



**KASTAMONU UNIVERSITY**

**GENDER EQUALITY PLAN<sup>1</sup>**

**2024-2027**

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<sup>1</sup> "The Gender Equality Plan (2024-2027) was approved by the Senate's decision numbered 2024/09-11, dated 28.03.2024

# KASTAMONU UNIVERSITY GENDER EQUALITY PLAN (GEP) 2024-2027

## **Status of quo gender equality in Turkey**

In Turkey, the general principle of equality regulated in the Article No.10 of the Turkish Constitution and the international agreements on fundamental rights and freedoms to which our country is a party, determine the normative area in terms of gender equality. There are a set of important regulations in this respect in Prime Ministry Circular on "Increasing Women's Employment and Ensuring Equal Opportunities" published in the Official Gazette No. 27591, "Women's Empowerment Strategy Document and Action Plan (2018-2023)" issued by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, and "Eleventh Development Plan (2019-2023)".

The Article No.10 of the Turkish Constitution guarantees equality before the law: "Everyone is equal before the law without distinction as to language, race, colour, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such grounds. (Paragraph added on May 7, 2004; Act No. 5170) Men and women have equal rights. The State has the obligation to ensure that this equality exists in practice. (Sentence added on May 7, 2010; Act No. 5982) Measures taken for this purpose shall not be interpreted as contrary to the principle of equality. (Paragraph added on May 7, 2010; Act No. 5982) Measures to be taken for children, the elderly, disabled people, widows and orphans of martyrs as well as for the invalid and veterans shall not be considered as violation of the principle of equality. No privilege shall be granted to any individual, family, group or class. State organs and administrative authorities are obliged to act in compliance with the principle of equality before the law in all their proceedings.

Turkey signed international conventions which contain regulations on the prohibition of discrimination and positive discrimination, which include the United Nations Convention on Civil and Political Rights, the United Nations Convention on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the European Convention on Human Rights. These agreements fulfill the requirements of the Article No. 90 of the Turkish Constitution. The principles set forth by the protection mechanisms stipulated by the aforementioned international treaties are the prevailing provisions in terms of gender equality.

In the Prime Ministry Circular No. 2010/14 on "Increasing Women's Employment and Ensuring Equal Opportunities" published in the Official Gazette No. 27591, it was stated that "In order to strengthen the socio-economic positions of women, to ensure equality between women and men in social life, to achieve sustainable economic growth and social development goals, it is essential to increase women's employment and to provide equal pay for equal work." In the "Women's Empowerment Strategy Document and Action Plan (2018-2023)" and "the Eleventh Development Plan", articles on equal opportunities for women and men are included.

## **Overview of the Kastamonu University GEP**

"Kastamonu University Gender Equality Action Plan" has been prepared in line with the mission, vision, ethical principles and strategic goals of our university, taking into account these principles for gender equality in Turkey, as well as the "Gender Equality Action Plan" carried out within the scope of the European Union Horizon 2020 GEARING-Roles project.

Kastamonu University's basic management approach is based on the principle of developing and implementing a policy that provides justice, respect, fairness and equal rights among academic, administrative and auxiliary staff and students without any gender discrimination. Our university attaches importance to providing gender-based equality of opportunity in scientific research and development processes, administrative studies and academic fields. In this context, it reports the data annually.

Kastamonu University treats its students and staff fairly in all its activities and decisions, without making any discrimination among its stakeholders. While considering equality of opportunity based on gender, it also prioritizes a "justice"-oriented principle by approaching disadvantaged individuals and groups with a sense of institutional and social responsibility. In addition, it attaches importance to ensuring gender-based equality by considering the equality of women and men on the basis of "distributive justice" within the institution. In this way, it complies with the requirements of the normative framework stipulated by our legal system by following the principles of both legal equality and positive discrimination in terms of disadvantaged groups.

