



OSTRAVSKÁ
UNIVERZITA

Final Report on the Gender Audit

Contract owner: University of Ostrava

Main auditor: JUDr. Jana Paják, LL.M.

Questionnaire survey: Mgr. Monika Šumberová
doc. Mgr. Pavel Drozd, Ph.D.

Period of audit implementation: October 2021 – February 2022



Contents

1. Brief information on the audited organisation	3
2. Information on the performed gender audit.....	3
a) HR policy:	4
b) Work-life balance:.....	5
c) Organisational culture:.....	5
3. Used methods	6
4. Basic findings of the audit	7
4.1. HR policy	8
Process of addressing workforce/gender-correct job advertising.....	8
Recruitment procedure	9
Dismissal/leaving of employees.....	9
Age diversity and age management.....	10
Training – personal and professional development of employees.....	11
4.2. Work-life balance.....	11
Flexible forms of work.....	11
Activities facilitating a more quality work-life balance.....	11
Management of maternity and parental leave	12
4.3. Organisational culture	12
Approach to the policy of equal opportunities	13
System of communication.....	13
Gender-correct language.....	13
Working environment/atmosphere.....	13
5. Recommendation for further course in the area of gender equality	14
6. Responsibility.....	14
7. Resources	15



1. Brief information on the audited organisation

The University of Ostrava was founded on 28 September 1991 and its establishment was an important historical milestone for Ostrava and the whole region. The University, which added humanities into higher education, was a new opportunity for the whole region.

Currently, the University of Ostrava is a renowned educational and research institution which also emphasises a so-called third role of a university: a social role. It represents an essential stakeholder in the field of social and cultural events in Ostrava and the whole region since it directly organises events for the public (Ostrava Researchers' Night, We are Ostravská!, etc.), or indirectly through the activities of students and academic staff. The cultural spectrum is also enriched by the university various and sophisticated initiatives.

2. Information on the performed gender audit

Reasons for audit implementation: Equality of women and men belongs to the principal values of the Czech Republic, which are also expressed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms. Although the issue of equality has become more important over the last years, there are still lots of gender inequalities, not only in the university environment. The UO perceives the issue of the equality of women and men in the field of employees and academic community as fundamental and important. Therefore, this area and its development has been integrated into the Strategic Plan 2021-2025. The data concerning the ratio of men and women at the University of Ostrava is annually monitored within the Annual Reports. With regards to the mentioned facts, the UO performed an audit of this gender area aiming at mapping of the real condition and taking appropriate measures for its development.

Period of audit implementation: The audit was carried out from October 2021 to February 2022. The period of October-November was used to collect data related to the gender issue, including the processing of a questionnaire survey carried out at the beginning of 2021. The period of December 2021 to January 2022 was used to the evaluation of individual data collected in relation to the content of internal regulations and their implementation. The conformity of the regulations with their implementation has been verified by outputs from individual working units.



Place of audit implementation: Rectorate of the University of Ostrava and individual parts.

Content of the audit: In general, the audit represents the situation in the Czech Republic with a subsequent comparison of the situation at the University of Ostrava. The gender audit monitors and evaluates the observance of gender equality in the audited organisation, namely across the whole spectrum of processes, presentations and activities of the organisation. It emphasises the fact whether the organisation behaves discriminatorily either through direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour, which might result in a labour-law suit, or through frequently underestimated ineffective use of human force with impacts on communication and organisational processes. Part of the gender audit is monitoring the quality of “relationship culture” in the audited organisation, which is the barometer of the working environment that significantly influences work effectivity, quality, and performance. In this regard, employees’ “subjective” evaluation and their view of the employer is very important since this “subjective” view can also determine the motivation and the sense of belonging with the employer. Concerning the nature of the observed facts, the organisation is also analysed from the perspective of its functioning in the organisational and human resources area. The aspects mentioned above then provide a global view on the current operation of the organisation regarding its gender-(in)correct approach and the form of work with employees. The monitored areas are:

