

Gender at the University of Antwerp



Content

Introduction	3
1. The path to greater gender equality.....	4
1.1. Gender balance in governing and advisory bodies in the Decree amending the administrative structure of the University of Antwerp (October 2013).....	4
1.2. Strategic Action Plan ‘Sustainable Gender Policy for Academic Staff’ (February 2014)	4
1.3. Gender at the University of Antwerp: report on current situation (July 2018)	4
1.4. Signing of the VLIR-JA Charter ‘Gender in academia 2019’ (June 2019).....	4
1.5. Diversity Action Plan for Staff (January 2021).....	5
2. Focus on 4 strategic policy objectives	5
2.1. Strategic policy objective n° 1	5
The University of Antwerp develops a diversity culture and creates a positive working atmosphere and organisational structure where diversity contributes to quality and innovation within our institution.	5
Organizational culture: UAntwerp is developing an organizational culture in which active pluralism, diversity and inclusion are the central focus. Every year, special attention is drawn to the gender and/or gender identity topic	5
Organizational structure: UAntwerp integrates the present diversity in its decision-making processes and pursues a policy that is more widely supported within Team Diversity	6
2.2. Strategic policy objective n° 2	6
The University of Antwerp further develops its inclusive recruitment policy that values everyone’s talents6	
Composing and spreading job advertisements: job openings appeal to as many diverse potential candidates as possible and encourage specific under-represented groups to apply	6
Selection procedure: the University of Antwerp focuses on accessible selection procedures with equal opportunities for every candidate and with targeted positive actions to increase diversity in the workforce	6
2.3. Strategic policy objective n° 3	7
The University of Antwerp applies an inclusive career development policy aiming at greater diversity.....	7
Training: the University of Antwerp provides a high quality training programme to promote the development of diversity competences in all staff members	7
2.4. Strategic policy objective n° 4	7
The University of Antwerp invests in qualitative and quantitative monitoring in order to stimulate a diverse organisation	7

Introduction

The University of Antwerp wants to create a working environment where everyone feels accepted and appreciated and where dealing with diversity is not only a reality, but also enriching if we are willing to learn from each other's opinions, experiences and competences.

By diversity, UAntwerp means variety, a range of characteristics that make people different from one another, expressed through qualities such as migration background, disability, social background, home language, age, ideology, gender and gender identity, as well as values, opinions, self-image, etc. All these characteristics combined make someone unique and partly determine their identity. Diversity is not restrictive and always dynamically subject to time and space. The University of Antwerp sees diversity as a normal phenomenon that involves everybody in our modern society. UAntwerp regards variety as a strength and an investment in the future.

In the past, the University of Antwerp mainly put the emphasis in its gender policy on removing the underrepresentation of women within the highest ranks of academic careers. Currently, the gender policy has become part of the wider whole of our diversity and inclusion policy.

Ratified by the Executive Board on 21th of December 2021, this document gives a concise summary of UAntwerp's commitment.

It is available on the website and can be consulted by every interested individual, within or outside our university

1. The path to greater gender equality

Since 2008, the University of Antwerp has been actively fulfilling its social responsibility commitment by creating a more inclusive organization with equal opportunities for all its students and staff. To this end, UAntwerp prepared two extensive reports on gender (M/F) among academic staff. The more recent Diversity Action Plan for Staff also indicates the direction in which UAntwerp plans to take its diversity and gender actions.

The following is a chronological overview of policy papers that help to establish more diversity and gender equality.

1.1. Gender balance in governing and advisory bodies in the Decree amending the administrative structure of the University of Antwerp (October 2013)

The existing decree at the University of Antwerp was extended by the 'Decree amending the administrative structure of the University of Antwerp' with an article about gender balance in governing and advisory bodies. As a minimum standard, 'no more than two thirds of the members may consist of people of the same sex'. This decree came into effect on 1 October 2013 and led to an amendment to the 'Academic Structure Memorandum' of our university.

1.2. Strategic Action Plan 'Sustainable Gender Policy for Academic Staff' (February 2014)

The Strategic Action Plan 'Sustainable Gender Policy for Academic Staff' translates the commitment of the University of Antwerp to promote gender diversity in every academic level through operational policies, actions and education. The plan was approved by the Board of Directors on 21 January 2014.

