

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2025-2028

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY AT UNIGE
2030 STRATEGIC VISION

Translated by FTI students for the Traduction project organized
by Susan Pickford, Marianne Starlander, Cécile Guiraud
and Hianau Siu.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2025-2028

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY AT UNIGE 2030 STRATEGIC VISION

FOREWORD

Founded in 1559, the University of Geneva (UNIGE) is currently ranked among the top 100 universities in the world. UNIGE contributes to scientific, educational, cultural, social and economic development locally while also shining on the international stage. The university comprises nine faculties – Science, Medicine, Humanities, Social Sciences, Economics and Management, Law, Theology, Psychology and Educational Sciences, and Translation and Interpreting – and 13 inter-faculty centres and institutes. In 2024, it had 18,261 students, 62% of whom were women, and a staff of 6,474.

In 2022 UNIGE was awarded the international Equity, Diversity, and Gender Equality (EDGE) certification in recognition of its commitment to analysing pay equity. In 2021 it conducted the accreditation process for the platinum-level Healthy Campus label, which it obtained the following year. UNIGE was one of the first Swiss institutions to set up a systematic monitoring system for the recruitment of professors, with delegates assigned to ensure equality and diversity in each appointing committee. Measures driven by federal programmes and funded by swissuniversities (the umbrella organization of Swiss higher education institutions) have led to an increase in the number of female professors. UNIGE now has the highest proportion of female professors of all Swiss universities.

The UNIGE Strategic Plan for 2024-2034 establishes a clear direction for the university, centred on three strategic pillars: (1) Shaping the world of tomorrow: A university that excels in research and teaching, building on the methodologies of the future; (2) Living in today's world: A dynamic, egalitarian and inclusive institution in harmony with our community; and (3) Promoting a university open to the world: A university that embodies and promotes the highest academic and humanist values in Switzerland and beyond. The Strategic Plan is well-positioned to address today's pressing

global concerns: growing inequalities, climate change and the emergence of artificial intelligence that risks developing beyond our control. Social fragmentation and information overload have led to an exponential increase in misinformation and the spread of information bubbles. Many people have thus taken up post-truth attitudes and adopted a growing distrust of modern democracy.

The actions we take to promote a harmonious community can be guided by a few key principles:

- Encouraging prosocial behaviour for the benefit of others:
 - Helping, sharing, cooperating and supporting
- Encouraging trial-and-error learning to foster a better understanding of the world, the scientific method and new ideas
- Encouraging critical thinking and empathy
- Trusting others
- Treating people equally and fairly, by promoting inclusion in general and accessibility in particular

Prof. Edouard Gentaz

Vice-Rector in charge of the Vivre Ensemble programme

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN: A STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE	4
EQUALITY & DIVERSITY AT UNIGE: ORIGINS AND OUTREACH	5
HISTORICAL OVERVIEW	5
MANDATE	5
ORGANIZATION AND OUTREACH	5
2030 VISION: TOWARDS A MORE EGALITARIAN AND INCLUSIVE WORK AND STUDY ENVIRONMENT	7
CONSULTATION PROCESS	8
STRATEGIC AND REGULATORY FOUNDATION	8
UNIGE EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN FOR 2025-2028: STRATEGIES	12
– ASTRATEGY 1: PREVENT, PROTECT AND SUPPORT. FOR A WORK AND STUDY ENVIRONMENT FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION	13
KEY PROJECTS FOR 2025-2028	15
– STRATEGY 2: PROMOTE RESPECT AND OPEN-MINDEDNESS FOR AN EGALITARIAN AND INCLUSIVE CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT	17
KEY PROJECTS FOR 2025-2028	19
– STRATEGY 3: CULTIVATE KNOWLEDGE AND FOSTER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR SHARING AND PROMOTING RESEARCH ON EQUALITY, GENDER AND DIVERSITY	21
KEY PROJECTS FOR 2025-2028	23
EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2025-2028: INDICATORS AND MONITORING	24
APPENDIX DATA ON THE UNIGE COMMUNITY	25

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN: A STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE

UNIGE is facing several challenges in light of recent changes to the regulatory framework that governs it. Two new cantonal laws, LED-L13279 and LED-Genre (L12843), entered into force in March 2023, requiring amendments to the University Act (LU). A third paragraph under article 3 was added, which reads: “The university shall prohibit all forms of direct or indirect discrimination based on personal characteristics” (LU, article 3, “Equality”, 2023). New directives on the protection of personal rights in the workplace also entered into force in June 2022 and March 2023. As a result, the university’s staff now require training and guidance so that they can identify problematic situations and report them to the competent authorities.

UNIGE must also achieve certain objectives and comply with specific requirements. For example, it must meet the equality requirements under the Gender Equality Act on equal pay, as well as targets set out in the 2024-2027 Agreement on Objectives (*Conventions d’objectifs*) concluded by the university with the cantonal authorities, particularly in terms of staff training and awareness on equality and diversity (objective 6.1).

This Action Plan is an essential requirement for submitting individual or collaborative projects on behalf of the university under the 2025-2028 federal programme, “Equity: Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion at all levels in higher education institutions”.

The Equality & Diversity Action Plan 2025-2028 also meets European requirements. Since 2022, these have called for each institution to establish a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) to be eligible for the Horizon Europe programme. All five focus areas highlighted by the programme are covered by the Action Plan’s ongoing or planned actions.

There are currently 75 ongoing and/or completed actions and 64 new ones planned in the five focus areas:

1. Work-life balance and workplace culture
2. Representation of women and men in leadership positions
3. Equality in recruitment and promotion
4. Gender mainstreaming in research and teaching
5. Measures to combat gender-based violence, sexism and sexual harassment of women

These actions do not only address gender equality issues. They also cover other aspects of diversity (see the appendix for a description). Their descriptions are aligned as closely as possible with European standards, while remaining in keeping with the general strategies. The actions against gender-based violence, sexism and sexual harassment of women thus also address forms of discrimination, violence and harassment impacting other groups. In addition, initiatives in the area of work-life balance and workplace culture encompass actions relating to organizational culture in the broad sense of the word.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY AT UNIGE: ORIGINS AND OUTREACH

UNIGE has implemented policies to build a more egalitarian university for more than 20 years. The Equality & Diversity Service (EDS) has existed in its current form since 2020, but the first department active in this field was established in 2002. Year after year, various initiatives and forms of support have driven a number of changes, consolidating the Service and its work within the university.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

2002: Establishment of an office in the division of Women's Issues

2008: The Women's Issues Office became the Equality Office

2015: The Equality Office was renamed the Equality Service

2020: The Equality Service expanded to become the Equality & Diversity Service

MANDATE

The EDS mandate is clearly defined and firmly established at UNIGE, in the University Act (LU, article 3) and in the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for Genevan Institutions of Higher Education. The policies and actions are defined in four-year action plans for the entire UNIGE community of students and staff and are in line with the strategic vision of the new Rectorate.

These four-year action plans (covering 2013-2016, 2017-2020 and 2021-2024) have been supported by the swissuniversities Equal Opportunities Programme.

UNIGE's commitment to equality has made it possible to institute sustainable policies and actions, creating a strong foundation that supports both the university's long-term strategies as well as new initiatives. These efforts

aim to meet the needs and expectations of the university community and respond to broader societal challenges.

ORGANIZATION AND OUTREACH

In 2024, the EDS was a unit of the Vivre-Ensemble administrative division, headed by Vice-Rector Edouard Gentaz and staffed with 5.1 posts.

