

**Marine Research Institute and Faculty of Marine Technology and Natural Sciences,
Klaipėda University**

Gender Equality Action Plan for the period 2018-2023

I General Part

1.1. Introduction

The activities of the scientific and academic community are characterized by a great creative freedom and dynamics, which sometimes do not fit into the standard generally accepted framework of work. In the modern world of science and studies, which is guided by the principles of gender equality and the ideas of human rights and freedoms, it is particularly important not to impede the dynamics in science, but, on the contrary, in compliance with the requirements of legal acts to create flexible and liberal working conditions for people working in the field of science and studies. In order to achieve significant results, a science and study institution must firstly keep in mind that researchers working in a particular field generate deserved results. That is why it is especially important to take into account their needs for working conditions.

In the modern context, the issue of gender equality at a science or study institution is of a particular importance, and the essence of it is that men and women working in the field of science or studies must have equal conditions and opportunities to achieve results and to fulfil their potential in work activities. In other words, in the areas of activity relating to work, international law and national law prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender. In this regard, in accordance with the requirements of the applicable legislation, the employer is obliged to implement and exercise the measures to ensure gender equality. The scope and content of the measures ensuring gender equality depend on the specifics of the employer's activities, which may result in the implementation of different measures aimed at ensuring gender equality at different scientific or educational institutions working in different fields of science.

Despite of the fact that in Lithuania there is a shortage of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) personnel, as well as researchers and scientists who ensure the development of new technologies and sustainable economic development, the potential of women as a lack of human capital is still not sufficiently exploited. Conversely, girls and women reluctantly choose creative, interesting and well-paid works in the field of STEM. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development notes that in 2014, in Lithuania STEM Bachelor degree have obtained 28.1% of females that is less than in neighbouring countries Latvia (31.8%) and Estonia (38.6%).

KU Marine Sciences and Technology subdivisions, in the framework of the H2020 project Baltic Consortium on the Promotion of Gender Equality in Marine Research Organizations (<https://www.baltic-gender.eu>), and in order to achieve the project results, the Gender Equality Plan is launched on 1st November, 2018.

1.2. Peculiarities of the general regulation of labour relations in Lithuania

The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter - the Constitution) establishes the principles that the family is the basis of the society and the state protects and cares for the family, motherhood, fatherhood and childhood. On the other hand, Paragraph 1 of Article 48 of the Constitution also provides that everyone is free to choose a job and business and has the right to have appropriate, safe and healthy working conditions, receive fair remuneration for work and social security in case of unemployment. It is often difficult to reconcile and harmonize the

principle of respect for the family as a value, and the right of a person to freely choose a job. In this context, these fundamental principles relating to the family are also implemented through the regulation of labour relations.

The Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the Labour Code) provides for the obligation of an employer to implement the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination on other grounds. One of the aspects of the implementation of these principles is the prohibition on the employer applying different criteria and conditions for recruitment, i.e. an employer must apply uniform selection criteria and conditions for men and women. During the employment relationship, the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of gender also persists and there is a general obligation of an employer to establish equal conditions of work for employees, equal opportunities for improvement of qualifications and pursuit of professional development, re-qualification and acquisition of practical work experience; and equal benefits. In addition, the Labour Code establishes an obligation to pay equal remuneration for men and women for equal value work.

The Labour Code establishes the principle of work and family consistency, when an employer is obliged to respect family responsibilities of his employees and to take measures to help to fulfil them. The implementation of the principle of family consistency in a particular workplace and the measures taken by the employer in order to fulfil their duty to respect the family responsibilities of employees has an impact on employee's decisions related to the selection and realization of career choices.

The Labour Code regulates in detail the leave for pregnant women, parenthood leave for those having children up to a certain age, and other social guarantees for people with family obligations.

1.3. Characteristics of the academic career planning

When working in the field of science, the aspect of personal career planning becomes relevant to both men and women. Although the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter - the Law on Science and Studies) defines the procedure for organizing the competition for a position as a researcher and the guidelines for qualification requirements for candidates, establishes the conditions for certification, defines the categories of researchers, establishes the provision that the first term (5 years) in a certain positions of a researcher; in practice, scientists or applicants to become scientists often face the barrier to clearly see their position in work after the term of 5 years. This involves a number of external factors that do not depend on the scientist. In particular, institutions of science and studies have the right to establish procedures and qualification requirements for certification and competition for the position of researchers, which in practice means that a candidate working in a single educational institution may find it difficult or even impossible to apply for a competitive position in another institution solely on the fact that the candidate's **qualification will be assessed on the basis of different criteria/evaluation indicators**.

