

# **GENDER EQUALITY PLAN (GEP) OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CARTHAGE**

**Period 2025-2027**

## **1. Institutional Introduction**

Through this Gender Equality Plan (GEP) 2025–2027, the University of Carthage commits to a structured process of institutional transformation. This process aims to sustainably strengthen equality between women and men within its academic, administrative, scientific, and decision-making structures .

This document serves simultaneously as an eligibility compliance instrument, a governance framework, and an operational management tool. It fulfills the eligibility requirements applicable to higher education institutions in Horizon Europe. Concurrently, it reflects the commitment of the University of Carthage to establish gender equality as a pillar of institutional quality, scientific excellence, international attractiveness, and organizational justice.

The central issue highlighted by institutional data is clear: despite a strong female presence in the student and academic pipelines, women remain underrepresented in the highest ranks and leadership positions. This GEP therefore aims to correct structural imbalances, consolidate stakeholder accountability, and establish a sustainable culture of equity, transparency, and prevention.

## **2. Compliance Framework and Guiding Principles**

This GEP is aligned with the European Commission requirements for Horizon Europe. As such, it incorporates the four mandatory procedural requirements:

- The existence of a public document, formally adopted and disseminated;
- The allocation of dedicated resources and identified expertise;
- The implementation of a sex-disaggregated data collection, monitoring, and annual reporting system ;
- A structured awareness-raising and training program, including the prevention of unconscious biases.

It also covers the thematic areas expected in a baseline GEP:

- Work-life balance and organizational culture;
- Gender balance in governance and decision-making;
- Equality in recruitment, career progression, and access to responsibilities ;
- Integration of the gender dimension into research, innovation, and training content;
- Prevention and management of gender-based violence and harassment .

The GEP of the University of Carthage is based on the following principles: institutional responsibility, data-driven approach, continuous improvement, zero tolerance for violence, and the alignment between internal equity and international competitiveness.

### 3. Synthetic Institutional Diagnostic

Consolidated diagnostic elements demonstrate that the University of Carthage possesses a significant female potential within its learning and working communities:

- 33,952 students, of whom 65.9% are women;
- 2,871.5 faculty members, of whom 59.0% are women;
- 1,436 administrative, technical, and service staff (ATO) targeted by the progressive consolidation of the gender information system .

Conversely, significant gaps persist regarding access to power positions and senior ranks:

- 28.9% of women among full Professors in higher education;
- 28.6% of women in leadership roles;
- 37.1% of women among Secretaries-General.

This diagnostic confirms the existence of vertical segregation and structural barriers affecting academic and administrative career paths . It justifies the deployment of an institutional plan combining corrective actions, monitoring tools, and performance indicators.

### 4. Purpose, Strategic Objectives, and Implementation Methodology

#### 4.1 Purpose

The purpose of the GEP 2025-2027 is to transform gender equality into a governance standard, a managerial quality criterion, and an excellence factor across all missions of the University of Carthage .

#### 4.2 Strategic Objectives

The plan pursues six strategic objectives:

1. Institutionalize a GEP governance structure endowed with responsibilities, resources, and a clear chain of accountability ;
2. Correct career imbalances and underrepresentation in leadership positions;
3. Improve work-life balance conditions and the quality of the organizational environment ;
4. Prevent, report, and effectively address all forms of gender-based violence or harassment;
5. Integrate the gender dimension into research, innovation, international projects, and educational content;
6. Deploy a robust gender information system, accompanied by indicators, dashboards, and a public annual report .

#### 4.3 Methodology

The implementation of the plan relies on a results-based management logic: initial baseline diagnostic, three-year planning, definition of deliverables, monitoring via indicators, annual review, and continuous adjustments. Each action is mapped to an institutional lead and a specific completion timeline.

### 5. Governance, Resources, and Accountability

To avoid any symbolic approach, the University of Carthage adopts a three-tier governance structure:

## 5.1 Strategic Level

The University Presidency provides political leadership for the GEP, validates strategic orientations, allocates resources, and ensures the integration of the plan into official governance instruments.