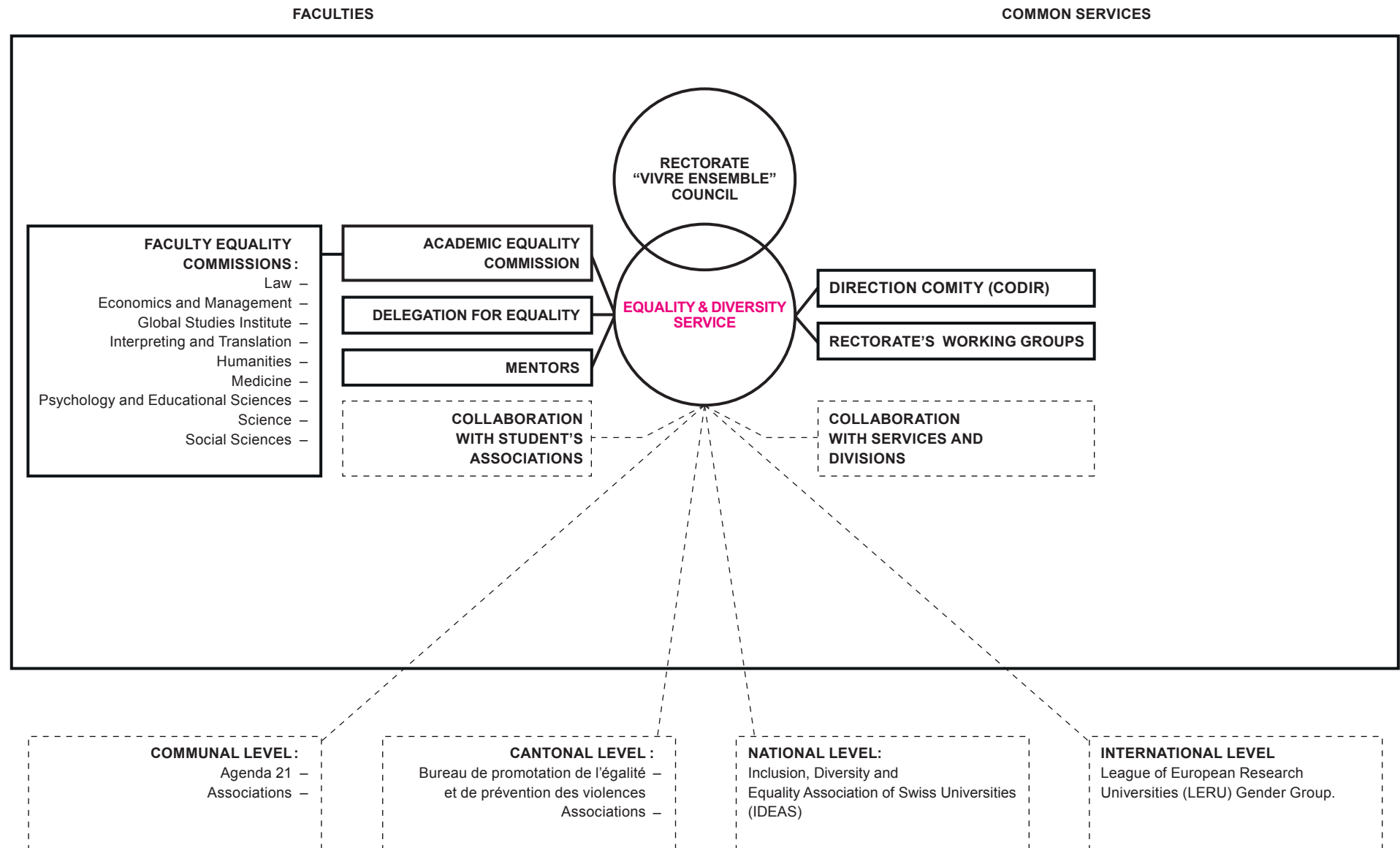
Within UNIGE, the following are affiliated with the EDS:

- a Commission on Academic Equality of the Rectorate, presided over by the EDS directors and the Vice-Rector responsible for the administrative subdivision;
- an Equality Commission within each faculty;
- four female professors with mentoring roles;
- five Delegate Professors for Equality from various faculties, constituting the Delegation for Equality.

The EDS represents UNIGE at the cantonal, national and European levels, through its participation in the Equality and LGBTIQ Advisory Commissions of the Canton of Geneva, in the Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Association of Swiss Universities (IDEAS) network and in the League of European Research Universities (LERU) Gender Group.

The EDS participates in or leads various internal working groups, including the UNIGE Council on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the working group on persons in crisis or serious situations; the working group on support for persons with disabilities; and the steering committee for the campaign for a benevolent university.

Figure : Structure and influence



2030 VISION: TOWARDS A MORE EGALITARIAN AND INCLUSIVE WORK AND STUDY ENVIRONMENT

Equality, respect for diversity and the fight against all forms of discrimination are central to our university's concerns, on both a human level – for the benefit of our student body and our staff – and professionally, through our research, teaching, dissemination of knowledge and service to the community. In keeping with Geneva's long tradition of humanism, UNIGE maintains an exemplary commitment in the field of equality, in particular in support of parenting, non-discrimination, diversity and inclusion, as well as protection of personal rights ([Strategic Plan 2024, strategic pillar 2](#)).

The Equality and Diversity 2030 Strategic Vision, established as part of the [2021-2024 Action Plan](#), and now in the 2025-2028 Action Plan, ultimately aims to create a more egalitarian and inclusive working and learning environment. The current Action Plan builds on existing initiatives by proposing clear, achievable strategic objectives that align with the university's commitments and continue the projects and actions carried out by previous Rectorates and supported by federal programmes. Transparency, fairness and openness are the values and guidelines for every action undertaken. Community involvement is sought at all levels by adopting a participatory and collaborative approach whenever possible. Actions are implemented on the basis of academic research and expertise and are part of an approach aimed at ensuring a sustainable impact.

UNIVERSITY ACT (LU)

Article 3 Equality

1. The university shall contribute to the democratisation of knowledge and promote equal opportunities.
2. The university shall guarantee equality between women and men. It shall encourage parity in representation and responsibilities. To this end, it shall take appropriate measures in favour of the underrepresented sex.
3. The university shall prohibit all forms of direct or indirect discrimination based on personal characteristics, including origin, age, sex, emotional and sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex status, disability, physical characteristics, social or family status and religious or political beliefs.

Article 13 Staff regulations

3. Unless otherwise provided in the regulation on university staff, the hiring process shall be opened for public registration. For renewable positions in the faculty and teaching and research staff, when candidates have equivalent qualifications, preference shall be given to the person belonging to the underrepresented gender.

Source: Republic and Canton of Geneva, 2023, University Act (LU).

Available in French at <https://silgeneve.ch/legis/>

CONSULTATION PROCESS

As part of the update of this Action Plan, the Equality & Diversity Service conducted a series of consultations between April and December 2024 with various entities, persons, services and commissions, including members of the Rectorate, the chairs and members of the faculty equality commissions, the UNIGE Equality Advisory Commission and some of the heads of services and divisions. Equality, diversity and inclusion professionals at the cantonal, national and international levels, particularly in institutions of higher education, were also consulted.

STRATEGIC AND REGULATORY FOUNDATION

The action plan is founded on a regulatory and policy framework. It is based on a series of recommendations stemming from the EDGE certification, from other institutional accreditation processes and from the fourth Agreement on Objectives, concluded between the university and the Canton of Geneva for the period 2020-2023.