At Kastamonu University, respectful and sensitive behavior towards all stakeholders and social values is adopted. In all actions pertaining to gender equality, priority is given to social norms and values on the basis of respect for individual rights and freedoms. Gender-based equality between men and women is taken into account in the distribution of duties, promotion, leadership and R&D studies within the institution. At the same time, utmost care is given to expand rights. A free discussion environment is provided for both students and staff within the university. In this sense, on the condition that it does not call for violence and does not contain hate speech, gender equality is taken into account by prioritizing gender equality in freedom of expression. Both academic and administrative assignments and promotions are based on gender equality by considering gender equality according to knowledge and experience. Besides a "procedural justice" oriented approach is adopted, acting with a sense of institutional and social responsibility towards disadvantaged individuals and groups.

"Gender Equality Action Plan", which covers the years 2024-2027, will be implemented and reported annually by the and [Kastamonu University Women and Family Studies Application and Research Center](#) and monitoring by the [Kastamonu University Quality Coordinator](#). The plan will be reviewed and updated based on the evaluation of its results.

Kastamonu University states in its "[Strategic Plan](#)" that it adopts respectful and sensitive behavior in all actions related to gender equality. It endeavors to meet the requirements of the Gender Action Plan and reports the outcomes annually.

Main Goals within the Scope of Kastamonu University Gender Equality Action Plan:

1. Ensuring gender equality balance in academic and administrative units. Positive discrimination practices such as quotas in favor of women who are under-represented in management and decision-making mechanisms,
2. Ensuring gender equality balance in decision-making mechanisms such as faculty boards and administrative boards in the academy,
3. Carrying out activities that raise awareness on gender equality by considering "distributive" and "procedural justice" within the institution,
4. Producing contents in order to create an "institutional communication language" perspective that considers gender equality in communication in all units of the university,
5. Establishing a "Gender Equality Board" under the [Kastamonu University Women and Family Studies Application and Research Center](#).

6. Establishing a unit under the “Quality Coordinator” cooperation with “Gender Equality Board” to monitor and reporting the results of the gender equality action plan during the years and providing insight to improve the current plan,
7. Examining the available data on the professional development processes and management positions of female personnel in the academic and administrative units of the university and eliminating shortcomings. Establishing information data networks on gender equality and receiving support from relevant units in this scope,
8. Considering the gender equality perspective in the research activities of the project teams, research groups, laboratories and workshops,
9. Carrying out studies (panels, training seminars, etc.) to raise awareness on gender equality addressing academic and administrative staff as well as students, under the leadership of the [Kastamonu University Women and Family Studies Application and Research Center](#).
10. Establishment of a “**Counselling unit for protection against sexual harassment and assault**” within university in order to prevent violence, abuse, mobbing and harassment in and around the campus,
11. Collaborating with non-governmental organizations, relevant institutions and women-oriented research centers at universities within the scope of effective fight against gender-based violence, biases and discrimination with the aim of achieving the stated goals,
12. Ensuring the work-life balance of the staff working in the academic, administrative and other units of the university in the context of gender equality.

## **Section I. Institutionalization and Capacity Building for Gender Equality**

As Kastamonu University, our main unit within the scope of gender equality within our institutional structure is "Women and Family Studies Application and Research Centre". This centre "Kastamonu University Community and Women's Studies Application and Research Centre" entered into force with the publication of its regulation in the Official Gazette dated 22.02.2015 and numbered 29275 and continued its activities. On 20.01.2020, the name, purpose and fields of activity of the centre were rearranged with the Regulation on the Amendment of the Regulation of Kastamonu University Community and Women's Studies Application and Research Centre published in the Official Gazette numbered 31014. Since this date, our centre has been carrying out its activities as "Women and Family Studies Application and Research Centre".

To ensure the GEP's success, **Gender Equality Board (GEB)** will be established to oversee the implementation, coordination, and oversight of this plan. Besides that, **Gender Equality Monitoring and Reporting Team (GEMART)** will be established with a sub-structure under the Quality Coordination Department for monitoring and follow-up of the work carried out. This team will be under the Quality Coordinatorship of our university and this group will work in partnership with Kastamonu University Women and Family Studies Application and Research Centre.