1.3. Gender at the University of Antwerp: report on current situation (July 2018)

In July 2018, we took stock of the gender plan from 2014.

1.4. Signing of the VLIR-JA Charter 'Gender in academia 2019' (June 2019)

Along with the other Flemish universities, the University of Antwerp signed the 'Gender in Academia' charter on 26 June 2019. The document was drawn up by the Young Academy (JA) and the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR). It builds on the ongoing efforts of the universities and aims to accelerate the transition to gender equality in academia.

1.5. Diversity Action Plan for Staff (January 2021)

The Diversity Action Plan for Staff (DAP Staff) comprises various actions to encourage a more inclusive working environment for the 6,000-plus staff members at the University of Antwerp. Gender is included under the heading of diversity.

2. Focus on 4 strategic policy objectives

The University of Antwerp focusses on four strategic policy objectives to promote a more inclusive working environment for all current and future employees. Each strategic policy objective is translated into operational goals containing concrete actions. The combination of different actions will have an impact on the culture of our institution, on the recruitment, selection, development and promotion of staff and on the monitoring of staff records. In order to pursue an inclusive environment, UAntwerp must also examine its formal and informal procedures and mechanisms.

2.1. Strategic policy objective n° 1

The University of Antwerp develops a diversity culture and creates a positive working atmosphere and organisational structure where diversity contributes to quality and innovation within our institution.

Organizational culture: UAntwerp is developing an organizational culture in which active pluralism, diversity and inclusion are the central focus.

Every year, special attention is drawn to the gender and/or gender identity topic

- E.g. International Women's Day
- E.g. International day of Women and Girls in Science
- E.g. Gender-Inclusive Communication campaign
- E.g. The negative impact of COVID 19 on academics with care responsibilities and/or a high teaching load

Viable and family-friendly working culture

- Fund covering the substitution of Tenured Academic Staff members during maternity leave
- Policy note 'Family-friendly meetings'
- Discount at various organisations for children's camps
- Clear framework for the prevention and handling of reports and complaints about discrimination and (sexual) inappropriate behaviour

Organizational structure: UAntwerp integrates the present diversity in its decision-making processes and pursues a policy that is more widely supported within Team Diversity

In order to have a truly supported and dynamic diversity policy, UAntwerp wants to reinforce diversity in all its aspects within the institutional structure. The following consultative bodies / departments keep their fingers on the pulse regarding diversity matters at UAntwerp.

- Team Diversity
- HR Department
- Steering Committee 'Diversity Action plan'
- Steering Committee 'Diversity'
- Board of Services to the University and the Community
- High-quality and accessible reporting channels for questions, reports and complaints regarding discrimination and inappropriate behaviour

2.2. Strategic policy objective n° 2

The University of Antwerp further develops its inclusive recruitment policy that values everyone's talents

Composing and spreading job advertisements: job openings appeal to as many diverse potential candidates as possible and encourage specific under-represented groups to apply

- Gender-friendly job advert templates are available
- A glossary regarding 'diversity and inclusion' (including gender) is being drawn up
- Implicit bias Mutual-Learning event, VLIR (the Flemish Interuniversity Council)

Selection procedure: the University of Antwerp focuses on accessible selection procedures with equal opportunities for every candidate and with targeted positive actions to increase diversity in the workforce

- The online job application platform has been screened from a gender perspective:
 - E.g. the reference period on CVs has been removed
- An *Implicit Bias* training for selection committees is being developed
- The 'selection' strategy has been screened from a gender perspective

2.3. Strategic policy objective n° 3

The University of Antwerp applies an inclusive career development policy aiming at greater diversity

Training: the University of Antwerp provides a high quality training programme to promote the development of diversity competences in all staff members

- Current development of a core competence regarding 'diversity and inclusion'
- The training and development programme is gradually being extended with diversity & inclusion courses
- The promotion procedure for Tenured Academic Staff takes gender into account

2.4. Strategic policy objective n° 4

The University of Antwerp invests in qualitative and quantitative monitoring in order to stimulate a diverse organisation

- Two-yearly focus groups concerning gender and/or gender diversity
- The mandatory Welfare Survey systematically evaluates any differences between M/F/X
- Data on M/F/X are monitored and reported
 - Power BI: tool for a detailed view of M/F ratio among staff members
 - Yearly reporting to the Diversity Steering Committee and the Board of Services about the situation on diversity & gender