- a) Human resources policy (hereunder “HR policy”)
- b) Work-life balance
- c) Organisational culture.

a) HR policy:

HR policy is a strategic area of any organisation. The gender audit focuses on the conditions, relationships, processes within HR issues, with an emphasis on whether the organisation applies directly or indirectly an equal opportunities policy that, for example, combats the application of gender stereotypes. The analysis of HR policy follows the entire process of working with the human capital of the audited organisation, from the selection and recruitment process, through the care of employees to the dismissal of employees. From the perspective of gender analysis, the organisational staffing structure is always examined with an emphasis on the (un)equal ratio of men and women in management and other functions.

- Process of addressing workforce/gender-correct advertising.
- Process of employee recruitment.
- Dismissal/leaving of employees.
- Age diversity and age management.
- Training.

b) Work-life balance:

Concerning gender perspective, the organization is evaluated if and how it enables to balance work and life, if parents – in the context of prevailing women/mothers tendency – are not discriminated, etc. Measures enabling the work-life balance taken by the employer, if implemented, need to be integrated into documentation, and perceived and communicated as a supportive aspect of good image and gender correctness. Work is the second most important value, after family, for most women and men. Harmonizing work and life represents everyday reality for all working women and men. Family and work are interconnected and the ways how people organize their work and family life must necessarily relate to external conditions and influences ruled by the labour market. Work-life balance is most crucial for families with small children and people aged 50+ (mainly women), who often take care of their immature children and ageing parents at the same time. However, it must be declared that the work-life balance issue concerns all employees, this issue is important for everyone. When implementing the work-life balance principles, the way how the employer approaches it is essential. It can be stated that an employer that has already been active in the work-life balance issue considers it part of its organisational culture. Such organisations try to develop their employees and create conditions to make them stay. The term work-life balance represents a wide range of activities which are ideal to combine work and life. With respect to this, the gender audit focused on the areas that simplify the work-life balance:

- Flexible forms of work.
- Activities simplifying work-life balance.
- Management of maternity and parental leave.

c) Organisational culture:

Organisational culture represents “organisation personality”, it is difficult to describe and objectivise. Similarly to people, organisations also tend to create own image presented to its surroundings. With respect to this fact, it is necessary to state that reality can be significantly different from such a “created image”. Organisational culture can be perceived as a comprehensive set of principles, approaches, norms, and values. Those are then shared and kept within the organisation as general behaviour patterns. This culture

determines external behaviour of the organisation toward its surroundings. It is also created by internal relationships, communication, and working environment. A modern employer actively works with the policy of equal opportunities and diversity, openly communicates with its environment and employees, and creates comfortable working environment. Its internal culture is sensitive, open, and respecting. Regarding organisational culture, the audit focused on:

- Approach to the policy of equal opportunities.
- System of communication.
- Gender-correct language
- Working environment/atmosphere/negative phenomena at a workplace – discrimination/sexual harassment, bullying

3. Used methods

Content analysis of documents

The main information sources of the content analysis were the website, publicly available external materials, internal documents, and data from the UO data warehouse. Implementation of the documents into practice was discussed with employees of the human resources departments.

Questionnaire survey

The questionnaire survey completed the content analysis of documents. The questionnaire was in the online form and the link to the questionnaire was sent to all employees. The output from the questionnaire survey forms an appendix to the gender audit.