The Gender Equality Board, which meets at least annually, is responsible for the following duties:

- Steering strategic leadership and overseeing the execution of the GEP Strategy,
- Approving the yearly action plan program,
- Facilitating the establishment of a consistent gender equality reporting system,

- Determining essential actions based on the routine reports received from the GEMART
- GEB may also be involved in providing or arranging training on gender equality for university staff and students. This could include training on unconscious bias, sexual harassment prevention, or inclusive practices.
- Evaluating the overall achievements in terms of inclusivity and gender equality, and advocating for these successes.

The Gender Equality Monitoring and Reporting Team (GEMART) at a university is tasked with the following responsibilities:

- **Monitoring Gender Equality Initiatives:** GEMART is responsible for tracking the progress of gender equality initiatives across the university. This includes monitoring the implementation of policies, programs, and activities related to gender equality.
- **Data Collection and Analysis:** GEMART collects and analyzes data related to gender equality. This could include data on gender representation in various roles and departments, gender pay gaps, and the impact of gender equality initiatives.
- **Reporting:** GEMART is responsible for compiling and presenting reports on the status of gender equality at the university. These reports may be shared with university leadership, staff, students, and other stakeholders.
- **Recommendations:** Based on their monitoring and reporting, GEMART may make recommendations for improving gender equality at the university. This could include suggesting new initiatives, changes to existing policies, or areas where more resources are needed.
- **Liaison with Stakeholders:** GEMART serves as a liaison between different stakeholders in the university (such as students, faculty, staff, and administration) on matters related to gender equality. They may facilitate communication, address concerns, and gather feedback.

## Section II. Recruitment & Career Progression

The Personal Department at Kastamonu University, in line with the university's vision and mission, develop plans, policies, and methods related to areas such as identifying necessary human resources needs, selection, job placement, education, career and performance management, motivation, management of individual and collective labor relations, occupational health and safety, and management of terminations.

In this context, the PD commits to ensuring social progress, combating gender bias and social marginalization, and eliminating all forms of discrimination. In all events and educational initiatives sponsored by Kastamonu University, the importance of equality and the promotion of social justice will be emphasized. No person's gender, affiliation, disability, or socioeconomic status will pose a barrier to employment.

The hiring of academic staff will be conducted in accordance with the Higher Education Law (No. 2547), the Regulation on Promotion and Appointment to Faculty Members, and the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles to be Applied in Recruiting Workers for Public Institutions and Organizations. These regulations do not facilitate career advancements for the underrepresented gender or recruitment and gender-sensitive selection practices.

While the Turkish Constitution and Turkish Labor Law contain provisions to prevent discrimination against employees and citizens, Kastamonu University will strive to implement gender-sensitive hiring practices and policies to guard against discrimination against women in hiring for academic or administrative positions.

Article 10 of the Turkish Constitution guarantees equality before the law, and the Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution Law No. 6701 also contains regulations regarding the prohibition of discrimination. At Kastamonu University, gender equality will be considered a vital and significant fundamental among all applicants. As a public university, the hiring processes at the institution will be governed by general laws, ensuring that no unconscious or implicit gender bias could influence hiring decisions.

Objectives	Activities	Period	Responsible/Supporting Units
1. Develop gender-sensitive recruitment and promotion process	a. Strive for gender parity on all academic hiring and promotion committees.	Short Term	Personnel Department Commissions
	b. Training for all members of recruitment committees and administrative staff recruiters on unconscious bias.	Medium Term	
	c. All academic and administrative job postings should be institutionally standardized to eliminate any sexism or implicit bias.	Medium Term	
2. Implement policies and procedures to address the underrepresentation of women in institutions and faculties.	a. Encourage underrepresented groups to participate in leadership positions on boards, commissions, and the Senate.	Short Term	
	b. Observing and putting into practice the gender-sensitive promotion rules to ensure gender parity in every position	Long Term	

### Section III. Work-Life Balance

The university will adhere to the updated Civil Servants Law No. 657, which provides new rights and leaves for parents, including a 16-week maternity leave and a half-day work permit postpartum for women officers. Both men and women can apply for part-time employment until the month following their child's first day of compulsory school.