Another equally problematic issue associated with the career planning of a scientist is the future perspective of the field of study. In case if the scientific direction is no longer considered promising and the research institution or the authority which is responsible for the development of science decides not to invest in its further development, there is a high probability that after the expiry of the researcher's term of employment, the competition will not be held for a corresponding positions in the field of science which he/she previously worked in a relevant research institution. At this point it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that it is not easy for a scientist to retrain from one field of science to another, and very often re-training will require additional studies.

The third factor that creates the uncertainty of a researcher's professional career is the **extra order certification** that the research institution has the right to carry out in order to verify the person's suitability for the taken position. If the result of the extra order certification is negative, the research institution may sack the employee from his / her position. On the other hand, the Law

on Science and Studies provides for an exemption for attestation, i.e. according to the law mentioned above, the period during which a person has been granted a pregnancy and childbirth, a parental leave or a leave to care for a child is not included in the 5-year period of attestation. However, when a person returns to work after pregnancy and childbirth, parental leave or leave to care for a child, it is necessary in a short period of time to achieve attestation requirements and undergo attestation.

As the fourth factor influencing the career of a scientist, it is important to mention one of the family responsibilities - the care of elderly relatives. Quite often, employees having elderly immediate family members of poor health are facing this commitment. Care for the elderly family members can take a lot of time and effort, which may affect the results of the scientific work of a researcher, and reduce the labour productivity. Although we do not have statistics that could substantiate this statement, however, in practice, most often women take care of these elderly people so they have to give up their work perspectives and achieve lower results in their work.

The fifth factor that impedes a clear line of scientific career is family-related commitments, especially in cases when a family has babies. The Labour Code establishes three types of targeted leaves related to family increase and the obligation of an employer to ensure the right of an employee to return to the same or equivalent place of employment (occupation) after a leave at least as favourable as the former working conditions, including the remuneration and all terms, such as the right to an increase in salary to which he/she would have been entitled if he/she had worked. First of all, in case of pregnancy, women receive pregnancy and maternity leave of 70 calendar days before delivery and 56 calendar days after delivery (in case of complicated childbirth or at birth of two or more children - 70 days). For the period of pregnancy and childbirth leave, the benefit is paid as provided by the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on sickness and maternity social insurance. In case of a normal pregnancy, the total duration of the pregnancy and maternity leave is 126 calendar days, i.e. over 4 months, and in case of a complicated childbirth or the birth of two or more babies: 140 calendar days, i.e. 4.5 months. After the pregnancy and childbirth leave, the selected family member is given a child care leave until the child reaches three years of age, which can be taken all at once or in parts. The Labour Code also provides for the possibility of taking these leaves for both parents and returning to work before the child reaches three years of age. Besides the child care leave until the child reaches the age of three, the said law provides for the child's father to take 30 calendar days long parental leave which is continuously granted at any time from the birth of the child until the child reaches three months of age (in case of a complicated childbirth or when two or more babies are born: since baby's birth until the baby reaches six month age). The total maximal length of the leave for women can be 3 years and 4.5-months for pregnancy and child care, and for a man - 3 years and 1 month for child care. These figures indicate that, in theory, the increase in the family should have an equal impact on men and women, but in practice there is a tendency for a greater part of the associated obligations to be taken by a woman, who because of this factor for some time "falls out of the labour market" or is less actively involved in it as before.

II Analysis of the situation at the Marine Research Institute of Klaipėda University

Firstly, in order to analyse the current situation of gender equality at the Marine Science and Technology Departments of Klaipėda University and to identify possible problems in this area, the analysis of the structure of academic staff was carried out in three levels: analysis of the ratio of men and women working at academic units throughout Klaipėda University and throughout two structural divisions: the Marine Research Institute and the Faculty of Marine Technology and Natural Sciences (Fig. 1). The analysis of the data shows that at Klaipėda University there are more women than men employed for the academic work: 44% of men and 56% of women respectively. In the Marine Research Institute, this ratio varies considerably: 68% men and 32% women, i.e. there are two times more men employed there. In the Faculty of Marine Technology and Natural Sciences, this ratio is: 53% men and 47% women respectively. The Marine Research

Institute, which employs fewer women and more men, is most distinguished. The ratio of men and women doing academic work is insignificant at Klaipėda University and the Faculty of Marine Technology and Natural Sciences. The analysed data distinguishes the Marine Research Institute as a structural unit in which it is necessary to deepen the issue of gender equality by examining the factors that make such a distinct difference.

