

Gender Budgeting in Italian Universities



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1 Introduction

The topic of gender budgeting in the academic field has been widely investigated from different perspectives.

Much research has gone into analyzing the models of women's career advancement in universities. Generally, some studies based from a feminist perspective (O'Neil et al., 2008; White, 1995) argue that existing models, such as Levinson et al. (1978) proposing linear progression through a series of life stages, are based on male patterns of behavior.

In contrast, O'Neil et al. (2008) suggest that women's career advancement follows different dynamics than men. For example, O'Leary and Sandberg (2008) observes that women measure success less by corporate advancement and more by subjective measures such as personal satisfaction and growth.

Concerning the academic contest, Probert (2005) shows that women are under-represented in Australian universities because they have less human capital than men, measured in formal qualifications and work experience.

Doherty and Manfredi (2010) conducted an empirical study in four English universities and found that women tend to plan their careers less than men. Indeed, many more women than men have no plans about their future steps, feel that they have already reached their career goal, have no further aspirations, or are ready to

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think about retirement. The authors conclude that several factors can explain these differences. The first one is that when women are mothers, they find their loyalty divided between home and work, and, as a result, they are less focused on their careers. A second explanation is that women can be unmotivated because they are tired of the barriers encountered along the way.

Generally, the literature concludes that many factors are contributing to gender disparity in high education leadership.

For instance, these factors include a lack of structured networking and mentoring programs, family-related compromise; male-centric leadership models and norms; the prejudice which disparages women and presumes they cannot assume high responsibilities; women have different expectations (Bornstein, 2008; Burkinshaw & White, 2017; Doherty & Manfredi, 2006; Dunn et al., 2014; Hoobler et al., 2014).

Hence, women leaders represent just a minority (Erlemann, 2016; Fritz & Knippenberg, 2017), and their underrepresentation in senior leadership positions continues to be a significant challenge in higher education despite international campaigns for gender equality and equality (Nyoni et al., 2017; Parker et al., 2018).

The phenomenon of a female leader is the only woman in the room in the meeting of university management boards is not uncommon (Tran & Nguyen, 2020).

According to Awang-Hashim et al. (2016), this situation can contribute to building a bad image for social justice. In addition, it can adversely affect the universities' development, causing the need to involve more women to carry out gender equality as well as to bring positive changes, since the "presence of women in leadership roles in higher education will contribute to positive and unique experiences which they will not have under gender-homogeneous leadership."

We believe that in the persecution of a strategy aimed at gender equality in universities, a key role is played by the gender budget, as a reporting tool of the gender equality strategy implemented and, at the same time, of the resources used to carry out this strategy.

Although the literature has extensively investigated the causes of inequalities in the academic field, few contributions analyze the strategic role of gender budgeting as a reporting and planning tool for policies to guarantee gender equality.

Given that, the purpose of this chapter is to analyze the state of the art of gender budgeting in a sample of Italian public universities to highlight the potential that gender budgeting can have to reach gender equality.

To achieve this goal, the authors intend to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1. What is the state of the art of the incidence of gender in the composition of Italian universities (student component, research fellows, postgraduates, teaching staff, technical-administrative staff and directors)?
- RQ2. What are the positive actions taken by Italian universities in gender budgeting to improve gender equality?
- RQ3. What is the level of integration between the positive actions favoring gender equality and the planning of the financial resources necessary to carry out these actions in the gender budgets of the sample considered?

This paper contributes to expanding the international literature on the connections between gender studies and academic context. Our literature review emphasizes the topic analyzed as an emerging issue, which allows us to identify new trends and future directions for research.

The major implication of the paper is to advance knowledge and practice about gender budgeting in academic contexts.

The relevant evidence of the chapter relates to a better understanding of the gender budget as a concrete tool for planning positive actions to improve gender equality in Italian universities.

The chapter is structured as follows.

In the following Sect. 2, the method of the literature review is set out. Then, the findings of the analysis are shown in Sects. 3 and 4. Implications, future lines of research and conclusions are presented in Sect. 5.