Kastamonu University believes that gender equality issues are not solely women's issues. The university aims to create an environment that allows all individuals, regardless of gender, to have successful research careers. The university will implement initiatives to address these issues, ensuring that gender does not pose a barrier to employment or career progression. The university is committed to fostering a culture of equality and social justice, where everyone's contributions are valued and respected.

Objectives	Activities	Period	Responsible/Supporting Units
1. Ensure equal distribution of	a. Conduct a comprehensive awareness-raising effort (particularly at the leadership level) concerning the	Medium Term	

administrative work and eliminate gender gaps in academic care labor.	unequal distribution of administrative chores and gendered academic care work.		Scientific Research Projects Division GEB GEMART
2. Promoting a family-friendly workplace and work-life balance	a. Establish work-life balance programs for learning, growth, and awareness that are especially suitable for academic staff.	Long Term	
3. Promoting the use of parental leave and childcare leave	a. Training academic and administrative staff about childcare and parental leave	Medium Term	
	b. Sharing the leave given to only one parent between the parents with a disabled child	Long Term	
4. Putting measures to prevent all kinds of discrimination, mobbing, and sexual harassment to increase well-being	a. Conducting research to reveal and prevent violence against staff members due to gender-based discrimination	Medium Term	
	b. Developing mechanisms to staff members experiencing gender-based discrimination	Medium Term	

## SECTION IV – Research and Teaching

The University endorses and permits internal financing for scientific research initiatives, known as BAP. Additionally, the faculty garners external financial support from global institutions, such as programs sponsored by the EU. Despite the absence of dedicated funding for gender studies programs, the faculty and researchers are engaged in pioneering and highly impactful research in areas like engineering, technology, art, law, infrastructure advancement, and the creation of socioeconomic value across various domains.

Moreover, the university is committed to meeting a crucial requirement of higher education gender equality ranking systems, such as the Times Higher Education rankings. This will be achieved by institutionalizing methodologies and practices that integrate gender considerations into research.

Objectives	Activities	Period	Responsible/Supporting Units
1. Supporting female academic staff in the field of research projects	a. Examining projects funded by Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit in terms of gender equality	Short Term	Scientific Research Projects Division Vice-Rector of Research
	b. Identifying the barriers to research processes of female academic staff	Medium Term	Vice-Rector of Education Commissions Directorate of Health, Culture and Sports Related Units
2. Supporting social responsibility projects on gender equality	a. Supporting social responsibility projects related to gender equality in student societies	Medium Term	Student Societies
3. Promoting the advancement of female students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)	a. Organising trainings for female students in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)	Medium Term	Library and Documentation Department Related Units
4. Strengthening access to gender equality resources	Enriching the library resources on gender equality	Medium Term	GEMART

## SECTION IV: Violence against Women, Combatting Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

Even though sexual harassment and discrimination are placed as delinquencies according to Labor Law No.4857, there is still a lack of awareness on what constitutes sexual harassment and discrimination among employees. In general, employees do not know about the procedures and codes of conduct in case of assault, discrimination, violence, and harassment. Instead, there is misinformation, disinformation, and in some cases lack of trust in the effective complaint and support mechanisms.

Objectives	Activities	Period	Responsible/Supporting Units
1. Commitment to ensuring a safe environment and communicating this commitment to everyone on campus at all times.	a. Evaluate the current process and create a new one to provide more effective and efficient complaint and assistance systems.	Medium Term	Counselling unit for protection against sexual harassment and assault Student affairs department Commissions GEB
2. To educate university students and personnel about human rights, violence, and discrimination	a. Update all existing training materials to accommodate current mechanisms and needs.	Short Term	
	b. Implementing Awareness-Raising Initiatives	Medium Term	
3. Preventing all University members from engaging in any type of violence, harassment, or discrimination	a. Re-structuring Disciplinary and Ethical Violations Processes in the context of gender equality	Medium Term	
	b. Organizing awareness-raising training		