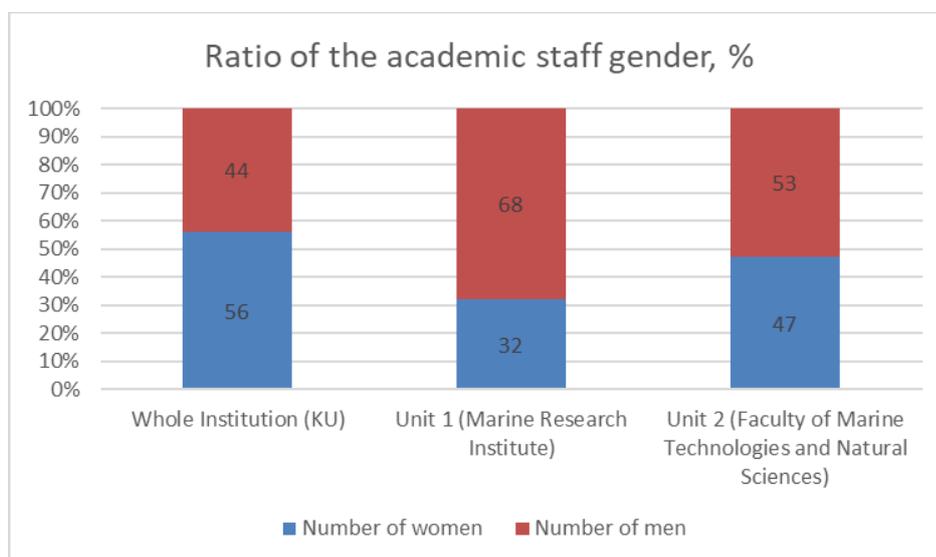


Figure 1 Ratio of the academic staff in gender

Secondly, the ratio of men and women in typical academic career stages has been analysed. The following stages are commonly distinguished: master degree students, researchers, doctoral students, assistants / junior researchers, lecturers / researchers, associate professors / senior researchers, professors / senior research staff (lecturers, assistants / researchers and junior (assistant) researchers, associate professors / Senior Researchers, Professors / Chief Researchers).