## 5.2 Coordination Level

A central Gender Focal Point ensures the overall coordination of the framework. This function benefits from an official teaching/workload reduction of 20% of working time (0.2 FTE) to guarantee continuous animation, monitoring, and accountability.

## 5.3 Operational Level

A central GEP Committee, in connection with the HR Department, statistical services, academic structures, communication services, institutional directories, and support centers, drives the deployment of actions, data aggregation, and indicator reviews.

## 5.4 Dedicated Resources

The University allocates a recurring annual budget to support:

- Training activities ;
- Digital tools and the gender information system ;
- Awareness campaigns;
- Reporting and support mechanisms;
- Promotion, mentoring, and communication actions .

This architecture complies with European requirements regarding dedicated resources, mobilized expertise, and the traceability of allocated funds.

## 6. Strategic Pillars of the GEP 2025-2027

### Pillar 1. Governance, Leadership, and Accountability

This pillar aims to anchor gender equality within the decision-making mechanisms of the University

#### Priority Actions:

- Formalization of GEP responsibilities through rectoral decisions;
- Adoption of an annual performance review circuit ;
- Integration of gender indicators into institutional dashboards;
- Annual reporting presented to governance bodies.

#### Key Indicators:

- Signature of governance and workload reduction acts;
- Implementation rate of planned actions;
- Annual publication of the progress report.

### Pillar 2. Recruitment, Career Progression, and Elite Mentoring

The goal is to reduce vertical segregation for women in higher education and research.

and secure more equitable pathways

### **Structural Measures:**

- Launch of the UCAR Elite Mentoring Program for female Assistant Professors and Associate Professors ;
- Personalized support for habilitation, publishing, scientific leadership, and project design ;
- Implementation of targeted workload reductions for female researchers heavily engaged in international consortia and projects ;
- Institutionalization of mandatory training on unconscious biases for members of recruitment, promotion, and thesis defense committees .

### **Success Thresholds:**

- At least 15 beneficiaries supported per year through mentoring ;
- 100% of committee members trained before committee validation ;
- Annual promotion of at least 10 success portraits or female excellence pathways with national and international visibility .

### **Pillar 3. Work-Life Balance and Organizational Culture**

This pillar acts on the working environment to reduce mental load, improve career sustainability, and promote a more inclusive institutional culture .

#### **Planned Measures:**

- Adoption of a reasonable hours and right to disconnect charter;
- Limitation of mandatory institutional meetings beyond 16:00 (4:00 PM) when compatible with service operations ;
- Development of support infrastructures, specifically a Well-being and Listening Space ;
- Launch of a feasibility study for emergency childcare or micro-nurseries on primary campuses .

#### **Expected Results:**

- Dissemination of the charter across all structures;
- Effective setup of the well-being space;
- Institutional validation of a feasibility report on parental infrastructures .

### **Pillar 4. Prevention of Gender-Based Violence and Harassment**

The University adopts a zero-tolerance doctrine regarding any form of violence, discrimination, or sexual and sexist harassment .

#### **Structural Frameworks:**

- Deployment of a secure digital reporting platform;

- Protection of confidentiality and rigorous data processing;
- Institutionalization of a listening and support unit;
- Activation of an emergency protocol combining psychological, medical, and legal support;
- Confidential referral to competent authorities within tightened deadlines.

### **Performance Indicators:**

- Platform fully operational;
- Management of reported situations within a target timeline of under 48 hours ;
- Coverage of all establishments by an annual awareness campaign.

## **Pillar 5. Integration of the Gender Dimension in Research, Innovation, Education, and Internationalization**

This pillar, essential for GEP completeness, reinforces the alignment of the University of Carthage with Horizon Europe standards and its internationalization strategy .

### **Operational Directions:**

- Progressive integration of the gender dimension into research projects, when scientifically relevant;
- Encouraging gender consideration in educational content, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, and innovation frameworks;
- Leveraging the GEP as a credibility asset in partnerships, consortia, and European calls;
- Promoting the University's expertise in bioeconomy, circular transition, eco-extraction, inclusivity, and responsible innovation.

### **Expected Deliverables:**

- Internal guidelines for incorporating the gender dimension into projects and training courses;
- Integration of the GEP criterion within support actions for project drafting;
- Production of awareness-raising content targeting research teams and support structures.