2 Literature Review

The gender budget can be defined here as a reporting tool of the equal opportunities strategy.

The term “equal opportunities” do not involve only gender-gap, but refers to all the actions aimed at eliminating broader discrimination, referring to “the well-being in the workplace of all subjects; to guarantee them access to the same condition of treatment, career progression and safety; and pursue any form of discrimination related to the belonging of people to a different gender, age, sexual orientation, race, ethical origin, disability and language.”

Accepting Pulejo (2013) approach, here it refers to gender as a “social category,” functional to the analysis of the different behavioral models, lifestyles, roles, and expectations of individual subjects. Moreover, as a social category, gender has an economic value as it conditions the way individuals act, increases needs whose satisfaction depends on the attention to their diversity in the workplace, as well as on the efficiency of public interventions in pursuing equal rights and opportunities for all.”

Similarly, Addabbo et al. (2011) define the gender budget as “a tool that measures the impact on men and women of the choices made, starting from the assumption that they are not gender-neutral.”

From an institutional point of view, in 1985, in the third United Nations world conference on women in Nairobi, the need emerges to implement gender mainstreaming strategies worldwide to promote actions to bring out active participation of women in social and economic life. The European Union accepts the principle of gender mainstreaming and, in particular, recognizes the gender budget as an implementing tool for the principle of gender mainstreaming. Indeed, the European Parliament (2003) recognizes how gender budgeting can be identified as an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary procedure, and it emphasizes the analysis of the impact of public policies on women and men and inserts the

gender perspective at all levels of the process of building public budgets, and aims to restructure income and expenses in order to promote equality between the sexes. Again, in 2010, the European Parliament, with the resolution “United Nations platform for action for gender equality,” underlines the need to combat gender inequality and promote its integration into legislative, budgetary, and political processes economic.

On a global level, gender equality represents one of the 17 sustainable development goals that States have committed to achieving by 2030.

At the same time, various interventions on the issue of gender budget take place in Italy.

In particular, in May 2007, the directive of the Minister for Reforms and Innovations of the Public Administration “Measures to implement equality and equal opportunities between men and women in public administrations” underlines the need to promote a culture oriented towards respect and enhancement diversity. In applying this principle, public administrations must present the data on personnel with distinct evidence by gender and highlight, always distinguishing by gender, different variables, including the salary and the time spent in the occupational positions. Furthermore, the directive requires public administrations to promote budget analysis representing which and how many resources are reserved for women, men, and both.

The Italian directive of May 2007 represents a milestone in the cultural and social path of gender policy since it introduces the gender budget in Italian public administrations. Moreover, it qualifies the gender budget not only as a simple instrument of non-financial reporting but as a tool that requires an economic analysis, by gender, of the allocation of available resources.

Hence, following these national initiatives, universities begin to align towards a gender mainstreaming strategy. For instance, in 2014, the national conference of the Equality Bodies of Italian universities promoted the implementation of an interdisciplinary working group to outline a proposal for guidelines for gender budgeting in universities.

Then, on September 19, 2019, the CRUI Group for gender budget presented the guidelines in Italian universities at the rectors’ conference.

In the universities, gender budgeting is an essential tool for promoting gender equality and integrating a gender perspective in the institutional policies to allocate economic resources. It can be defined as a document that performs two functions: firstly, it photographs the state of the art concerning the gender distribution of the different components of the university (students, teaching staff, technical-administrative staff); secondly, it monitors the actions taken by the university in favor of gender equality, and evaluates their impact on university policies, also analyzing the economic and financial resources invested.

The two purposes of gender budgeting need to be integrated. Hence, context analysis is necessary to plan positive actions and allocate economic resources to reduce any gender gaps that may be present in the university. To completely understand the context, monitor the level of achievement, and measure any

deviation, it is useful analyzing the effects generated by the planned actions and the impact of budgetary expenditure on women and men.