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct of Genevan Institutions of Higher Education

A) The Institutions of Higher Education promote the principle of equal opportunity. They prohibit any discrimination based on, among other things, sex, ethnic or social origin, genetic characteristics, religious beliefs, political opinions, membership in a national minority, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity, both in fulfilling the tasks of teaching and research and in the relationships within the academic community. Particular consideration and safeguarding shall be granted to individuals in a position of vulnerability.

Source: UNIGE, 2019, *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct of Genevan Institutions of Higher Education*. Available at www.unige.ch/ethique/charter

STATUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY

Article 4 Commissions assisting the Rectorate

2. A Delegation for Equality, composed of at least of two full professors and one full-time delegate, shall be appointed by the Rectorate. Equitable representation of women and men shall be ensured among professors.
3. The Delegation shall assist the Rectorate in implementing the principle of equal rights and opportunities for women and men. It shall take part in hiring committees and shall follow up, where appropriate, on objections and appeals relating to the hiring process.

Source (in French): www.unige.ch/files/1716/2566/2224/Statut-Version-1juillet2021.pdf

UNIVERSITY STAFF REGULATIONS

Article 99 Examination and proposal by the committee

4. In assessing an applicant's scholarship, account shall also be taken of the time spent by the applicant on activities other than research, in particular family responsibilities.

Source (in French): www.unige.ch/rectorat/static/reglement_personnel.pdf

SUMMARIES AND EXCERPTS OF KEY GUIDELINES

Agreement on Objectives 2024-2027

Objective 6.1: Continue to develop and implement an inclusiveness policy covering diversity in all its forms.

Objective 6.5: Support career development for technical and administrative staff, in particular via continuing education and opportunities for career advancement.

On UNIGE's Strategic Plan 2024-2034

“We can build strong bonds in our community in many ways: through a better alignment with community expectations in terms of equality (through daycare policy, for example) and diversity and inclusion (encompassing gender, ethnic and cultural backgrounds and all types of disabilities) as well as the quality of the working environment and daily well-being.”

(Audrey Leuba, Rector)

“We shall pursue our objectives of establishing an example of equality, taking into consideration parenthood, non-discrimination, diversity and inclusion, as well as safeguarding personal rights.”

“We shall pay constant attention to ensuring the quality of staff working conditions and career advancement, including by encouraging continuing education.”

2023 Human Resources Strategy

“Promoting diversity through an inclusive approach at UNIGE: In collaboration with the Equality & Diversity Service, the Human Resources Division shall promote an inclusive approach, actively supporting equal pay and the integration and promotion of women, persons with disabilities and

people who may face discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender, social or cultural origin or religion.”

“Detecting and combating inappropriate behaviour: UNIGE shall take particular care to protect the personal integrity of its members, insisting on a zero-tolerance policy for such situations. Human resources experts, supported where necessary by legal experts, shall take measures to prevent and combat situations of personal injury or discrimination, competently and with humanity. Staff members can contact the psychologists of the Confidentiality Unit (Cellule Confiance), who shall be available at short notice to hear them out, assess their situations and suggest a course of action in complete confidentiality and independence. In the event of physical or verbal violence, the Violence Prevention Unit shall be able to take immediate action.”

Directives on the protection of personal rights and conflict management in working relations and the protection of personal rights and conflict management in academic relations

“The Rectorate is the authority that takes appropriate measures to prevent the risk of infringement of personal rights and to protect, inform and raise awareness among the staff.”

Directive on requesting the use of a preferred first name, surname and/or gender

“Staff and students may request, according to the conditions and procedures set out in the following sections, the use of a preferred first name, surname and/or gender.”

Directive on inclusive and gender-sensitive language at UNIGE

“The university has decided to use inclusive and gender-sensitive language in all its official documents, both new and amended, especially in

regulations, directives, reports and job postings. It will also promote the use of gender-sensitive and inclusive writing in all its communications, such as newspapers, magazines, newsletters and websites and in all personal communications.”

EDGE Action Plan 2022

“The university is committed to conducting a yearly gender pay gap assessment and to developing an equal pay policy. (...) It is further committed to systematically seeking gender-diverse pools of candidates for all management positions and to providing training aimed at raising awareness about potential gender biases (...) among all persons involved in performance assessment, recruitment or promotion processes. (...) It undertakes to continue to strengthen the institutional culture by allocating sufficient resources for the prevention of sexual harassment and all forms of violence and discrimination in the workplace. Lastly, UNIGE undertakes to analyse and integrate intersectional issues in its equality and diversity policy, particularly in terms of sexual orientation and gender identity and minority and disability status.”

Action plan for non-professor teaching and research collaborators (CCER) 2022

Measure 13/Pillar III – Communication on the resources available at UNIGE for managing psychosocial risks:

“A communication plan shall be drawn up to make known the support role played by management, the Human Resources Division and the human resources focal points within the administration, and the role of staff mediators in case of workplace conflict, and of the Confidentiality Unit (Cellule Confiance) in case of moral or sexual harassment involving members of the student body, the administrative and technical staff, teaching and research collaborators (CCER) and professors. (...) This communication plan should also include the reporting of annual statistics on sanctions imposed by UNIGE for violations in order to counter any perception of impunity.”

Measure16/Pillar III – Train and empower those in supervisory or leadership roles to identify and address psychosocial risks and signs of violation of personal rights:

“It is crucial that those in supervisory or leadership positions are better able to recognise working conditions that lead to stress and psychological suffering and signs of violations of personal rights so that they are able to respond to them responsibly.”

SUMMARIES AND EXCERPTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from the EDGE certification process in 2022

“Continue to allocate specific resources for implementing the policy to prevent sexual harassment and all forms of workplace violence (...) At the same time, the leadership team must communicate internally and externally that the institution does not tolerate sexual harassment or any form of workplace violence (...) Continue to ensure full leadership support for gender equality in the workplace and ensure that university leaders regularly communicate, both internally and externally, the institution’s commitment to progress on this issue by explicitly highlighting the shared benefits for both men and women working for the institution as well as for the institution itself.”

Recommendations from the institutional accreditation process in 2022

2.3 “Strengthen and expand support measures for other forms of inequality, whether social, related to sexual orientation or disability, and amplify communication about them to the university community.”

5.1 “Develop an institutional policy for continuing education and staff development that includes administrative and technical staff.”

Recommendations based on the expert report on the 4th Agreement on Objectives, 2020-2023, between the Canton of Geneva and the University of Geneva

“Regarding the institutional inclusivity policy, although the indicator has been fully achieved, it is nevertheless necessary to boost the central budget to enable ongoing actions and regular monitoring.”

Quality Standards for Institutional Accreditation – Guidelines of the Accreditation Council for Accreditation Agencies, 2024

2.5 “Institutions of Higher Education promote equal opportunities and real equality in practice. They set objectives in the area of social sustainability – particularly regarding diversity, equal opportunities, and inclusion – take appropriate measures to achieve them, and monitor their effectiveness.”

UNIGE EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2025-2028: STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1: PREVENT, PROTECT AND SUPPORT
FOR A WORK AND STUDY ENVIRONMENT
FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION

STRATEGY 2: PROMOTE RESPECT AND OPEN-MINDEDNESS
FOR AN EGALITARIAN AND INCLUSIVE
CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

STRATEGY 3: CULTIVATE KNOWLEDGE AND FOSTER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
FOR SHARING AND PROMOTING RESEARCH ON EQUALITY,
GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Each strategy incorporates several objectives that work as guidelines for planned actions and initiatives.
Progress on objectives and indicators will be monitored on an annual basis.