Analysed documents:

- Outputs from the questionnaire survey
- Internal regulations of the audited subject
- Data from a data warehouse
- Website of the audited subject and publicly available presentation materials

4. Basic findings of the audit

The UO perceives the issue of equality of women and men with respect to employees and academic community as fundamental and essential. Therefore, this area and its development has been integrated into the Strategic Plan 2021-2025. The Strategic Plan of the UO for 2021-2025 particularly focuses on the HR policy, where one of the defined goals was to support motivational environment for employees and better care for them. Expected activities and outputs are, for example: support of the development of managerial competences, support of career growth, methodical support in publishing, promoting, and administering open recruitment procedures – also using the Euraxess platform, support of junior employees in relation the career regulations, mentoring, support of tools for work-life balance, and primarily **active forming of gender policy**. In the Strategic Plan 2021-2025, the UO has committed to and still commits to the principles stipulated in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers. The above-mentioned is an inseparable part of holding the HR Award, which is awarded by the European Commission to research institutions which implement the HRS4R strategy (Human Resources Strategy for Researchers). In order to check the quality of human resources management and the fulfilment of the HR Award requirements, a questionnaire survey was performed among the employees of the University of Ostrava. The results are part of the gender audit appendix. The **questionnaire survey** was focused, among others, on working conditions of employees, communication, work-life balance, equality and discrimination, or following ethical rules at a workplace.

The issue of equality has been also observed by the UO in the **Collective Agreement**, which stipulates equal treatment in Paragraph 6.1. It declares that the employer is obliged to guarantee equal treatment of all employees regarding working conditions, remuneration and other financial issues, professional preparation, and the opportunity to achieve office function promotion or other promotion at work.

Article 3, Paragraph 1(h), of the **Regulations on Working Practices** of the UO, dated 6 March 2019, stipulates that the employer is obliged to ensure equal treatment of all employees concerning their working condition and remuneration and other financial obligations, professional preparation, and the opportunity to achieve functional or other promotion. Any discrimination is banned in compliance with legally stipulated discriminatory signs, both direct discrimination and behaviour which could lead to discrimination.

Gender area at the UO is directly tackled in the **Regulations of the Career System**, where Article 10, Paragraph 2, stipulates that the recruitment procedure must comply with the requirements of impartiality and equal opportunities and consider specific needs of the applicants. The UO has been focusing on the issue of supporting the parenthood of its employees for a long time. Flexibility and outgoing working environment are highly emphasised. The HR policy of the UO treats pregnant women and mothers/fathers of small children with the maximum helpfulness.



A particular example is the possibility of a part-time job, contract work, or home office.

From 1 January 2022 onwards, the UO in cooperation with children groups Elánek has enabled its employees or students to place their children into a children group while maximally considering their operational needs.

4.1. HR policy

HR policy, or HR strategy, is a strategic area of any organisation. HR management creates social potential to ensure organisation's objectives, necessary number of competent people and their management (or efficient management) leading to the fulfilment of objectives set by the organisation.

Positive evaluation in this area relates to:

- *Organisational Regulations*, which is comprehensible and well-arranged and which determines the internal organisational structure of the University, labour-law relationships, basic duties, rights, and responsibilities of employees.
- *Organisational structure of a universitywide workplace* – updated in December 2021, which contains all organisational schemes of individual parts.
- *Regulations on the Career System* – which governs the professional promotion and development of employees after completion of defined criteria. the conditions and objectives of the career growth are processed in the employee's career development plan.
- *Strategic Plan of the UO 2021-2025* – which contains, among others, an objective to support prevention of incorrect and discriminative behaviour.
- *Implementation Plan of the Strategic Plan of the UO for 2021 and the following years*, which contains activities determined by the Action Plan in relation to the HR Award, such as preparation of e-learning courses, implementation of systematic mentoring for new academic staff, elaboration of the evaluation of creative activities.

Process of addressing workforce/gender-correct job advertising

The process of addressing workforce is the "starting line" of the recruitment process while observing the principles of equal opportunities. With respect to gender-correct approach, the issues of gender-correct process of addressing new employees is evaluated.



Positive evaluation in this area relates to:

- *Code of Ethics of the UO*, which is available on the university website and which commits the UO to moral values and ethical conduct.
- *Gender correctness* of the majority of job positions.
- *Content of job advertisements*, which included description of the scope of work, requirements for the applicants, and the offer from the employer's part, i.e. benefits, support of work-life balance.
- *Regulations on Recruitment Procedures* (valid from 1 January 2022), a document anchoring the recruitment process of a new employee.