All this considered, in the next paragraph, an empirical analysis is carried out on a sample of 16 gender budgets that were drawn up by Italian public universities to systematize:

1. Positive actions planned by Italian universities within the gender budget to implement the gender equality strategy.
2. Details of the economic and financial resources planned by Italian universities within the gender budget to implement these positive actions.

The following section summarizes the empirical research that the authors conducted.

3 Research Methodology

The empirical research is conducted on a sample of 16 gender budgets drawn up by the following Italian public universities:

1. Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna “Alma Mater”
2. Polytechnic of Turin
3. University of L’Aquila
4. University of Basilicata
5. University of Brescia
6. University of Catania
7. University of Florence
8. University of Foggia
9. University of Genoa
10. University for Foreigners of Perugia
11. University of Rome “Sapienza”
12. University of Udine
13. University of Mediterranean Studies of Reggio Calabria
14. University of Naples “Federico II”
15. IUAV University of Venice
16. Polytechnic University of Marche

To completely represent the national territory, the sample is composed by selecting one public university for each region. The following regions are not involved from the number of Italian regions:

- Aosta Valley (since there is only one private university in the area)
- Molise
- Sardinia
- Trentino-Alto Adige

The latter three do not have the gender budgets available on the website.

Table 1 Distribution of the selected universities by region

Region	University selected
Abruzzo	University of L'Aquila
Basilicata	University of Basilicata
Calabria	University of Mediterranean Studies of Reggio Calabria
Campania	University of Naples "Federico II"
Emilia-Romagna	Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna "Alma Mater"
Friuli Venezia Giulia	University of Udine
Lazio	University of Rome "Sapienza"
Liguria	University of Genoa
Lombardy	University of Brescia
Marche	Polytechnic University of Marche
Piedmont	Polytechnic of Turin
Puglia	University of Foggia
Sicily	University of Catania
Tuscany	University of Florence
Umbria	University of Perugia
Veneto	IUAV University of Venice

Table 1 shows the combination of regions/universities.

4 Finding

To answer the RQ1, which refers to the systematization of gender incidence by category in Italian universities, the authors analyzed all the gender budgets involved in the sample and sorted the gender data according to the following classification:

- Students
- PhD students
- Trainees
- Research fellows
- Teaching staff
- Directors

The data was obtained by analyzing the gender budgets available on the universities' official websites. The research was carried out considering the latest available budget. However, there is no time alignment with the latest available budget (for example, some are dated 2018, others 2016).

The Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 show the results of this analysis.

Concerning the University of L'Aquila it emerges that:

- Among the students, women prevail.
- Among PhD students, women prevail.

Table 2 Incidence by gender of the University of L'Aquila

University of L'Aquila	2018					2017					2016					
	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total
Enrolled students	9637	8044	54.50	17,681	10,025	8061	55.43	18,086	10,769	8311	56.44	19,080	10,769	8311	56.44	19,080
PhD students	113	90	55.67	203	112	85	56.85	197	115	105	52.27	220	115	105	52.27	220
Trainees	\	\	\	\	196	116	62.82	312	198	124	61.49	322	198	124	61.49	322
Research fellows	45	75	37.50	120	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	\
Teaching staff	199	351	36.18	550	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	\
Directors	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
TA staff	\	\	\	\	27	29	48.21	56	137	101	57.56	238	137	101	57.56	238
Total	9994	8561	53.86	18,555	10,360	8292	55.54	18,652	11,219	8642	56.49	19,861	11,219	8642	56.49	19,861

Table 4 Incidence by gender of the University of Mediterranean Studies of Reggio Calabria