STRATEGY 1: PREVENT, PROTECT AND SUPPORT FOR A WORK AND STUDY ENVIRONMENT FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION

● Facts and data

Violations of personal rights continue to occur in the academic sphere (Wild, 2024¹) and Swiss universities are no exception (Faniko, 2016²; Faniko et al., 2012³; Magni, forthcoming⁴). Places of study are the third most common environment in which discrimination has been observed (Eisner & Hässler, 2022⁵; OFS, 2024⁶). This includes the University of Geneva, which has documented a number of cases involving infringements on personal rights on its campus (2022 Management Report, UNIGE, 2023⁷; 2023 Management Report, UNIGE, 2024⁸).

● UNIGE's commitment

Building on several years of pioneering initiatives, including the #UNIUNIE campaign in 2017⁹, UNIGE is reaffirming its commitment to fostering a lasting culture of equality and inclusion, and to creating an environment that promotes community cohesion. We highlight these commitments in the Rectorate's new Strategic Plan (UNIGE, 2023¹⁰): "UNIGE aims to be a model institution in social and environmental matters. This implies paying special attention to the health and well-being of our community and, alongside public authorities, addressing the needs of those in precarious situations."

In line with these efforts, UNIGE's human resources strategy (2023¹¹) outlines clear objectives for preventing conflicts and discrimination, developing skills, and supporting continuing education. In addition, two directives have been issued on the protection of personal rights and conflict management at work (UNIGE, 2022¹²) and in academic settings (UNIGE, 2023¹³).

A campaign and website (unige.ch/help) have also been launched to centralise resources, help prevent violations of personal rights, protect, inform and raise awareness among staff.

● Cantonal, national and international initiatives

These efforts are rooted in a broader legal framework. In compliance with the Agreement on Objectives (*Convention d'Objectifs*) 2024-2027¹⁴ concluded between UNIGE and the Canton of Geneva, the university has committed to establishing training to combat discrimination and create a work and study environment free from any form of discrimination. At the cantonal level, the new General Act for Equality and Non-Discrimination (Republic and Canton of Geneva, 2023¹⁵) underlines the importance of education and training on equality, violence, discrimination, prejudice and stereotypes. It also encourages awareness and prevention campaigns. The enforcement of this new act amends article 3 of the University Act (LU) by adding a new paragraph 3: "The university shall prohibit all forms of direct or indirect discrimination based on personal characteristics, including origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex, disability, physical characteristics, social or family status, and religious or political beliefs" (Republic and Canton of Geneva, 2023)¹⁶.

At the national level, the Federal Act on Gender Equality¹⁷ supports equality between women and men in the workplace.

At the international level, this commitment to equality is upheld in a series of conventions, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)¹⁸, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)¹⁹, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)²⁰ and the Istanbul Convention²¹ (entered into force in Switzerland in 2018).

Building on current research and existing policies, UNIGE has set the following objectives for the 2025-2028 period:

STRATEGY 1: PREVENT, PROTECT AND SUPPORT (5 OBJECTIVES)


1. Raise awareness and inform the university community
2. Listen to and provide support for community members on issues related to violations of personal rights, parenting or other specific needs
3. Provide training on equality, diversity and inclusion
4. Strengthen workplace equality
 - › Establish fair policies for recruitment, promotion and compensation
 - › Support women researchers in their academic careers
 - › Promote and support balanced gender representation at all levels and in all fields
 - › Promote non-linear career models
5. Improve legal and regulatory frameworks



FOCUS KEY PROJECTS 2025-2028

Develop information platforms on mechanisms and resources related to the protection of personal rights (www.unige.ch/help), parenthood (www.unige.ch/parentalite), accessibility, and LGBTIQ issues (under construction).

2025-2028 

Organize information sessions with the entire UNIGE community on the protection of personal rights. 2025-2028 


Conduct awareness and prevention campaigns (“For a caring university!”, “UNIGE without obstacles”) and produce the needed materials (“Don’t turn a blind eye” guide).

2025 

Listen, provide support and refer individuals to the appropriate resources for issues involving violations of personal rights (students/staff).

2025-2028

Lead and carry out prevention and intervention training for conflicts and/or violations of personal rights, and psychological and/or sexual harassment. 2025-2028

Help establish effective training for individuals responsible for handling situations involving violations of personal rights in educational settings via a pilot project with academic advisors. 2026-2028 

Implement training on bias during recruitment procedures, and support the development of tools to raise awareness of gender bias during recruitment procedures for faculty positions (e.g. creating videos).

2025-2028 

Maintain the target of 50% female professors among new appointments. 2025-2028

Maintain and develop career programs: Mentorat Relève, RRM, HIT, Subside Tremplin, Professeure. 2025-2028

Recognize and promote continuing education efforts undertaken by staff and further develop training paths. 2025-2028

Strengthen the system for addressing violations of personal rights, especially in academic settings. Coordinate, monitor and harmonise practices between teams/departments.

2025-2028 

Indicateurs de succès : A ; C ; D ; E ; F ; I ; J ; K ; L ; M (see details for indicators on page 24)

- 1 Wild, S. (2024). Shrouded in secrecy: How science is harmed by the bullying and harassment rumor mill. *Nature*, 629(8010), 245.247. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-024-00986-w>
- 2 Faniko, K. (2016). *Academic career at the University of Geneva: The human factor*. Accessed at https://www.unige.ch/rectorat/egalite/files/7114/7982/7612/Rapport-Sexisme_def.pdf
- 3 Faniko, K., Ellemers, N., & Derks, B.. (2022). Lack of ambition or lack of support? Diversifying career experiences of men and women explain the persistence of gender bias. *Journal of applied Social Psychology*, 52, 851-864.
- 4 Magni, G. (forthcoming). Violences de genre en milieu universitaire: *Quel lien avec d'autres formes de discrimination et quelles conséquences sur les parcours universitaires des étudiant-exs qui les subissent?* Case study at the University of Geneva. (Doctoral thesis in education sciences, defense planned for spring 2025).
- 5 Eisner, L. & Hässler, T. (2022). Swiss LGBTIQ+ Panel – Synthesis Report 2022. <https://www.doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/z29gd>
- 6 Federal Statistical Office. (2024). *Situations de discrimination*. Accessed at <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home/statistics/population/migration-integration/vivre-ensemble-Suisse/experience-discrimination.as-setdetail.31849495.html>
- 7 UNIGE. (2023). *Annual report 2022*. Accessed at https://www.unige.ch/files/5016/8849/0645/LN_RA_UNIGE2022_CONTENT_WEB_INTER_230704.pdf
- 8 UNIGE. (2024). *Annual report 2023*. Accessed at https://www.unige.ch/files/5417/1714/2452/LN_RA_UNIGE2023_WEB.pdf
- 9 UNIGE. (2017). *Campagne « #UniUnie contre le harcèlement »*. Accessed at <https://uniunie.ch/#Accueil>
- 10 UNIGE. (2023). *University Assembly*. Accessed at https://www.unige.ch/assemblee/designation_rectrice_recteur/designation_rectrice_recteur/Audrey-leuba
- 11 UNIGE. (2023). *Stratégie des ressources humaines*. Accessed at https://www.unige.ch/dirh/application/files/5917/0187/4381/Strategie_RH_2023.pdf
- 12 UNIGE. (2022). *Directive – Protection of persons and conflict management in labor relations*. Accessed at <https://memento.unige.ch/doc/0355>
- 13 UNIGE. (2023). *Directive – Protection of the person and conflict management in academic relationships*. Accessed at <https://memento.unige.ch/doc/0363>
- 14 UNIGE. (2023). *Convention d'objectifs entre l'État de Genève et l'Université de Genève pour les années 2024-2027*. Accessed at https://www.unige.ch/files/1817/1223/9497/COB_2024_2027_annexes.pdf
- 15 Republic and Canton of Geneva. (2023). *Loi générale sur l'égalité et la lutte contre les discriminations (LED)*. Accessed at <https://silgeneve.ch/legis/index.aspx>
- 16 Republic and Canton of Geneva. (2023). *Loi sur l'université (LU)*. Accessed at https://silgeneve.ch/legis/data/rsg/rsg_c1_30.htm?myVer=1717494779851
- 17 Federal Law on Equality between Women and Men. (1995). 151.1. Accessed at https://fedlex.data.admin.ch/eli/cc/1996/1498_1498_1498
- 18 International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial discrimination. (1965). RO 1995.1164; FF 1992 III 265. Accessed at https://fedlex.data.admin.ch/eli/cc/1995/1164_1164_1164
- 19 Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against Women. (1979). RO 1999.1579; FF 1995 IV 869. Accessed at <https://fedlex.data.admin.ch/eli/cc/1999/239>
- 20 Convention on the Rights of Handicap persons. (2006). RO 2014.1119; FF 2013.601. Accessed at <https://fedlex.data.admin.ch/eli/cc/2014/245>
- 21 Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la prévention et la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique (Convention d'Istanbul). (2011). RO 2018 1119. Consulté sur <https://fedlex.data.admin.ch/eli/oc/2018/168>