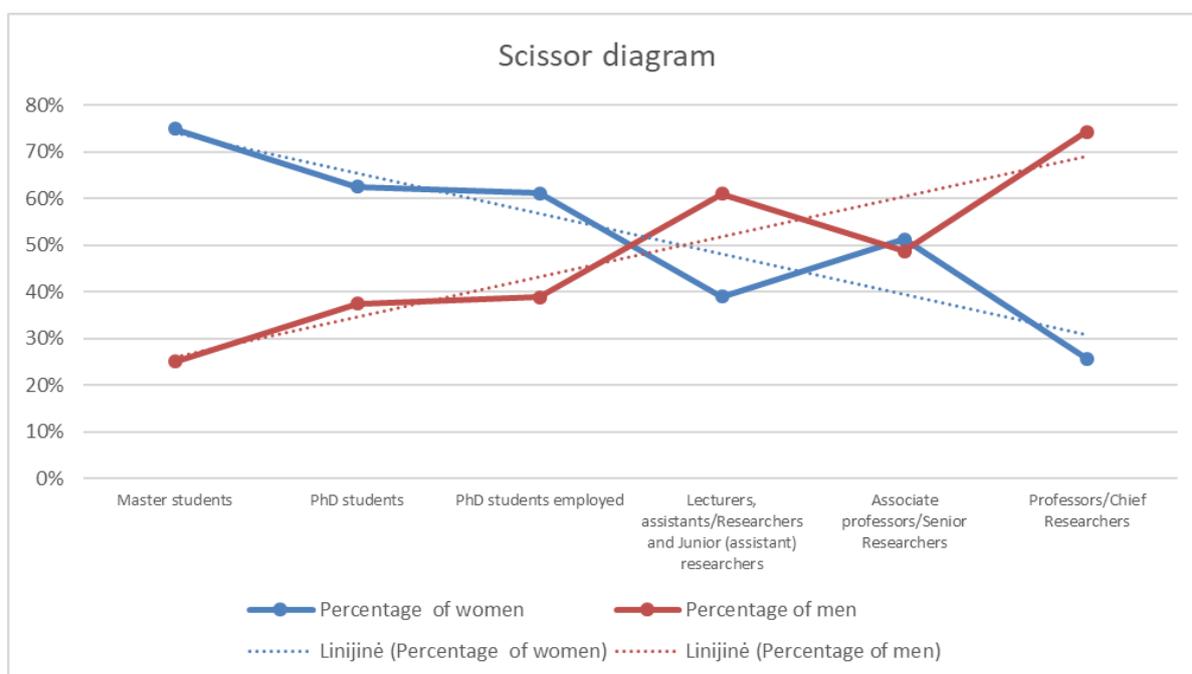


Figure 2. Male to female ratio in typical academic careers (Scissor diagram) of Marine Science and Technology subdivisions of Klaipėda University

Figure 2 illustrates the fact that relatively more women than men start studying the Marine Sciences, but this proportion changes to the disadvantage of women while „climbing up the career

ladder“, and this drop in the number of women who have reached the career altitudes is greater than the EU's indicator in STEM disciplines (Fig. 3) From the data presented, it can be concluded that the critical phase (break point) is the period between the PhD phase and the junior research worker's position.

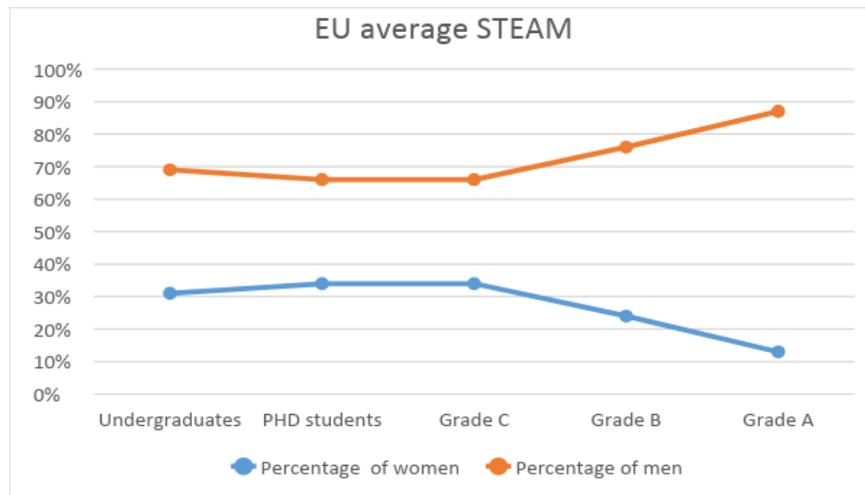


Figure 3. EU-Average for Natural sciences, Engineering and Technology (EU-28) in 2013

When analysing the trends in choosing to study one or another subject, it is necessary to take into account the prevailing viewpoint that Marine Sciences and Technology are areas of activity or study in which men are more active than women. To a large extent such a stereotype is formed by the study programs: Navigation, Fleet Maintenance, Ship Design and Construction, Marine Transport Energy Engineering, where men dominate. Marine science is chosen by graduates of Biomedical and Physical sciences after finishing Biology, Ecology and Environment, Physical Geography, Geology and Computer Science studies, where the male to female ratio is also highly dependent on the speciality. Young women most often choose Biology or Ecology, and young men dominate in other programs.

The decrease in the number of women scientists after completing doctoral studies may be related to both personal and external causes. First of all, the decision not to pursue a career in science can be influenced by the personal decision of a woman to choose other areas of work, for example, an area that is not related to Marine Sciences at all or to the Maritime Science area, but when the workplace is not a science or study institution. In this case, the qualifications and knowledge gained during the course of studies are not adapted for the direct purpose. On the other hand, such personal choices can be influenced by external factors related to working conditions.

Secondly, the period after the doctoral studies is in many cases, a period when women begin to create families and often have children. In the case of family increase, it is natural for a woman to leave work for a shorter or longer period of time. Despite the fact that the Labour Code provides for a number of imperative provisions concerning the protection of pregnant women and parents with children during the employment relationship, it can be concluded that it is not enough to meet the universal requirements of the law and that every institution engaged in scientific or other activities must take additional measures to establish equal conditions for men and women to enter into work life and to reach professional achievements.