	2019					2018					2017					
	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total
University of Mediterranean Studies of Reggio Calabria																
Enrolled students	2142	1805	54.27	3947	2089	1854	52.98	3943	2110	1972	51.69	4082				
PhD students	\	\	51.00	\	\	\	52.00	\	\	\	50.00	\	\	\	\	\
Trainees	\	\	63.00	\	\	\	60.00	\	\	\	61.00	\	\	\	\	\
Research fellows	\	\	54.20	\	\	\	54.00	\	\	\	53.89	\	\	\	\	\
Teaching staff	98	123	44.34	221	36	125	22.36	161	94	122	43.52	216				
Directors	2	2	50.00	4	2	2	50.00	4	2	2	50.00	4				
T.A. staff	161	80	66.80	241	161	80	66.80	241	161	80	66.80	241				
Total	2403	2010	54.45	4413	2288	2061	52.61	4349	2367	2176	52.10	4543				

Table 5 Incidence by gender of the University of Naples “Federico II”

University of Naples Federico II	2016			2015			2014					
	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total
Enrolled students	46,884	36,726	56.07	83,610	47,254	35,420	57.16	82,674	48,464	36,780	56.85	85,244
PHD students	\	\	57.00	\	\	\	56.00	\	\	\	57.00	\
Trainees	\	\	60.00	\	\	\	58.00	\	\	\	59.00	\
Research fellows			56.00				54.00				57.00	
Teaching staff	886	1523	36.78	2409	912	1554	36.98	2466	658	1571	29.52	2229
Directors	5	3	62.50	8	5	3	62.50	8	5	3	62.50	8
T.A staff	1423	1638	46.49	3061	1452	1659	46.67	3111	1478	1702	46.48	3180
Total	49,198	39,890	55.22	89,088	49,623	38,636	56.22	88,259	50,605	40,056	55.82	90,661

Table 6 Incidence by gender of the University of Bologna “Alma Mater”

University of Bologna “Alma Mater”	2019			2018			2017					
	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total
Enrolled students	46,123	36,813	55.61	82,936	46,793	37,201	55.71	83,994	46,500	37,427	55.41	83,927
PhD students	769	855	47.35	1624	687	760	47.48	1447	623	678	47.89	1301
Trainees	828	719	53.52	1547	763	652	53.92	1415	755	593	56.01	1348
Research fellows	610	582	51.17	1192	605	535	53.07	1140	610	592	50.75	1202
Teaching staff	1124	1678	40.11	2802	1098	1645	40.03	2743	1072	1649	39.40	2721
Directors	7	7	50.00	14	7	8	46.67	15	7	8	46.67	15
T.A staff	1961	992	66.38	2954	1929	987	66.15	2916	1952	1004	66.04	2956
Total	51,442	41,646	55.27	93,068	51,882	41,788	55.39	93,670	51,519	41,951	55.12	93,470

Table 8 Incidence by gender of the University of Rome “Sapienza”

Università degli Studi di Roma “Sapienza”	2018					2017					2016				
	Women	Men	% women	Total		Women	Men	% women	Total		Women	Men	% women	Total	
	✓	✓	54.00	✓		✓	✓	55.00	✓		✓	✓	58.00	✓	
Enrolled students	✓	✓	54.00	✓		✓	✓	55.00	✓		✓	✓	58.00	✓	
PhD students	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Trainees	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Research fellows	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Teaching staff	✓	✓	40.00	✓		✓	✓	39.00	✓		✓	✓	38.00	✓	
Directors	✓	✓	75.00	✓		✓	✓	75.00	✓		✓	✓	75.00	✓	
TA staff	✓	✓	59.00	✓		✓	✓	59.00	✓		✓	✓	59.00	✓	
Total	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	

Table 10 Incidence by gender of the University of Brescia

University of Brescia	2020					2019					2018				
	Women	Men	% women	Total		Women	Men	% women	Total		Women	Men	% women	Total	
Enrolled students	\	\	45.50			\	\	45.90			\	\	45.90		
PhD students	\	\	37.70			\	\	37.80			\	\	37.70		
Trainees	286	428	40.10	714		323	439	42.40	762		368	508	42.20	875	
Research fellows	58	70	45.31	128		61	59	50.83	120		59	63	48.36	122	
Teaching staff	228	384	37.25	612		220	377	36.85	597		220	377	36.85	597	
Directors	2	1	66.67	3		2	1	66.67	3		2	1	66.67	3	
TA staff	320	170	65.31	490		320	170	65.31	490		320	170	65.31	490	
Total	894	1053	45.92	1947		926	1046	46.96	1972		969	1119	46.43	2087	