STRATEGY 2: PROMOTE RESPECT AND OPEN-MINDEDNESS FOR AN EGALITARIAN AND INCLUSIVE CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

● Facts and data

Several studies have shown that taking diversity into account has a positive impact on businesses, including on the well-being and motivation of employees (Roberge et al., 2021²²). Conversely, toxic work environments are one of the main reasons women leave academia (Spoon et al., 2023²³). From a practical standpoint, a work environment that values individual differences benefits businesses, particularly in decision-making (Cloverpop, 2020²⁴), productivity, and innovation (Alshebli et al., 2018²⁵; International Labour Office, 2019²⁶). In addition, fostering diversity in universities significantly reduces discriminatory behaviour (Tisserant et al., 2011²⁷). Finally, it is essential that leaders work to ensure that all employees feel respected, included and valued so that the benefits of diversity can be felt (Ellemers & Rink, 2016²⁸).

● UNIGE's commitment

Diversity, in all its forms, is well represented at UNIGE. For example, the university community is comprised of 49% women and 51% men, and 59% of students and 46% of faculty come from other cantons or countries (Statistics office, 2024²⁹). Requests for accommodations from students with disabilities are also on the rise, with 371 requests recorded in 2022-2023 (Student Health Service, 2024³⁰). However, student precarity remains a reality: In 2023, the Financial Aid Office received 2,124 applications and awarded 1,059 grants. UNIGE is paying special attention to these issues by stressing the importance of community integration through its focus on "Vivre ensemble". Several programmes are in place to help make

the University more inclusive: COPIL AAPSH (SED, 2024³¹) for improving accessibility for persons with disabilities; the Group for Multidisciplinary Reflection on the Historical Representations of UNIGE in Public Spaces (UNIGE, 2024³²) for managing scientific legacy and the place of historical figures in the public sphere; the Horizon programme (UNIGE, 2024³³) for facilitating the integration of people from migrant backgrounds; the Women Experts programme (UNIGE, 2024³⁴) for strengthening the visibility and presence of women in the media, the guidelines on inclusive language (UNIGE, 2023³⁵) and the directive allowing the selection of a preferred first name or surname for academic use (UNIGE, 2020³⁶).

In addition, UNIGE was awarded the platinum-level Healthy Campus label by the International University Sports Federation (FISU³⁷), demonstrating its commitment to the well-being of our entire community. Furthermore, according to the latest recommendations issued as a part of the institutional accreditation process in 2022, UNIGE must expand its support measures to address all forms of inequality and further develop its continuing education policy for staff (UNIGE, 2021³⁸).

● Cantonal, national and international initiatives

More broadly, the Code of ethics and professional conduct for the Geneva Institutions of Higher Education requires all members of the academic community to respect ethical values in their activities (UNIGE, 2019³⁹). At the cantonal level, the Sectoral Law on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or intersex (LED-Genre)⁴⁰ came into effect in

2023, and two other Sectoral Laws on racism and ableism are being drafted. All Swiss universities pay particular attention to improving work and study conditions, especially through the various projects developed under the P-7 programme for diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities in higher education development (2021-2024),⁴¹ financed by swissuniversities. This includes The Better Science initiative⁴², which calls for a reimagining of academia to prioritise sustainability, diversity and equal opportunities.

At the European level, these efforts are also supported by LERU⁴³, its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy Group and its Gender Equality Plans. The European Charter for Researchers⁴⁴ and Horizon Europe's campaign for gender equality⁴⁵ further demonstrate Europe's commitment.

Building on current research and existing policies, UNIGE has set the following objectives for the 2025-2028 period:

STRATEGY 2: PROMOTE RESPECT AND OPEN-MINDEDNESS (6 OBJECTIVES)

1. Expand the use of inclusive language at UNIGE
 - › Develop UNIGE's strategy for inclusive language
 - › Accompany and support staff to adopt new practices
 - › Encourage inclusive practices in administrative processes
2. Encourage initiatives for inclusive and egalitarian teaching
3. Strengthen community cohesion at UNIGE
 - › Improve accessibility
 - › Encourage greater respect for ethnic and social diversity
 - › Encourage greater respect for gender and sexual orientation diversity
 - › Encourage greater respect for parenthood and work-life balance
4. Increase the visibility of women experts
5. Support initiatives for a more inclusive university through a bottom-up approach
6. Strengthen faculties' involvement in developing and implementing projects and foster a spirit of participation





FOCUS KEY PROJECTS 2025-2028

Contribute to the supplement of the directive on the use of images in communication, led by the Communication Department. 2025-2026

Create a MOOC on the topic of neurodiversity for teachers as part of the Swiss cooperative project for neurodiversity (2025-2028).

2025-2026 

Include faculty representatives and people with disabilities in the work of the Accessibility and Support for People with Disabilities Steering Committee and establish its role in the institution. 2025 


Support the development of a professional integration strategy for people with disabilities (accreditation follow-up and bill). 2025-2028 

Maintain and annually update our Women Experts platform. Expand its media outreach, and develop training and new initiatives.

2025-2028 

Support departments and other groups in developing road maps.

