

APPROVED BY
Order No. of 2023
of the Rector of Vilnius University

POLICY ON THE PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, VIOLENCE AND PERSECUTION AT VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Policy on the Prevention of Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Violence and Persecution at Vilnius University (hereinafter the 'Prevention Policy') shall describe and implement the ways of recognising discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence and persecution, possible forms thereof, as well as the principles of protection of the persons who sought assistance on or reported cases of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence and persecution, the assistance provided to them and the investigation of the reports submitted by them. The provisions of this Prevention Policy shall be mandatory for all members of the Vilnius University community.

2. The procedure for submitting and investigating the reports on cases of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence and persecution, providing consultations, applying protective measures and enforcing the Prevention Policy measures shall be determined by the Description of the Procedure for the Examination of Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Violence and Persecution Cases at Vilnius University (hereinafter the 'Description').

3. Vilnius University (hereinafter the 'University') commits to create such a working and learning environment in which members of the University community and third parties would not experience hostile, unethical, humiliating, aggressive, insulting, and offensive actions that undermine the honour and dignity of an individual member of the community, a third person, or a group thereof, the physical or psychological integrity of a person or that are aimed at intimidating, degrading or putting such persons in a disadvantageous position.

4. Discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment or violence against members of the University community and third parties as well as their persecution are prohibited at the University. Members of the University community must respect the dignity of other persons, communicate with others politely and respectfully, and ensure a safe working and learning environment by their conduct.

5. The Prevention Policy was developed in accordance with the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Lithuania Law on Equal Treatment, the Republic of Lithuania Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, and the methodological recommendations for the preparation of the Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy of the State Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Lithuania under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.

6. Members of the University community are introduced to the Prevention Policy by making it publicly available on the website and intranet of the University in accordance with the procedure established in the Guidelines for the Provision of Information about the Activity of Vilnius University (approved by Resolution of the Council of Vilnius University No. T-2016-11-1 of 28 September 2016) and by means of the University document management system.

7. The terms used in this Prevention Policy:

7.1. **Responsible employee** means an employee who, upon the decision of the head of the core academic or non-academic unit, has been assigned the functions of counselling the members of the unit's community on discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence and persecution,

other issues related to the implementation of this Prevention Policy, and other functions specified in the Prevention Policy and the Description.

7.2. **Community members** means the members of the academic community of the University, non-academic employees and members of the governing bodies of the University. Members of the academic community of the University are the University lecturers and University researchers (in either science or arts) (including associate lecturers and researchers, researchers-trainees, visiting lecturers and researchers (in either science or arts) as well as any other lecturers and researchers (in either science or arts) who participate in the academic activity of the University within the framework of exchange or cooperation programmes), as well as students and unclassified students of the University, including persons pursuing studies at the University within the framework of exchange or cooperation programmes.

7.3. **Discrimination** means unwelcome behaviour when, on one or more grounds for discrimination, less favourable conditions are applied to a person than are, were or would be applied to another person under similar circumstances. Cases of instruction to discriminate and discrimination at the behest of another person shall also be considered Discrimination.

7.4. **Grounds for discrimination** means personal identity characteristics which are prohibited to be discriminated against: gender, race, nationality, citizenship, language, origin, social status, faith, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, health status, marital and family status, membership in a political party, trade union or association, religion, intention to have children and other grounds established by law.

7.5. **Witness** means a person who provides information for the investigation of a report.

7.6. **Victim** means a member of the University community or a third person who is identified as a victim of possible discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence or persecution in the report submitted in accordance with the procedure provided for in the Description.

7.7. **Persecution** means cases of treating a member of the community or a third person less favourably because the member of the community or a third person intends to submit, has submitted or assisted in submitting a report on discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence or persecution, testified to such a case or otherwise participated in the process of reporting and/or investigating such a case.