Table 11 Incidence by gender of Polytechnic University of Marche

	2018				2017				2016			
	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total
Marche Polytechnic University	6900	8483	44.85	15,383	7032	8558	45.11	15,590	7172	8524	45.69	15,696
Enrolled students	167	170	49.55	337	179	181	49.72	360	172	198	46.49	370
Trainees	269	206	56.63	475	247	198	55.51	445	258	201	56.21	459
Research fellows	121	113	51.71	234	112	122	47.86	234	103	114	47.47	217
Teaching staff	184	353	34.26	537	167	350	32.30	517	168	356	32.06	524
Directors	1	1	50.00	2	1	1	50.00	2	1	1	50.00	2
TA staff	342	189	64.41	531	332	201	62.29	533	325	207	61.09	532
Total	7984	9515	45.63	17,499	8070	9611	45.64	17,681	8199	9601	46.06	17,800

Table 12 Incidence by gender of the Polytechnic of Turin

	2018				2017				2016			
	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total
Polytechnic of Turin												
Enrolled students	10,041	24,645	28.95	34,687	10,112	25,145	28.68	35,257	10,345	25,078	29.20	35,423
PhD students	253	510	33.16	763	253	510	33.16	763	250	507	33.03	757
Trainees	\	\		\	\	\		\	\	\		\
Research fellows	171	373	31.43	544	170	370	31.48	540	171	368	31.73	539
Teaching staff	284	702	28.78	986	280	708	28.34	988	278	694	28.60	972
Directors	3	3	50.00	6	3	3	50.00	6	3	3	50.00	6
TA staff	546	335	62.00	881	546	338	61.76	884	544	334	61.96	878
Total	11,298	26,568	29.84	37,866	11,364	27,074	29.56	38,438	11,591	26,984	30.05	38,575

Table 13 Incidence by gender of the University of Foggia

University of Foggia	2015				2014				2013			
	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total
Enrolled students	9407	5109	64.80	14,516	9381	5766	61.3	15,173	9237	5277	63.02	14,658
PhD students	\	\	61.30	\	\	\	72.10	\	\	\	64.10	\
Trainees	\	\	59.00	\	\	\	56.00	\	\	\	61.10	\
Research fellows	8	10	44.44	18	8	10	44.44	18	8	10	44.44	18
Teaching staff	69	216	24.21	285	70	210	25.00	280	68	215	24.03	283
Directors	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0.00	1
TA staff	191	147	56.51	338	190	150	55.88	340	195	155	55.71	350
Total	9675	5483	63.83	15,158	9649	6137	61.12	15,786	9508	5658	62.10	15,310

Table 15 Incidence by gender of the University of Florence

University of Florence	2018				2017				2016			
	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total	Women	Men	% women	Total
Enrolled students	51,428	36,183	58.70	87,611	50,576	34,856	59.20	85,432	50,318	34,679	59.20	84,997
PhD students	881	906	49.30	1,787	871	857	50.40	1,728	931	913	50.50	1,844
Trainees	1,193	930	56.20	2,123	1,131	809	58.30	1,940	1,138	674	62.80	1,812
Research fellows	814	742	52.30	1,556	859	756	53.20	1,615	816	676	54.70	1,492
Teaching staff	1,684	2,495	40.30	4,179	1,648	2,472	40.00	4,120	1,669	2,621	38.90	4,290
Directors	10	15	40.00	25	10	15	40.00	25	10	15	40.00	25
TA staff	1,550	750	67.40	2,300	1,591	763	67.60	2,354	1,598	816	66.20	2,414
Total	57,560	42,021	57.80	99,581	56,686	40,528	58.31	97,214	56,480	40,393	58.30	96,873