2025-2028 

Systematise regular calls for projects, supporting faculties and students in carrying out new projects that contribute to the strategic goals of preventing and reducing all forms of discrimination, especially through information or training mechanisms. 2025-2028 

Success indicators: B; E; F; G; H; I; K; L; M; N (see details for indicators on page 24)

- 22 Roberge, M.- Élène, Huang, W.-R., & Xu, Q. J. (2021). A diverse and inclusive psychological work climate: Some antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Organizational Psychology*, 21(6). <https://doi.org/10.33423/jop.v21i6.4839>
- 23 Spoon, K., Laberge, N., Wapman, K. H., Zhang, S., Morgan, A. C., Galesic, M., Fosdick, B. K., Larremore, D. B., & Clauset, A. (2023). Gender and retention patterns among the U.S. faculty. *Science Advances*, 9(42), eadi2205. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.adi2205>
- 24 Cloverpop. (2020). Hacking diversity with inclusive decision-making. Accessed at https://www.cloverpop.com/hubfs/Whitepapers/Cloverpop_hacking_diversity_Inclusive_Decision_Making_White_Paper.pdf
- 25 AlShebli, B. K., Rahwan, T., & Woon, W. L. (2018). The preeminence of ethnic diversity in scientific collaboration. *Nature Communications*, 9(1), 5163. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-018-07634-8>
- 26 International Labour Office. (2019). *Women in Business and Management: The business case for change*. Accessed at https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms_700966.pdf
- 27 Tisserant, P., Bourguignon, D., Vignocan, C., & Wagner, A. (2011). *L'usage de la diversité réduit-il la discrimination?* Accessed at https://vod.canal-u.tv/vod/media/canal/Document/Universite_paul_verlaine_metz_sam/discrimination.et.gestion.de.la.galit.et.de.la.diversit.Conclusion_11715/4.a.tisserant_et_al_2011_usage_DI-versite.pdf
- 28 Ellemers, N., & Rink, F. (2016). Diversity in work groups. Current opinion in Psychology, 11, 49-53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2016.06.001>
- 29 Statistical Information Office. (2024). Accessed at <https://www.unige.ch/stat/>
- 30 Student Health Service. (2024). Special Needs Office. Accessed at <https://www.unige.ch/sse/index.php?CID=457>
- 31 Equality & Diversity Service. (2024). Accessibility Management and Reception of Individuals with Disabilities Committee [only in French]. Accessed at <https://www.unige.ch/rectorat/Equality/thematics/Diversité/handicaps-needs-by-ticuliers/Comité-de-pilotage-Accessibilité-et-ac-Cueil-des-personnes-en-situation-de-handicap/>
- 32 UNIGE. (2024). Historical appearances [only in French]. Accessed at <https://www.unige.ch/universite/figurations-historiques/Groupe-de-Reflexion-Interdisciplinary-sur-les-figurations-Historiques/>
- 33 UNIGE. (2024). Academic Horizon [only in French]. Accessed at <https://www.unige.ch/horizon-academique/>
- 34 UNIGE. (2024). The women experts of Unige [only in French]. Accessed at <https://expertes.unige.ch>
- 35 UNIGE. (2023). Directive – Inclusive and gender-sensitive writing at UNIGE [only in French]. Accessed at <https://memento.unige.ch/doc/0316>
- 36 UNIGE. (2020). Directive – Request the use of a first name, a last name and/or a usual gender [only in French]. Accessed at <https://memento.unige.ch/doc/0010>
- 37 Student Health Service. (2024). Healthy Campus label [only in French]. Accessed at <https://www.unige.ch/sse/equipe/label-healthy-campus>
- 38 UNIGE. (2021). Institutional Accreditation according to the LEHE – Self-Assessment Report [only in French]. Accessed at https://qualite.unige.ch/static/secure/A4_Accreditation2022_Rapport.pdf
- 39 UNIGE. (2019). Code of ethics and professional conduct for the Geneva Institutions of Higher Education. Accessed at <https://www.unige.ch/ethique/charte>
- 40 Republic and Canton of Geneva. (2023). *Loi générale sur l'égalité et la lutte contre les discriminations liées au sexe et au genre (LED-Genre)*. Accessed at <https://silgeneve.ch/legis/index.aspx#>
- 41 Swissuniversities. (2024). P-7 Diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities in higher education development (2021-2024) [only in French]. Accessed at <https://www.swissuniversities.ch/fr/themes/egalite-des-chances-et-diversite/p-7-Diversity-inclusion-and-equal-of-opportunity>
- 42 BetterScience. (2024). Accessed at <https://betterscience.ch/fr/#/>
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STRATEGY 3: CULTIVATE KNOWLEDGE AND FOSTER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR SHARING AND PROMOTING RESEARCH ON EQUALITY, GENDER AND DIVERSITY

● Facts and data

Universities play an important role in the transmission of knowledge and skills, in acquiring them and in learning how to use them (Perrenoud, 2004⁴⁶). Research on questions of gender is essential in many fields, including medicine (Tannenbaum et al., 2019⁴⁷), and approaches such as Gendered innovations (Schiebinger, 2008⁴⁸) highlight the importance of integrating sex and gender analysis into research to enrich it and increase its social relevance (European Commission, 2020⁴⁹).

For several years, as part of its action plans and with the aim of fostering dialogue and enhancing knowledge, the Equality and Diversity Service (EDS) has spearheaded numerous collaborations. These include projects with public institutions (City of Geneva Agenda 21 and Canton of Geneva Office for the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Violence), non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations (Amnesty International Switzerland and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations), associations (LGBT Asylum Liaison Centre of Geneva Women's Associations), festivals (Les Créatives Festival and International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights), foundations (Foyer-Handicap Foundation), and companies (SIG, HUG and Swisscom). On average, the Equality and Diversity Service co-organizes twenty events each year for the general public, including round tables, conferences, exhibitions, interactive stands and communication and awareness-raising campaigns. In addition, the EDS supports two continuing education sessions, a Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS), and a summer school dedicated to questions

of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. These initiatives target a broad audience and address needs at the cantonal, national, and international levels, with the goal of raising awareness and providing information while also highlighting academic research

● UNIGE's commitment

UNIGE affirms its role in the strategic vision of the Rectorate: "UNIGE fulfils its mission of seeking truth and advancing knowledge by fostering intellectual curiosity, creativity, and a critical spirit, all while respecting academic freedom. [...] While it aims to develop its academic disciplines, it also promotes interdisciplinarity in order to foster the search for solutions to the great challenges of our societies."

● Cantonal, national and international initiatives

UNIGE's commitments are supported through involvement in several cantonal and national networks, in particular through the co-organization of international days (e.g. Women's Rights Day, LGBTIQ Rights Day and Disability Rights Day).

At the European level, Horizon Europe⁵⁰ also highlights the importance of adopting a gender perspective in every research project.

Building on current research and existing policies, UNIGE has set the following objectives for the 2025-2028 period:

**STRATEGY 3: CULTIVATE KNOWLEDGE AND FOSTER
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (4 OBJECTIVES)**

1. Highlight and promote the importance of diversity, equality and inclusion
 - › Courses and training
 - › Student and faculty work
 - › Research
2. Promote equality and diversity in career guidance and in the job market
3. Fight against violence and discrimination – relations and events with the community
 - › Women's rights
 - › LGBTIQ rights
 - › Rights of people with disabilities
 - › Rights of people from an ethnically diverse or immigrant background
4. Expand continuing education courses on equality and diversity



FOCUS KEY PROJECTS 2025-2028

Continue to award the annual gender prize, aimed at supporting and rewarding student work from any faculty adopting a gender perspective.

2025-2028

Continue organising the “Journée Futur en tous genre” (Future of all Kinds day) and “Elargis tes horizons” (Broaden your Horizons day) at UNIGE. Develop consistent career paths in line with national programme objectives. 2025-2028

Organise international days on the theme of equality & diversity.