Deficiencies are seen in:

- gender-incorrect language of certain advertised job positions;
- insufficient transparency in the area of remuneration, when even the base salary is not always part of the advertised job position.

Recruitment procedure

The recruitment procedure should be transparent. Such procedures must be well documented and archived. The recruitment criteria must be formulated in a gender-correct language.

Positive evaluation in this area relates to:

- anchoring stricter rules for recruitment of person who are personally or family-related to the UO. The Regulations on Recruitment Procedure stipulates that a person close to the applicant cannot be a member of the recruitment committee;
- The UO disposes of all key documents important for this observed area. The recruitment procedure is transparent and well-stipulated in the key documents of the UO.

Deficiencies are seen in:

- adaptation process of new employees is not stipulated;
- Inexistence of rules for onboarding of employees, including the acquisition of all necessary information for everyday orientation in the university environment.



Dismissal/leaving of employees

A sensitive, yet inseparable part of the life of an organisation is dismissal/leaving of employees. From the gender-correctness perspective, it is evaluated whether dismissal/leaving is not directly/indirectly related to discrimination and whether the reasons are not based on the issues of gender, age, or a change of the family situation (e.g. parenthood).

Positive evaluation in this area relates to:

- communication with employees in the area of work motivation/demotivation.

Deficiencies are seen in:

- not stipulated rules for communication with employees who terminate their employment.

Age diversity and age management

In the context of the issue of direct and indirect age discrimination and equal opportunities, the principle of positive use of age management is promoted. This type of management takes into account the life stages of people in the workplace and takes into account their changing resources as they age (health, competences, but also values, attitudes and motivation).

Positive evaluation in this area relates to:

- The UO promotes equal treatment of all applicants, as well as all employees, in its key documents;
- The UO supports the area of work-life balance and offers different forms of working time to make this acceptable to employees of different age groups, parents with young children and employees caring for otherwise dependent family members;
- the UO is an employer that knows the composition of its employees, keeps statistics on diversity (in terms of gender, age, parenthood).

Deficiencies are seen in:

- the UO does not have an officially stipulated system of age management in its HR policy.



Training – personal and professional development of employees

Training forms a significant area of personal and professional development of employees. If an employer is engaged in this area, it is perceived positively by the employees in terms of evaluation of the quality of the employer.

Positive evaluation in this area relates to:

- the UO pays considerable attention to the development and training of the employees since it supports and enables the employees to do so;
- gradual implementation of the process of career development plan for each employee focused on personal and professional development.

Deficiencies are seen in:

- not stipulated rules for training of employees.

4.2. Work-life balance

Regarding gender perspective, it is evaluated whether the organisation promotes work-life balance, whether parents – in the context of prevailing women/mothers tendency – are not discriminated, etc.

Flexible forms of work

The UO is an employer promoting flexible forms of work. The mode of flexible working hours is officially stipulated in the Rector's Order entitled Rules of Recording Working Hours at the University of Ostrava.

Positive evaluation in this area relates to:

- stipulated rules of flexible working hours and the possibility of home office, their implementation into practice.

Activities facilitating a more quality work-life balance

The UO is proactive in supporting the work-life balance, and in this context we can certainly mention the officially stipulated flexible working hours and the possibility of part-time work, work outside the



workplace (after agreement with the head in specific cases). Other activities to promote the balance include 6 weeks' leave (8 weeks for academics by law), 5 days' sick leave and, more recently, the organisation of suburban camps for children of employees and students and the organisation of psychological hygiene days for employees.

Positive evaluation in this area relates to:

- start of activities for parents and children – children group and activities during holidays;
- facilitating home office and introduction of sick leave and longer leave for non-academic employees.