## **Pillar 6. Gender Information System, Monitoring-Evaluation, and Publication**

The performance of the plan depends on the University's capability to produce reliable, comparable, and updated data.

### **Priority Actions:**

- Progressive consolidation of the statistical database including the 1,436 ATO agents;
- Annual extraction of sex-disaggregated data covering academic staff, administrative staff, and, where applicable, student populations ;
- Construction of a GEP dashboard integrating structural, process, and outcome indicators;

- Annual publication of a synthetic

progress report.

### Retained Indicators:

- Coverage rate of the mapped ATO population, with a minimum target of 95%;
- Annual production of the dashboard
- Regular updates of representation, career, training, and alert processing indicators.

### 7. Priority Matrix 2025-2027 :

| Pillar   | Priority Action                                                           | Primary Indicator                          | Target / Threshold              | Deadline          |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Pillar 1 | Formalization of GEP responsibilities and coordination workload reduction | Signed acts                                | 100%                            | Q3 2025           |
| Pillar 2 | Launch of the elite mentoring program                                     | Number of beneficiaries                    | ≥ 15/year                       | From 2025 onwards |
| Pillar 2 | Mandatory training of committees on unconscious biases                    | Share of trained members                   | 100%                            | Permanent         |
| Pillar 3 | Deployment of the work-life balance and disconnection charter             | Share of covered structures                | Complete institutional coverage | End of 2025       |
| Pillar 3 | Feasibility study for micro-nurseries                                     | Validated report                           | 1 validated deliverable         | End of 2026       |
| Pillar 4 | Secure reporting platform                                                 | Availability of the platform (0.1.7-0.1.8) | 100% operational                | End of 2026       |
| Pillar 4 | Alert processing                                                          | Average management response time           | < 48 hours                      | Permanent         |
| Pillar 5 | Gender guide for research / education / projects                          | Disseminated guide                         | 1 institutional guide           | 2026              |
| Pillar 6 | Consolidation of the ATO database                                         | Coverage rate                              | ≥ 95%                           | Q4 2025           |
| Pillar 6 | Public annual GEP report                                                  | Published report                           | 1 report/year                   | Annual            |

## 8. Strategic Valuation of the GEP Opportunities

## in Horizon Europe

The harmonized content of this report transforms the GEP into a strategic asset for the international positioning of the University of Carthage (p. 8). The alignment matrix elements demonstrate that GEP compliance strengthens the institutional credibility of the University within Horizon Europe consortia (p. 8). This valuation does not replace the plan itself; it illustrates how the GEP can become a marker of organizational maturity, European compliance, and partner credibility for future expressions of interest, applications, and international collaborations (p. 8).

It is recommended that any support cell for European projects within the University integrates the GEP into its standard institutional positioning file and consortium pitch arguments (p. 8).

## 9. Provisions for Monitoring, Updating, and Publication

This GEP will be subject to:

- A semi-annual internal monitoring by the GEP coordination and dedicated committee;
- An annual review based on consolidated indicators;
- A public progress report;
- Methodical adjustments whenever observed results require them .

The dissemination of the document on appropriate institutional portals and its communication to university structures constitute an essential condition for its full effectiveness .

## 10. General Conclusion

The Gender Equality Plan 2025-2027 of the University of Carthage does not stem from a purely declarative logic . It asserts itself as a structural transformation instrument, articulating compliance, governance, social performance, and academic competitiveness .

By structuring management mechanisms, allocating identified resources, consolidating a gender information system, and deploying concrete actions on careers, the working environment, violence prevention, and the integration of gender into research and teaching, the University of Carthage establishes a robust, credible, and evolving framework.

This document thus constitutes a finalized, coherent, and directly deployable version of the GEP report of the University of Carthage for the 2025-2027 period.

## 11. Official Adoption Declaration

This Gender Equality Plan is adopted as the institutional reference document for the 2025-2027 period . It is intended to be published, disseminated, and applied across all structures under the jurisdiction of the University of Carthage .

Done in Tunis,

For the University of Carthage

The President of the University / The University Council  
(Official Signature and Stamp)

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