2025-2028

Raise awareness of questions of gender, equality and diversity through various public projects: Round tables, conferences, exhibitions, workshops, and more. 2025-2028

Maintain and expand the range of continuing education offered.

2025-2028

Indicators of achievement: E; F; K; L; M (see details of indicators on page 24)

- 46 Perrenoud, P. (2004). *L'université entre transmission de savoirs et développement de compétences*. University of Geneva: Faculty of psychology and educational sciences. Accessed at https://www.unige.ch/fapse/SSE/teachers/perrenoud/php_main/php_2004/2004_07.html
- 47 Tannenbaum, C., Ellis, R. P., Eyssel, F., Zou, J., & Schiebinger, L. (2019). Sex and gender analysis improves science and engineering. *Nature*, 575(7781), 137-146. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-019-1657-6>
- 48 Schiebinger, L. (2008). *Gendered innovations in Science and Engineering*. Stanford University Press.
- 49 European Commission: Directorate-General for Research and Innovation. (2020). *Gendered innovations 2: how inclusive analysis contributes to research and innovation: policy review*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/316197>
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EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2025-2028: INDICATORS AND MONITORING

To monitor the implementation of the Equality & Diversity Action Plan 2025-2028, we have established a series of key indicators to measure the progress and achievement of the defined objectives.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative indicators, developed using the existing database and in alignment with other institutional monitoring frameworks (the Agreement on Objectives and Strategic Plan), will be regularly reviewed to assess impact and adjust the strategy as needed.

INDICATORS

Representation and equity

- A. Percentage of women in positions of responsibility (administrative or technical managers and professors) | **STRATEGY 1**
- B. Proportion of students and staff from under-represented groups, to be evaluated with the departments (number of accommodations) | **STRATEGY 2**
- C. Average wage gap between men and women within the institution | **STRATEGY 1**

Actions implemented

- D. Number of information or training sessions on equality, diversity and inclusion organised each year (number of training hours, number of people trained/informed with job specifications, PAT/PENS/ETU) | **STRATEGY 1**
- E. Participation in equality and diversity initiatives (number of people attending Equality and Diversity Service events/programmes) | **STRATEGIES 1, 2, 3**

- F. Number of people reached annually by the Equality and Diversity Service's communications (unilist mailings, number of people reached on networks, the traffic of Equality and Diversity Service's web pages) | **STRATEGIES 1, 2, 3**

- G. Infrastructure accessible to people with disabilities: number of new building adaptation measures | **STRATEGY 2**
- H. Number of new content accessibility measures/initiatives (courses, websites) | **STRATEGY 2**

Results and impact

- I. Student drop-out or disengagement rates by gender, nationality, or other criteria | **STRATEGIES 1, 2**
- J. Number of reports of sexism, harassment, discrimination, and their resolution (types of discrimination, target person's role – administrative and technical staff/teaching staff/students) | **STRATEGY 1**
- K. Achievement rate of specific objectives set by the strategic vision, (specific objectives achieved/total objectives targeted) | **STRATEGIES 1, 2, 3**

Culture and environment

- L. Assessment of the perception of an egalitarian and inclusive environment (measured through institutional surveys) | **STRATEGIES 1, 2, 3**
- M. Analysis of personal testimonies on the impact of projects (via case studies) | **STRATEGIES 1, 2, 3**

Institutional commitment

- N. Number of consultations for the integration of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion considerations into action plans/road maps specific to services or entities other than the EDS (NCCRs; departments) | **STRATEGY 2**

APPENDIX

DATA ON THE UNIGE COMMUNITY⁵¹

All figures are published and updated annually by the Bureau des données institutionnelles et décisionnelles (BDID) and distributed internally at <https://www.unige.ch/stat/>. This part of the action plan includes 2023 data on UNIGE students and staff.

STUDENTS

UNIGE is the Swiss university with the largest proportion of female students, with 63% of female students at all levels, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Distribution of students (BDID source)

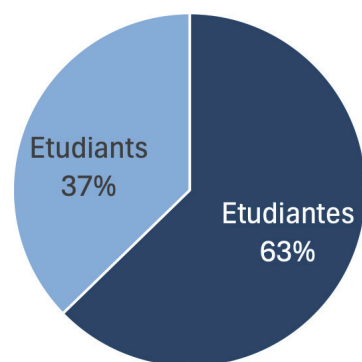
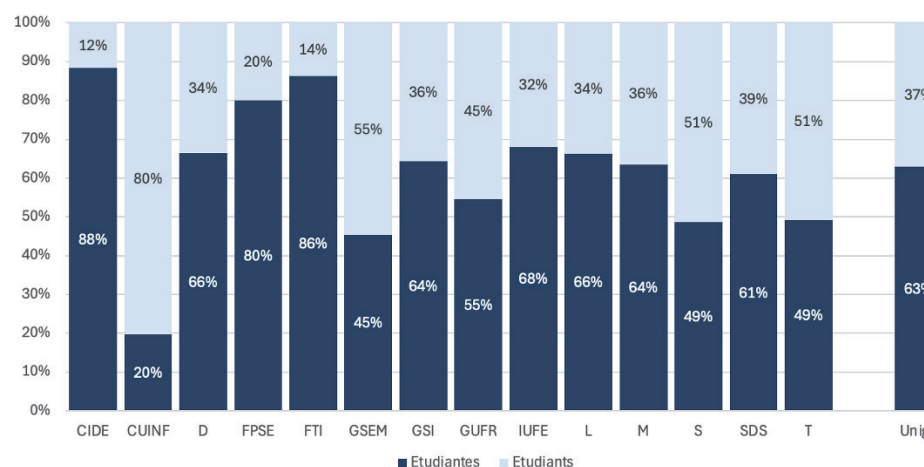


Figure 2 shows that the proportion of female students is higher in some faculties, for example Translation and Interpreting and Psychology and Educational Sciences.

Figure 2

Distribution of students by faculty (source BDID)

Diversity can also be observed in student countries of origin, with 39% from outside Switzerland.



Accommodation requests made by students with disabilities have increased, with 371 requests in 2022-2023.

Financial precarity is an ongoing challenge, with 2,154 applications received by the Financial Aid Office and 1,059 grants distributed in 2023.

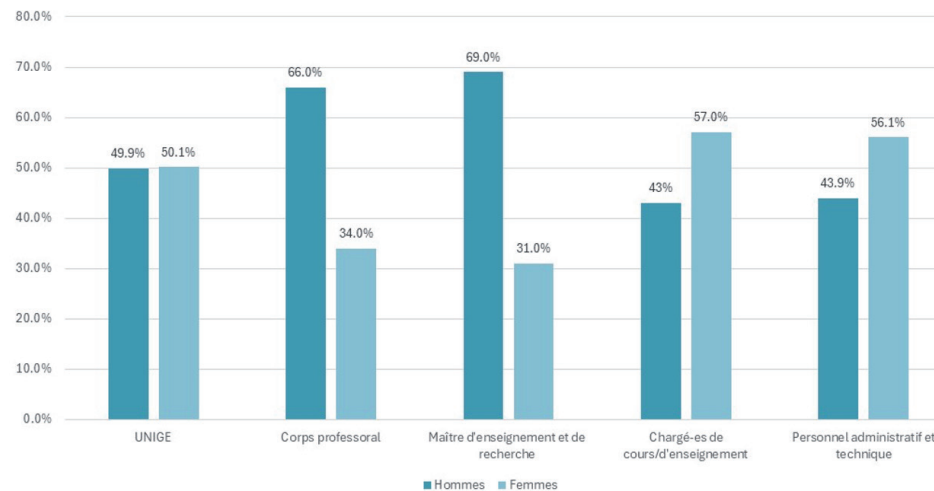
STAFF

Women represent 50% of UNIGE employees. Figure 3 shows that this balance depends on their role.

