

## **MONITORING REPORT ON THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This report aims to monitor the state of progress of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of the Università Telematica San Raffaele Roma, approved in 2024 and structured in accordance with the CRUI guidelines and the requirements of the European Commission.

Monitoring represents a fundamental tool for verifying the level of implementation of the planned actions, assessing the effectiveness of the measures adopted, and identifying areas for improvement, with a view to continuous and adaptive updating of the Plan.

The report is based on an integrated analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, as well as on a review of the main initiatives carried out by the University during the reference period.

### **2. MONITORING METHODOLOGY**

The monitoring of the GEP was conducted through:

- analysis of gender-disaggregated data relating to academic and technical-administrative staff;
- collection of qualitative information from institutional documents and implemented initiatives;
- verification of the state of progress of the actions planned across the five strategic areas of the Plan;
- comparison with the objectives defined during the planning phase.

This methodological approach enables a systematic assessment that is consistent with the structure of the GEP, which provides for continuous monitoring based on specific indicators.

### **3. OVERALL STATE OF PROGRESS OF THE GEP**

The overall analysis reveals a satisfactory level of implementation of the planned actions, with significant alignment between the strategic objectives and the initiatives concretely realised.

The University has demonstrated a strong institutional commitment to promoting gender equality, adopting an integrated and systemic approach that involves governance, staff, and the student community.

The implemented activities are consistent with the five key areas of the GEP and show a progressive structuring of gender policies within the University.

### **4. MONITORING BY STRATEGIC AREA**

In recent years, the Università San Raffaele Roma has made considerable efforts to promote gender equality through the implementation of integrated policies and proactive strategic initiatives aimed at supporting a fair and inclusive academic environment. To this end, the University has carried out and planned multiple positive actions aimed not only at eliminating gender barriers but also at enhancing diversity within its community.

The University has adopted a holistic approach to managing gender issues, with the intent of highlighting how institutional policies are not gender-neutral; on the contrary, they exert distinct and significant effects on men and women, shaping their experiences and opportunities differently.

This approach is reflected in the numerous day-to-day initiatives that aim to improve study and working conditions for all members of the university community. The main ones are outlined below, illustrating the principal activities carried out to date.

#### **4.1 Area 1 – Work-Life Balance and Organisational Culture**

The actions planned in this area are at an advanced stage of implementation. Flexible working arrangements have been adopted and certain services aimed at promoting the organisational and professional well-being of staff have been strengthened.

In 2024, the University introduced a specific "Regulation for the execution of work performance in the form of agile working", establishing a regulatory framework that values process-based management and staff accountability, with the aim of enhancing overall productivity and making more efficient use of new technologies. The adoption of this regulation also responds to the need to offer flexible solutions that support the reconciliation of professional and private life, improving the perception of the working environment and the well-being of workers. In parallel, the University has sought to encourage sustainable commuting, reducing daily home-work travel and thereby contributing to environmental protection and collective savings, as well as to the overall improvement of quality of life.

Furthermore, as part of the many initiatives undertaken to build a culture aimed at educating about differences and ensuring an inclusive and respectful academic environment, the University established alias careers through a dedicated Regulation. The activation of this procedure is not only an act of social awareness, but represents an essential step towards a more just and egalitarian society.

Additionally, the Università San Raffaele Roma has embarked on a process of reflection on the linguistic styles used in its institutional communications, with the aim of being a promoter of social change intended to remove the obstacles that, even today, stand in the way of overcoming gender stereotypes. A Vademecum on the introduction of inclusive, gender-sensitive language has therefore been drawn up and disseminated, applicable both to the drafting of internal documents and to external communications.

#### **4.2 Area 2 – Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making Processes**

The actions in this area have been initiated, with particular reference both to awareness-raising activities aimed at highlighting the importance of female representation in senior positions, and to targeted support for female candidacies to access the University's decision-making bodies. It is indeed fundamental for the University that men and women enjoy equal opportunities to participate in decision-making processes, which must be conducted in a gender-sensitive manner, recognising and valuing existing differences, in order to guarantee effective equal opportunity.

#### **4.3 Area 3 – Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression**

The University has initiated a structured process aimed at disseminating, not only within the academic community but also in the broader context, a cultural awareness on gender matters. Furthermore, the University is also working to eliminate the invisible biases that condition academia and, in general, society. A crucial element is the constant monitoring of career paths, carried out through the definition and analysis of specific indicators that will feed into the Gender Budget, so as to guarantee equitable and discrimination-free professional advancement.