Another barriers to be mentioned for women to achieve more in the area of scientific carrier in Maritime Science are glass ceiling, male networks and gender stereotypes influencing recruitment and promotion processes. On the other hand, currently (in the year 2018) Maritime Research Institute has an example of good practice, as the number of men and women is nearly equal at the Institute council (5 women, 6 men). Otherwise, the situation in changing the stereotypes influencing recruitment and promotion processes requires some action to be taken. According to this, different measures has to be taken in order to achieve better work conditions and self-realisation for women of different age and family status.

III Measures to be taken in order to improve women's working conditions and to motivate women to work at the Maritime Research Institute and the Faculty of Marine Technology and Natural Sciences

In order to improve the quality of working conditions for women working in the field of studies and science at Maritime Research Institute of Klaipeda University and the Faculty of Marine Technology and Natural Sciences, the plan of measures (Table 1) has developed. The following actions have been identified after the analysis of the situation at maritime subdivisions has been accomplished as well as taking in mind the recommendations of Horizon 2020 program project, that started in 2016 and which is destined to ensure the equality of women and men in the organizations of maritime research in the region of Baltic sea. The aim of The plan of measures is to help to seek/to help to ensure the gender equality in maritime subdivisions in the period 2018-2020.

Table 1. The plan of measures

Target	Actions	Term, source of funding	Comments	Responsibilities/ responsible person(s)	Result
1. Career Advancement					
1.1. Enhance the career advancement and leadership	1.1.1. Trainings in the institution to raise the awareness at all levels about gender issues	August 2019 Funds of the <i>Baltic Gender</i> project	1-day trainings "Institutional capacity building workshop: gender in research" for the administration of Klaipeda University, Maritime Research Institute and Faculty of Marine Technology and Natural Sciences	<i>Baltic Gender</i> project team	At least 20 persons gained knowledge on gender equality in the field of marine sciences and technology
		On-going Funds of Klaipeda University	Trainings on university level whilst implementing the policy of Klaipeda University on gender equality	Administration of Klaipeda University	
	1.1.2. Encouragement to attend competence	On-going Funds of Agency for	Dissemination of training / internship information	Director of Marine Research Institute	Improved leadership competencies

Target	Actions	Term, source of funding	Comments	Responsibilities/responsible person(s)	Result
	building/leadership trainings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERASMUS staff training; • ERASMUS teaching; • internships 	Science, Innovation and Technology, ERASMUS+ and Research Council of Lithuania		(hereinafter Director)/Dean of Faculty of Marine Technology and Natural Sciences (hereinafter Dean)	
	1.1.3. Promotion of women to leadership positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assigning of administrative/managing tasks (conference/meeting organization); • assigning the chairing of conferences, meetings/moderation of discussions; • assigning team (proposal/project/project activity) leadership 	On-going	To form leadership skills through practical activities	Director/Dean, Heads of Research Groups, Leaders of Projects	Increased number of female at higher level scientific and administrative positions
1.2. Provide career development and networking opportunities	1.2.1. Building grass-root networks of scientists inside the institution	2 Annual meetings	To create a network of scientists. Good practice examples from the project <i>Baltic Gender</i> are going to be used. Females PhD students and early career scientists will be involved into the organizational committee.	<i>Baltic Gender</i> project team, the administration of subdivisions	A network of scientists with the focus on women careers created

Target	Actions	Term, source of funding	Comments	Responsibilities/ responsible person(s)	Result
	1.2.2. Providing mentoring opportunities to early and mid-career women scientists	August 2020	To analyze the need of mentoring to early and mid-career women scientists	<i>Baltic Gender</i> project team, the administration of subdivisions	Good practice examples disseminated and discussed.
1.3.Transparent career paths	1.3.1. Providing career development plans with annual updates	August 2020	Identify the need and to prepare information about the paths of academic career (leaflet, section in the webpage, etc.) for masters, doctoral candidates, specialists, junior researchers.	<i>Baltic Gender</i> project team, the administration of subdivisions	The information about the paths of academic career prepared
1.4. Encouraging women to participate in decision-making boards and committees	1.4.1. Improve the involvement of woman and offer more possibilities for women to participate in decision-making processes	On-going	To delegate women as candidates to the decision making boards and committees	Director/Dean, researchers	At least 30 % underrepresented gender in decision-making boards and committees
2. Work and Family					
2.1. Promoting family friendly strategies	2.1.1. Ensure the availability of flexible working hours, remote office 2.1.2. Promoting shared leave policies between men and women 2.1.3. Exit interviews with women (and men) going on parental leave 2.1.4. Maintain the contacts with individuals taking family breaks	On-going	1.To inform newly employed employees about the possibilities to have flexible working hours, remote office 2. To use a good practice examples of the project <i>Baltic Gender</i> (interview of the employees who were on parental leave) 3. To spread the leaflet prepared during the project „Recommendations for family-friendly strategies and institutional practices in higher education and research organizations“. 4. When employees take leave because of family responsibilities (bringing up children, caring for relatives) they will be informed about the recent	Director /Dean HR department	A higher satisfaction of work conditions, a more fluent return to work after parental leave or other family-related leaves