7.8. **Violation of the Prevention Policy** means a case of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence or persecution committed by a member of the community through their own culpable action or inaction, determined in accordance with the procedure established in the Description.

7.9. **Whistle-blower** means a member of the community or a third person who sought assistance or submitted a report on a possible case of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence or persecution in accordance with the procedure established in the Description.

7.10. **Report** means a written submission of information about a possible case of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence or persecution to the Commission for the Prevention and Investigation of Cases of Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Violence and Persecution in accordance with the procedure established in the Description.

7.11. **Harassment** means unwelcome behaviour when, on one or more grounds for discrimination, it is intended to offend or it actually offends the dignity of a person and when it is intended to create or it actually creates an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment.

7.12. **Sexual harassment** means unwelcome offensive, verbal, written or physical behaviour of a sexual nature towards a person, when such behaviour is motivated by the purpose or effect of harming the dignity of a person, in particular by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment.

7.13. **Complainee** means a member of the community against whom the Report has been submitted.

7.14. **Violence** (physical, psychological, sexual, economic) means an intentional physical, psychological, sexual, economic impact or the threat thereof, caused by action or inaction, as a result of which non-material or material damage is sustained or may be sustained once or repeatedly (systematically, long-term).

7.15. **Third parties** means persons who are not members of the community, as defined in Item 7.2 of this Prevention Policy, but participate in the activities of the University.

CHAPTER II FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, VIOLENCE AND PERSECUTION

8. Discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence, or persecution may be expressed by a physical action, verbal, written, or visual means, including, but not limited to, the following forms:

- 8.1. unwelcome physical contact;
- 8.2. offensive, humiliating gestures, jokes, remarks, comments, responses, gossip, rumours;
- 8.3. demonstration of offensive, humiliating images, inscriptions or other material (audio, visual, etc.);
- 8.4. aggression;
- 8.5. defamation;
- 8.6. bullying;
- 8.7. isolation or non-cooperation at work, not sharing of important information, assigning instructions and tasks that do not correspond to the responsibilities and functions provided for in the job description, belittling achievements, ignoring requests for help, exclusion from meetings or consultations, and from social activities of the team;
- 8.8. intrusive pursuit of communication, stalking, collection of information about the person, when it is not related to the job functions performed or the qualification requirements of the person;
- 8.9. threats or other intimidating behaviour (e.g. threat of dismissal, unfavourable change of working-time schedule, etc.);
- 8.10. coercion for the purpose of receiving certain behaviour, services, sexual favours not related to work or activities at the University;
- 8.11. unjustified deterioration of the conditions of work or activity at the University, compared to other members of the community or third parties performing the same work or activity.

9. Legitimate requirements to properly perform work functions or other academic and/or non-academic duties, instructions to comply with the requirements of legal acts and regulations, disagreement of opinions shall not be considered to be cases of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence or persecution.

10. Discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence or prosecution are prohibited:
- 10.1. in places of work and study, including public and private spaces, when members of the community or third parties are at the disposal of the University, perform work functions, conduct learning or other activities at the University;
 - 10.2. during breaks to rest and eat or when using household, sanitary and hygiene facilities;
 - 10.3. during tours, trips, training, events or social activities related to work, studies or other activities at the University;
 - 10.4. during the communication of persons related to work, studies or other activities at the University, including communication using information and electronic communication technologies;
 - 10.5. in housing provided by the University;
 - 10.6. on the way to or from work or studies.

CHAPTER III
**PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT,
SEXUAL HARASSMENT, VIOLENCE AND PERSECUTION**

11. Each member of the community must assess their behaviour towards other members of the community and third parties, respect their private life, views, beliefs, their physical and mental integrity and refrain from actions that would be considered violations of this Prevention Policy.