#### **4.4 Area 4 – Integration of the Gender Dimension into Research and Teaching Programmes**

The University is achieving this objective through the organisation of workshops and events for the academic community aimed at encouraging the inclusion of a gender perspective in research and teaching activities. Emphasis has been placed on promoting, within the various educational pathways, topics related to gender and the valorisation of diversity. Research projects involving academics from various scientific-disciplinary areas have been encouraged and funded, in order to address these topics through a holistic approach and a cross-pollination of knowledge and expertise from different fields of study and research.

In parallel, the University has expanded its educational offering by introducing, also in collaboration with institutions and centres of excellence, postgraduate courses and First and Second Level Master's programmes that, in addition to fostering the development of participants' specialist skills,

place at their centre the gender perspective, diversity and inclusion, while at the same time promoting individual well-being.

#### **4.5 Area 5 – Measures Against Gender-Based Violence, Including Sexual Harassment**

The University has developed an articulated system of prevention and awareness-raising, aimed at systematically combating every form of gender-based violence, both in the field of scientific research and in that of teaching and training. Networks of collaboration have been built with stakeholders at national and regional level, with the aim of developing specific competencies and promoting processes of organisational and social innovation, thereby fostering a profound and lasting cultural transformation.

In parallel, educational and training initiatives have been strengthened, aimed at raising awareness and providing concrete tools for the prevention of violent acts and opposition to every form of gender discrimination.

A further testament to the attention paid to these issues is represented by the collaboration with the Multiversity Group and the latter's membership of Valore D, a pioneering association in addressing the issue of gender balance and promoting a culture of inclusion. Thanks to this partnership, the entire university community can access specific training courses on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I). Added to this is the launch of "Multiwomen AG", the first Affinity Group, conceived to support and accompany female staff through mentoring initiatives, testimonials, webinars and professional growth opportunities.

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the University scheduled, for November 2024, a series of initiatives — both internal and open to the public — with the aim of spreading awareness, promoting shared reflection and fostering a culture of respect and non-violence. The proposed activities include:

- a self-defence webinar organised by the Multiwomen Affinity Group (AG) in collaboration with Professione Autodifesa, entitled "Self-Defence: Correct Approach and Practical Techniques", aimed at strengthening personal safety and self-esteem;
- a training session organised by Multiwomen AG with AIEF (Italian Association of Financial Educators) entitled "Financial Education as a Tool Against Economic Gender-Based Violence", which illustrated how financial education can serve as a tool against economic gender-based violence;
- a training course on "Gender Harassment in the Workplace" in collaboration with Valore D, aimed at understanding and recognising gender harassment in the workplace, so as to foster a culture of respect in every professional setting;
- a video-podcast entitled "Scomodiamoci: the awareness podcast on the culture of non-violence", produced with the support of actress and influencer Carolina de' Castiglioni in collaboration with Valore D, bringing together men and women with the aim of analysing, in an inclusive manner, the issue of gender-based violence;
- a webinar "Sliding Doors – The Power of Change for a Different Tomorrow", dedicated to identifying the different types of violence, offering an overview of the current situation and presenting examples of prevention strategies.

These initiatives testify to the University's constant commitment to guaranteeing an inclusive and supportive environment, in line with the highest ethical and institutional standards.

The economic sustainability and the proposed timetable for the implementation of the GEP have received the full endorsement of the two main governing bodies of the University, the Academic Senate and the Board of Directors, highlighting the priority relevance attributed to gender issues. Through its concrete implementation, the Università San Raffaele Roma aims to integrate teaching and research from the perspective of Gender Studies and Gender Equality. In this regard, the GEP is not conceived as an initiative intended exclusively for women, but as an inclusive project for the benefit of all, aimed at guaranteeing equal opportunities, improving the well-being of the academic

community, and ultimately making the University a model of best practices both nationally and at the European level.

In parallel with the implementation of the measures pertaining to the five areas of the GEP, the University has also undertaken further initiatives of considerable importance, reinforcing its commitment to ensuring an inclusive academic environment and enhancing opportunities for personal and professional development for the entire university community.

In particular, the University has defined a Three-Year Plan for Teaching Innovation, aimed at introducing advanced teaching methodologies and employing the latest generation of technologies, in order to redefine the process of knowledge transfer. The main objective is to create an interactive, inclusive and flexible learning environment, capable of responding to students' educational needs and preparing new generations to competently face the challenges of an ever-changing global context.