Target	Actions	Term, source of funding	Comments	Responsibilities/ responsible person(s)	Result
			developments and upcoming events (seminars, meetings, trainings, field works etc.). E-mail address will remain available in mailing lists and in Contacts list on the webpage during the leave of absence.		
3. Other					
3.1. Integration of gender aspects in marine research	3.1.1. Encouraging the integration of gender and gendered differences to the research content, project design and management	On-going	To disseminate good practice examples of <i>Baltic Gender</i> at the Institute and Faculty	<i>Baltic Gender</i> project team	A bigger number of projects that got funding
3.2. Promotion of Gender-Conscious Teaching	3.2.1. Encouraging teaching staff to use Gender-Conscious Teaching language/methods	Period of 2019-02-28/03-01 Funds of the <i>Baltic Gender</i> project	1. To use/disseminate the experience gained during the project <i>Baltic Gender</i> and trainings (2 employees already participated, another call for 2 more employees is already announced for trainings „Gender Equality and Gender-Conscious Teaching in Science“, that is going to take place from 28 th February to 01 st March 2019 at Kiel University of Applied Science	<i>Baltic Gender</i> project team	More confident teaching language/ methods
3.3. Regularly collecting gender-disaggregated data	3.3.1. Collecting data on indicators recommended by <i>Baltic Gender</i>	Annually by August 2020	1. Collecting sex-disaggregated data concerning career advancement, leadership, resources (pay gap, part-time employment), decision making, recruitment, work and family for calculation of gender equality indicators recommended by <i>Baltic Gender</i> 2. Integration of relevant gender equality indicators into annual subdivisions reports 3. Monitoring the structural changes within marine departments	<i>Baltic Gender</i> project team, , the administration of subdivisions Human Resource Department	No unexplained pay gap

Target	Actions	Term, source of funding	Comments	Responsibilities/ responsible person(s)	Result
3.4 Preventing, pursuing sexual harassment	3.4.1 Providing information on sexual harassment within the organization	On-going	To inform employees what actions should be taken if a person experiences sexual harassment (information in website)	<i>Baltic Gender</i> project team, the administration of subdivisions Academic Ethics Committee of Klaipeda University	The employees will be informed what actions should be taken if person experienced sexual harassment
3.5. Towards gender-equal communication and publicity creation	3.5.1 Adapting measures to support equal visibility of male and female researchers in the media	On-going	To appoint a responsible person - communication specialist to monitor the situation and to react and act accordingly	The administration of subdivisions	The insurance of implementation of equal possibilities in communication and publicity creation
3.6. Identifying the reasons why employees leave work at the institute	3.6.1. Developing a guideline for exit interviews at different career levels (postdoc, C,B,A): collecting retention and mobility data on women/men	August 2020	1. To use the experience gained during the project <i>Baltic Gender</i> whilst preparing a questionnaire for exiting employees to identify the reasons of exit 2. To share the experience gained during the project <i>Baltic Gender</i> with the HR department of Klaipeda University	<i>Baltic Gender</i> project team, the administration of subdivisions, HR department of Klaipeda University	Prepared questionnaires for the analysis of the exit reasons
Long term sustainability					
To ensure GEP monitoring and long term sustainability	3.1.4. Transferring successful third-party funded Gender Equality measure to long-term basic funding.	After August 2020 Funds of the subdivisions	1. To ensure the continuous implementation of the <i>Baltic Gender</i> activities 2. Attribution of Gender Equality Coordinator Functions 3. Implementation of gender equality monitoring	Director /Dean	The continuity of project activities is ensured