Staff countries of origin are balanced: 50% are Swiss, 50% are other nationalities.

Figure 3

Distribution of staff according to roles (BDID source)



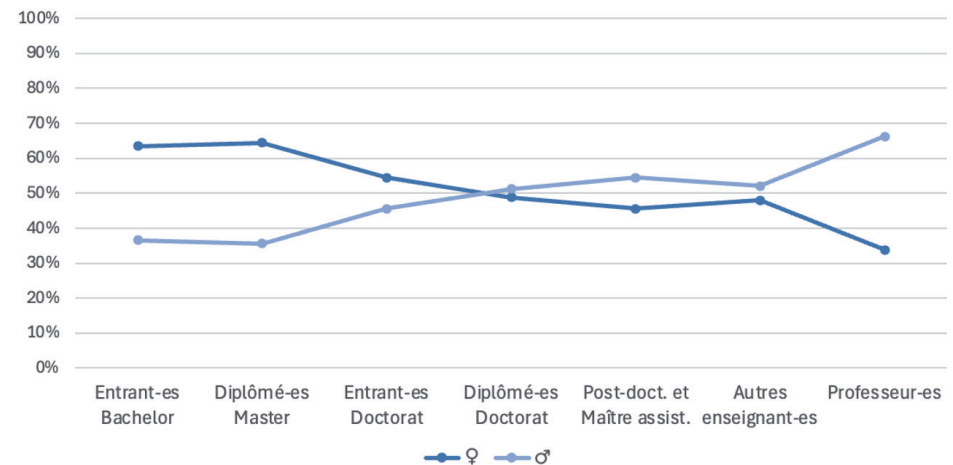
CAREER PROGRESSION FOR MEN AND WOMEN

The University of Geneva currently has more female than male students, equal numbers of female and male PhD students, but only about half as many female professors as male professors (see Figure 4).

The data demonstrates the scissors effect – a metaphor that shows that the number of women decreases as they advance in their careers.

Figure 4

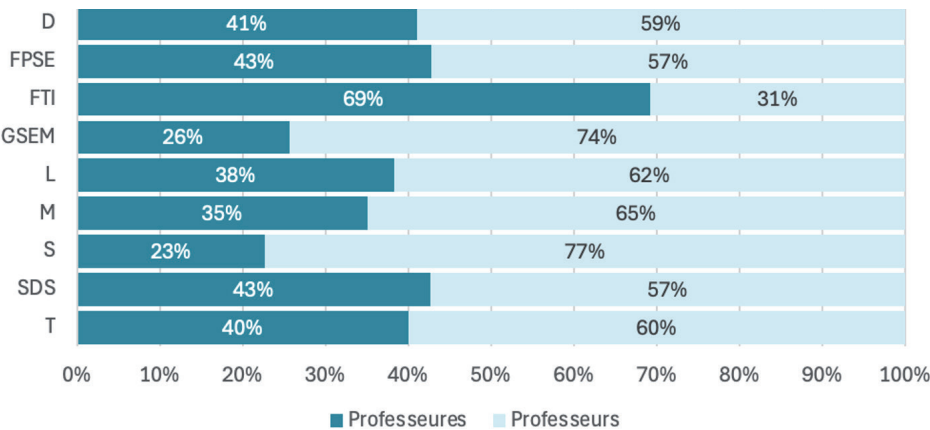
Distribution of women and men at different stages of their academic career (BDID source)



MALE AND FEMALE PROFESSORS

As shown in Figure 3, UNIGE has 34% of female professors. Figure 5 reveals significant differences between faculties: for instance, the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting has 69% of female professors, whereas the Faculty of Science has just 23%.

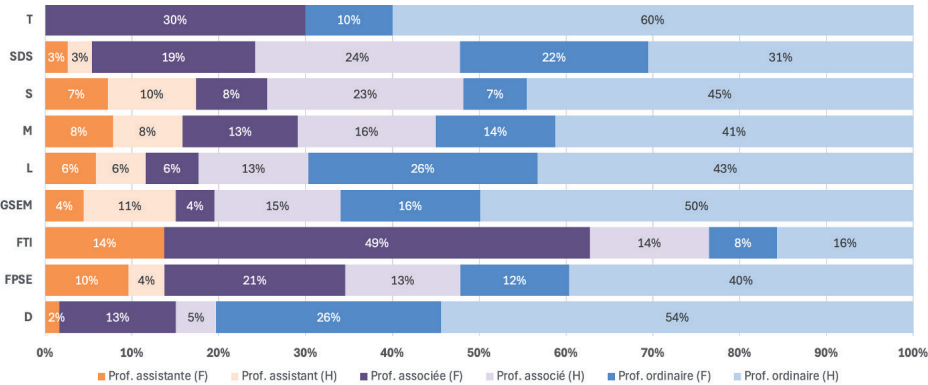
Figure 5
Distribution of professors by faculty (BDID source)



Further disparities persist at the levels of assistant, associate and full professor, as shown in Figure 6.

There is an imbalance between men and women at the most advanced career level of full professor, where women are underrepresented, especially in faculties such as Law (26% women and 54% men), GSEM (16% women and 50% men) and Theology (10% women and 60% men). The imbalance is less pronounced for assistant professors, for example in the faculties of Medicine (8% women and 8% men) and Literature (6% women and 6% men). The pattern is less clear at the intermediate level, since both trends are observed for associate professors. The recent analysis by Czech et al. (2024) highlights differences in how long it takes male and female professors to achieve promotion.

Figure 6
Distribution of professors by faculty and career level (BDID source)



WOMEN AND MEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Women represent 50% of deans, 33% of vice-deans, 0% of section presidents, 37% of section vice-presidents and 36% of policy directors (or department depending on the faculty).

See Table 1 for more details.

Table 1
Proportion of teaching staff in leadership positions (BDID source)

	Women	Men	Total	% Women
Rector	1	–	1	100%
Vice-Rector	2	3	5	40%
Dean	4	4	8	50%
Vice-Dean	7	14	21	33.3%
Section President	–	10	10	0%
Section Vice-President	3	5	8	37.5%

In terms of administrative and technical staff, women represent 45% of heads of service, managers, directors and Rectorate members.

In addition to statistical data, UNIGE conducts broader thematic surveys to highlight the progress of equality or, conversely, persistent or emerging problems within the institution. A survey conducted among the intermediate-level teaching and research staff (CCER) revealed situations of precarious employment and harassment (UNIGE, 2022). Surveys have also been conducted on equal pay (2016, 2020). UNIGE also has an Observatory of Student Life, whose mission is to provide statistics and conduct longitudinal surveys on the student population.

51 This non-exhaustive list of indicators is based on recent data from the *Bureau des données institutionnelles et décisionnelles* (BDID) <https://www.unige.ch/stat/>

Author: Service égalité & diversité / The Equality & Diversity department

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www.unige.ch/egalite

 @unigeegalite

Contact

Uni Dufour

24, rue du Général-Dufour

1211 Geneva

022 379 12 68

egalite@unige.ch