The Department has also organised "Research Seminars", a programme of monthly meetings designed to promote the sharing of study areas and methodologies, as well as to foster interdisciplinary activities within departmental research. The topics covered range from medical prevention — also from a gender perspective — to social inclusion.

In parallel, the University has established a University Merit Fund, aimed at providing additional remuneration to professors and researchers who carry out duties beyond their ordinary obligations, achieve particularly significant results, or contribute to the acquisition of public and private funding.

On the front of inclusion and female empowerment, the Università San Raffaele Roma has made a significant contribution to the activities promoted by the Multiwomen Affinity Group, participating in initiatives focused on key themes for women's health, nutrition and well-being, such as the event entitled "Women and Nutrition: The Various Stages of Life".

In addition, the University demonstrates significant attention to the psychological well-being of its staff, recognising that mental health is an essential prerequisite for genuinely sustainable organisational growth. As proof of this commitment, in 2023 each employee was able to access four free sessions with psychologists and psychotherapists, thanks to the TConsulta digital mental health support platform. This initiative testifies to the institution's desire to place the care of the person at the centre of the professional culture, promoting a working environment in which psycho-physical well-being occupies a position of primary importance.

Furthermore, the University has initiated collaborations with institutions and organisations of national and international standing, in order to exchange good practices and actively participate in research networks focused on gender studies, demonstrating its commitment not only at an institutional level but also in contributing to the debate and to public policies on gender equality.

## **ADDITIONAL WELFARE INITIATIVES AT THE UNIVERSITY**

### **1. SOCIAL INCLUSION ACTIONS**

The Università San Raffaele Roma is committed to guaranteeing the right to education and full participation in university life for students with disabilities, specific learning disorders (SLD) and special educational needs (SEN). This commitment is grounded in the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006) and applicable national legislation, through the removal of barriers and the implementation of adequate support measures.

The Disability and Specific Learning Disorders Service (DSLDS) serves as a fundamental point of reference for student assistance, fostering an inclusive and accessible university environment. The University has adopted advanced strategies to ensure the academic success of students with difficulties, investing in digital technologies, inclusive teaching methodologies and personalised support.

#### ***The DSLDS Service: Analysis of Needs, Actions Taken and Their Development Over Time***

The DSLDS Service serves as an indispensable point of reference for students with disabilities, Specific Learning Disorders (SLD) and Special Educational Needs (SEN), providing structured and personalised support aimed at guaranteeing equal opportunities in access to and enjoyment of the university experience. The service's activity begins with targeted reception, during which the figures appointed by the University Governance and coordinated by the Rector's Delegate for students with DSLDS conduct an in-depth analysis of students' individual needs, identifying the most appropriate solutions to facilitate their academic journey, in compliance with applicable regulations. This process involves the identification of compensatory and dispensatory tools and the mediation between lecturers and students to ensure the effective application of the necessary support measures. In addition to fostering constructive interaction between students and lecturers, the service provides assistance in managing administrative and bureaucratic procedures, such as the accreditation procedure for the DSLDS service, the issue of the badge for access to dedicated services, and the application for compensatory and dispensatory measures provided for by current legislation.

Over the years, the University has expanded and refined the services available to students with disabilities and SLD, adopting an increasingly inclusive and multidimensional approach. In particular, one of the central aspects of this commitment concerns reception and guidance at the point of entry, a crucial moment for supporting students in choosing the academic pathway best suited to their needs. Through individual consultations, detailed information is provided on study pathways, on how to access support services, and on the most effective strategies for addressing any difficulties encountered during the university journey.

Particular attention is paid to the personalisation of examinations and academic support, guaranteeing students the possibility of making use of compensatory tools, additional time and specialist tutors, with the aim of minimising the obstacles related to specific learning difficulties. In this regard, the University continuously invests in the adoption of accessible teaching materials and in the implementation of advanced digital tools, which allow for the creation of a flexible learning environment adaptable to diverse needs. Furthermore, for students with motor difficulties, the University ensures a personalised assistance service in the classroom and during examination and graduation sessions, providing specific supports that facilitate active participation in academic activities.

All these initiatives are part of a broader strategy of inclusion and accessibility, aimed at removing barriers that might limit the full participation of students with disabilities and SLD in university life. The University is committed to ensuring a welcoming and dynamic environment in which every stu-

dent can feel valued and supported in their academic journey, promoting an educational model based on equity, personalised learning and teaching innovation. Through this constant commitment, the University continues to strengthen its role as an institution attentive to the needs of all students, contributing to the building of a truly inclusive academic community where the right to study and active participation are guaranteed to everyone, regardless of personal difficulties.

