaviors and to raise awareness on this issue	Organizing training programs with the support of the relevant units of the University and encouraging the academic staff, administrative staff and managers of the University to participate	Mersin University Support Unit Against Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault MERKAM GE Commission General Secretariat Academic Units Strategy Development Department Center for Sustainable Teaching and Learning	Long and Medium Term	Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Awareness Training (annual)
Including concepts related to sexual harassment and gender-based violence in gender equality courses	Identification and elimination of deficiencies Ensuring that the subject is explained effectively by developing interactive materials such as videos, case studies and simulations	MERKAM Related Units	Short and Long Term	Gender Equality Based Teaching Methods Guide
Ensure a safe university environment against sexual harassment and	Identification and illumination of the places requested to be illuminated on the campus,	Presidency Mersin University Support Unit	Long Term	Maintaining on-campus lighting

<p>gender-based violence</p>	<p>Increasing physical security measures such as the installation of emergency buttons</p> <p>Increasing the number of rings to organize transportation in a safe way</p> <p>Ensuring that security personnel, including women, move around the campus with mobile vehicles</p> <p>Establishment of communication channels through which a denunciation or emergency call can be made to the security unit in case of need (purple call)</p> <p>Keeping the campus more lively, especially at night, increasing social activities and creating environments that will make students feel safer on campus</p>	<p>Against Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault</p> <p>MERKAM</p> <p>GE Commission</p> <p>General Secretariat</p> <p>Department of Construction and Technical Affairs</p> <p>Protection and Security Directorate</p> <p>Related Units</p>		<p>Establishing a safe on-campus transportation network</p>
<p>Preventing sexual harassment and violence within the university and creating safe spaces</p>	<p>Developing cooperation mechanisms with local security units and relevant public institutions and establishing effective intervention processes</p>	<p>University Management (Presidency/ Deans' Offices)</p> <p>Mersin University Support Unit Against Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault</p>	<p>Long Term</p>	<p>Cooperation Protocols</p> <p>University Campus Safety Data</p>

		<p>MERKAM</p> <p>GE Commission</p> <p>University Legal Consultancy</p> <p>Psychological Counseling and Guidance Center</p> <p>Local Security Units (Police Department, Gendarmerie, etc.)</p> <p>Women's Counseling Centers</p> <p>Related Units</p>		
<p>Evaluation of the work of the Support Unit against Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault</p>	<p>Preparation annual reports</p>	<p>Mersin University Support Unit Against Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault</p> <p>MERKAM</p> <p>GE Commission</p> <p>Related Units</p>	<p>Long and Medium Term</p>	<p>Number of prepared reports</p>