Management of maternity and parental leave

Parental leave is the biggest challenge in company practice, because when returning after such a long period of time, the employee is likely to have lost a lot of knowledge, work competences and habits, and probably an overview of the area as well.

Positive evaluation in this area relates to:

- possibility of engaging employees in the working process earlier, i.e. during the course of the parental leave.

Deficiencies are seen in:

- insufficient communication with persons on the maternity and parental leave;
- inexistence of an adaptation process after returning from the maternity and parental leave.

4.3. Organisational culture

Organisational culture can be understood as a set of principles, attitudes, norms and values. These are then shared and maintained in the organisation as general patterns of behaviour, conduct and performance. This culture determines the external behaviour of the company or organisation towards its environment and is furthermore shaped by internal relationships and the working environment. The quality and level of communication (personal, individual, group) is a key element in shaping the corporate/organisational culture.



Approach to the policy of equal opportunities

The UO approaches the policy of equal opportunities responsibly and openly promotes this issue.

System of communication

The system of communication should be stipulated in internal regulations with the definition of which information and activities will be communicated, their intervals, form, and who will be responsible for communication. Communication is a key element of forming corporate/organisational culture.

Positive evaluation in this area relates to:

- the UO disposes of key documents which communicate important information to the employees in a written form.;
- communication through social networks and live magazine.

Deficiencies are seen in:

- inexistence of a well-arranged system for internal communication with employees, which is implemented through mass emails.

Gender-correct language

A gender-correct language is an area which is also observed within the audit, primarily in recruitment and advertising area, internal documents, and external communication – with the general public. It can be positively evaluated that most of the analysed job advertisements were written in a gender-correct language. Deficiencies are mentioned earlier in this report in the recruitment process of employees.

Working environment/atmosphere

Concerning gender equality, the presence of discriminating practices and other negative phenomena, such as mobbing, bossing, sexual harassment, at a workplace are primarily evaluated. In general, it concerns a global atmosphere created and working conditions provided by the organisation.



The audit conclusions reveal an alert primarily in the area of inappropriate conduct at a workplace. The UO focuses on this area in 2022 and there will be a separate detailed questionnaire survey. Following the survey, the UO is ready to take appropriate measures to achieve safe and fair university environment, both for employees and students.

5. Recommendation for further course in the area of gender equality

The concept of gender equality is often perceived as primarily targeting women. However, the sense is not to break the diversity of environment, but to ensure equal opportunities and the quality of life of women and men, identify specific barriers in the institution resulting from gender stereotypes and prejudices, prevent them by suitably set measures, and motivate to fully use the human potential. In its comprehensive conception, it also means inclusion of other groups of persons, regardless sexual orientation, religion, political and world opinions, etc.

Systematic changes should help the UO to fulfil objectives, such as:

- creation of equal working conditions for all employees;
- reduction of risks resulting from the inefficient use of human resources and related economic losses;
- support of excellence in research and social relevance of research;
- search for opportunities to share and acquire experience in the area of equality of women and men;
- open discussion on and flexible reaction to trends in the area of equality of women and men in accordance with institutional, national, and international policies.

6. Responsibility

The responsibility for processing, coordinating, and evaluating of the Action Plan of Gender Equality at the UO 2021-2025 lies with the Director/Directress of the Centre for HR Management, or the Bursar of the University, whose office is in charge of this issue.



7. Resources

The UO primarily anticipates engagement of the following units: Office of the Vice-Rector for Strategy and Development (overall administration and coordination of the cooperation with other units), Office of the Vice-Rector for Research and Creative Activities, Bursar's Office – Centre for HR Management, Rector's Office – Counselling Centre.

Anticipated sources of funding of the activities mentioned below are: Programme to Support Strategic Management of HEIs for the Years 2022-2025, Centralised Development Programme for Public HEIs for 2022, Operational Programmes of the Czech Republic 2021-2027, own sources.