### Main Initiatives Implemented

The University has undertaken various initiatives to ensure equitable access to the educational pathway for students with disabilities and SLD and to promote their academic success. Details of these initiatives are set out in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1 – Main Initiatives**

Service	Details
<i>Consulting/assessment on assistive technologies</i>	The DSLDS Service provides personalised consulting to assess and identify the assistive technologies best suited to students' needs, within the scope of dispensatory and compensatory measures provided for under the current regulatory framework. Tools proposed include speech synthesis software for reading digital texts, talking calculators for students with SLD, and facilitated writing tools with automatic spell-checkers to improve accessibility and learning.
<i>Study support and academic career support</i>	The Disability and SLD Student Service guarantees individual guidance and study support sessions for interested students to ensure academic success. Furthermore, the University promotes a welcoming and inclusive environment, fostering the psychological well-being of all students, including those with disabilities and SLD. In addition to individual consultations that students with disabilities can request from the DSLDS Service to explore matters related to their academic career, both from an administrative and study plan perspective, the University provides personalised support for managing examination needs at the various campus locations and at key moments in the academic journey, such as graduation sessions.
<i>Mobility assistance</i>	Mobility assistance includes accompaniment to the classroom for students with limited motor ability during examination and graduation sessions. Students must submit a request at least ten days in advance to organise the service according to their needs.
<i>Assistance in sourcing teaching materials</i>	The DSLDS service supports students in sourcing accessible teaching materials, such as texts in digital formats compatible with speech synthesis software, structured notes to facilitate study, and interactive concept maps to improve information comprehension. This work is guaranteed above all by the study platform, which features an accessible version.
<i>Provision of assistive devices in classrooms and libraries</i>	The classrooms where in-person examinations take place can be equipped, upon request by interested students, with support devices such as enlarged screens for students with visual impairments, software for accessibility to lessons, and recording tools to allow lessons to be listened to again.
<i>Library services and their accessibility</i>	As the University is a distance-learning institution, it does not have physical libraries, but guarantees access to an extensive catalogue of digital resources. Students with disabilities can request materials in accessible formats and make use of simplified search tools.
<i>Accessibility of textbooks (e.g. electronic texts)</i>	Study materials are available in accessible format on the platform through which video lectures are delivered. The availability of slides and course handouts, together with the video recorded by the lecturer, allows students to choose their preferred mode of information input (auditory/visual/both) based on their needs arising from their specific functional profile.
<i>Creation of an accessible platform</i>	The "accessible" platform represents an evolution of the student version developed by Multiversity and is fully compliant with the WCAG 2.0 accessibility standards, enabling people with disabilities to make full use of teaching content. In its development, the recommendations of the Italian Union of the Blind and Visually Impaired were incorporated, both in terms of points of attention and warnings, to ensure compatibility with high-level screen readers such as NVDA.

Service	Details
	For deaf users, in light of currently available technologies, the University has not adopted stenotyping solutions but has introduced automatic subtitling, potentially assisted by "re-speaking". In terms of design, particular care was taken to define a clear and well-organised site structure, with consistent and intuitive navigation paths, as well as options enabling rapid access to the relevant sections of the page. Maximum attention was paid to text legibility, ensuring adequate chromatic contrast, limiting the use of less accessible fonts, and allowing font sizes to be adjusted. For multimedia content, subtitles and transcriptions generated contemporaneously with the creation of lessons were provided, so as to support those unable to use the audio. Furthermore, it was ensured that all essential functions are accessible via keyboard, offering clear error messages and efficient compatibility with assistive devices such as screen readers and virtual keyboards. The entire system also adheres to the principles of code semantics and correct markup, correctly identifying the language in use. The platform, which adopts the same loading, updating and maintenance procedures for the front end and back end as those applied to the standard version, thus pursues a dual objective: to promote usability by a diverse range of users and to guarantee uniformity in content management and monitoring, offering an inclusive and high-quality service to all users.
<i>Personalised examination planning</i>	Teaching content can be accessed by students at any time thanks to the always-open access to the platform. In-person examinations are distributed across the national territory and on multiple days, so as to allow flexible scheduling compatible with the needs of students with disabilities, who also have the option of sitting examinations in a personalised format.
<i>Assistance with administrative procedures</i>	Students receive assistance with the bureaucratic procedures related to enrolment in the DSLDS service, the application for compensatory tools, the management of tax concessions, and the submission of certifying documentation.
<i>Entry guidance</i>	The University organises reception consultations to support students in choosing the most suitable study pathway for their needs. Information is provided on the support services available and on the most effective learning strategies.
<i>In-progress guidance</i>	Students with SLD and disabilities can benefit from personalised tutoring to monitor academic progress and address any difficulties. Periodic consultations may be requested to assess the effectiveness of the measures adopted and identify improvement strategies.
<i>Exit guidance for employment</i>	The University collaborates with the Job Placement Sector to facilitate the employment of students with disabilities. Support is provided in preparing CVs and for job interviews, as well as contacts with companies sensitive to workplace inclusion. Recruiting Days are organised in collaboration with the Grafton Group (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division), aimed specifically at members of protected categories (Art. 1 L. 68/99 and Art. 18 L. 68/99).
<i>International mobility</i>	The DSLDS service offers assistance to students wishing to participate in international mobility programmes, providing support in identifying accessible solutions at partner universities.
<i>Economic concessions</i>	Students with disabilities and recognised invalidity may obtain reductions in university fees as provided for by current legislation.