12. The following measures for the prevention, elimination and control of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence and persecution are established at the University:

12.1. organisation of thematic training and meetings for community members;

12.2. provision of information to members of the community on the current legal framework in the field of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence and persecution via internal communication channels at least once a year;

12.3. introduction of the Prevention Policy and the Description to new members of the community;

12.4. monitoring the microclimate of the University by means of community surveys;

12.5. publication of anonymised decisions and/or summaries thereof of the Commission for the Prevention and Investigation of Cases of Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Violence and Persecution on the website of the University;

12.6. consultations of University Community Psychologists;

12.7. other prevention, elimination and control measures initiated by the entities specified in Item 13 of this Prevention Policy, taking into account the circumstances of specific cases.

13. The Central Administration units of the University responsible for personnel management, organisation of community surveys, implementation of equal opportunities and psychological counselling of community members shall be responsible for the implementation of the measures provided for in Item 12 of this Prevention Policy at the University. The heads of core units and the appointed responsible employees at the units shall cooperate in implementing the measures provided for in Item 12, as well as inform the Central Administration units specified in this Item about the needs of the unit, and, if necessary, implement such measures in the unit.

14. The heads of units and/or direct supervisors must respond to all cases of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence and persecution within the unit they are aware of and, if necessary, get involved in the process of their investigation. Passive behaviour of supervisors (e.g. non-intervention, silence, etc.) may be investigated and found to be a violation of the Prevention Policy.

15. Members of the University community are encouraged to express disagreement, non-recognition, request not to repeat unwelcome behaviour, report cases of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence and persecution in the manner specified in the Description or inform the appointed responsible employee at the unit, their direct supervisor and/or the head of the unit, and cooperate during the investigation of the report.

CHAPTER IV
**CONSULTATION AND INVESTIGATION OF REPORTS ON DISCRIMINATION,
HARASSMENT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, VIOLENCE OR PERSECUTION**

16. A member of the community or a third person who has experienced, noticed or learned about cases of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence or persecution, may contact either the head of their unit or the heads of the units where the complainee or the victim works or

studies, or the direct supervisors of such persons, or the appointed responsible employees at such units. These cases can also be addressed to the University's Trust Line (by e-mail at pasitikejimas@cr.vu.lt or by filling in the Trust Line form available on the website of the University).

17. Taking into account the needs expressed by the victim and the circumstances of the case of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, violence or persecution indicated by them, the victim may be provided with counselling, protective measures may be applied, and a report may be submitted to the Commission for the Prevention and Investigation of Cases of Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Violence and Persecution, established and permanently operating pursuant to the Order of the Rector of the University. The provision of consultations and the investigation of the information or report provided by the victim shall be based on the principles of objectivity, impartiality, immediacy, promptness, assistance to the victim and confidentiality. The complainee shall be presumed innocent until the information or report provided by the victim is investigated. The procedure for the provision of consultations, application of protective measures, and submission and investigation of reports shall be set out in the Description.

18. The University prohibits any harassment of the whistle-blower or the person participating in the process of the investigation of the report. Harassment should be reported as a violation of the Prevention Policy.

19. The University undertakes to provide consultations, apply protective measures for whistle-blowers, victims and witnesses as well as enforce the Prevention Policy measures in accordance with the Description.

20. If it becomes apparent that the report is known to be false, the procedure for investigating the violation of academic ethics or work discipline may be initiated against the whistle-blower who submitted the known to be false report by taking into account the circumstances of the specific case and in accordance with the legal acts of the University.

CHAPTER V IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE PREVENTION POLICY

21. The Prevention Policy is implemented by members of the University community.

22. The Prevention Policy is formed by the Pro-Rector for Organisation Development and Community Affairs of the University. The supervision of the implementation of the Prevention Policy shall be carried out by the unit of the Central Administration responsible for the development of the University community, the Commission for the Prevention and Investigation of Cases of Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Violence and Persecution established by the Order of the Rector of the University and responsible employees.

23. The Prevention Policy shall be regularly reviewed and updated as needed. The Prevention Policy shall be approved and amended by the Order of the Rector of the University.