Source: Internal elaboration on internal data

### **Evolution of Support Requests**

In recent years, the University has recorded a significant increase in support requests, reflecting a growing awareness of and confidence in the services offered. In confirmation of this trend, the number of students with disabilities and SLD enrolled has risen from 255 in the academic year 2019–2020, of whom 30 were followed by the DSLDS Service, to the current 484 enrolled. Of these, 122 students (approximately 25%) have requested accreditation with the DSLDS Service and make use of the various services available. The Università San Raffaele Roma continues to invest resources to improve accessibility and support for students with disabilities and SLD. The

growth trend in support requests reflects not only the constant increase in enrolled students, but also the effectiveness of the initiatives adopted and the commitment shown over time by the University Governance to continuous improvement in order to guarantee equal opportunities for all students.

## **2. UNIVERSITY INITIATIVES FOR EVALUATING ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

The Università San Raffaele Roma has been participating, since the 2023/2024 academic year, in the Good Practice project, coordinated by the Graduate School of Management of the Politecnico di Milano (Polimi). This initiative, which involves numerous universities annually, aims to identify and enhance best practices in management and administration, through a benchmarking methodology based on a structured set of indicators. Good Practice operates in an academic context increasingly characterised by continuous innovation and growing competition among university institutions.

The value of the project lies in a participatory research approach, in which the participating universities make available data and information concerning their own support services, thus enabling the development of a shared evaluative model that promotes internal and external transparency and accountability. In this way, Good Practice is not limited to providing a statistical comparison between the performance of the various participants, but facilitates a collaborative dialogue oriented towards common improvement and the adoption of more sustainable management strategies.

The impact of Good Practice is articulated across several levels. First, on a social level, it contributes to qualifying the higher education system by spreading a culture based on the measurement and comparison of results. Within the network of universities involved, the project fosters forms of cooperation and knowledge exchange, overcoming the traditional tendency towards confidentiality about costs and procedures. At the level of the individual university, it encourages greater internal accountability, helping institutions to set concrete objectives for their support services and making those services a factor of attraction for students and lecturers. Finally, from an academic perspective, Good Practice extends the horizon of performance management, integrating technical aspects (such as the analysis of indicators and benchmarking) with relational considerations regarding the use of tools and the tangible impact on the operations of universities.

At the conclusion of each national edition of the project, the responsible scientific team produces a final report, in which it analyses the performance of each university in terms of the efficiency and effectiveness of its administrative processes, comparing them with the results achieved by the other participants. The Università San Raffaele Roma, through its participation, aims not only to improve its internal processes, but also to contribute to the progress of the national academic system, making the services offered more transparent and measurable and, consequently, strengthening the trust placed in the institution by students, lecturers and external stakeholders.

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## **CONCLUSIONS**

The monitoring reveals that the GEP of the Università Telematica San Raffaele Roma is at an advanced stage of implementation and is proving to be an effective tool for the promotion of gender equality.

The University has demonstrated a strong capacity to translate strategic objectives into concrete actions, adopting an integrated and sustainable approach.

It will, however, be essential to continue strengthening the monitoring systems and assessing the impact of the actions taken, in order to guarantee continuous and lasting improvement.