Table 16 Incidence by gender of the University for Foreigners of Perugia

University for Foreigners of Perugia	2020					2019					2018				
	Women	Men	% women	Total		Women	Men	% women	Total		Women	Men	% women	Total	
Enrolled students	710	374	65.50	1084		671	379	63.90	1050		617	324	65.57	941	
PhD students	13	12	52.00	25		16	8	66.67	24		15	8	65.22	23	
Trainees	\	\		\		\	\		\		\	\		\	
Research fellows	3	2	60.00	5		7	1	87.50	8		4	3	57.14	7	
Teaching staff	23	32	41.82	55		22	35	38.60	57		24	33	42.11	57	
Directors	0	1	0	1		0	1	0	1		0	1	0.00	1	
TA staff	116	58	66.67	174		124	61	67.03	185		124	64	65.96	188	
Total	865	479	64.36	1344		840	485	63.40	1325		784	433	64.42	1217	

- Among the trainees, in 2016 and 2017, women prevail, whereas the data are not available for 2018.
- Among the research fellows, men prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, men prevail.
- Among technical-administrative staff, in 2016 women prevail, whereas in 2017 prevail men. Data are not available for 2018.

Concerning the University of Basilicata, it emerges that:

- Among the students, men prevail.
- Among PhD students, women prevail.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, there is a perfect gender balance.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, data are not available.
- Among technical-administrative staff, men prevail.

Concerning the University of Mediterranean Studies of Reggio Calabria, it emerges that:

- Among the students, women prevail.
- Among PhD students, women prevail.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, women prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, there is a perfect gender balance.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University of Naples, it emerges that:

- Among the students, women prevail.
- Among PhD students, women prevail.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, women prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, women prevail.
- Among technical-administrative staff, men prevail.

Concerning the University of Bologna, it emerges that:

- Among the students, women prevail.
- Among PhD students, men prevail.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, women prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, there is a perfect gender balance.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University of Udine, it emerges that:

- Among the students, men prevail.
- Among PhD students, data are not available.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, data are not available.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, men prevail.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University of Rome, it emerges that:

- Among the students, women prevail.
- Among PhD students, data are not available.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, data are not available.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, women prevail.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University of Genoa, it emerges that:

- Among the students, women prevail.
- Among PhD students, data are not available.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, there is a perfect gender balance.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, men prevail.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University of Brescia, it emerges that:

- Among the students, men prevail.
- Among PhD students, men prevail.
- Among the trainees, men prevail.
- Among the research fellows, men prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, women prevail.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University of Marche, it emerges that:

- Among the students, men prevail.
- Among PhD students, there is a perfect gender balance.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, women prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, there is a perfect gender balance.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the Polytechnic of Turin, it emerges that:

- Among the students, men prevail.
- Among PhD students, men prevail.
- Among the trainees, data are not available.
- Among the research fellows, men prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, there is a perfect gender balance.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University of Foggia, it emerges that:

- Among the students, women prevail.
- Among PhD students, women prevail.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, men prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, men prevail.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University of Catania, it emerges that:

- Among the students, data are not available.
- Among PhD students, data are not available.
- Among the trainees, data are not available.
- Among the research fellows, data are not available.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, data are not available.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University of Florence, it emerges that:

- Among the students, women prevail.
- Among PhD students, there is a perfect gender balance.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, women prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, men prevail.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University of Perugia, it emerges that:

- Among the students, women prevail.
- Among PhD students, women prevail.
- Among the trainees, data are not available.
- Among the research fellows, women prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, men prevail.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

Concerning the University “IUAV” of Venice, it emerges that:

- Among the students, women prevail.
- Among PhD students, there is a perfect gender balance.
- Among the trainees, women prevail.
- Among the research fellows, women prevail.
- Among the teaching staff, men prevail.
- Among directors, men prevail.
- Among technical-administrative staff, women prevail.

In the light of the analysis carried out, authors conclude that in the Italian universities observed, and the women prevalence is higher among students, trainees, postgraduates and technical and administrative staff.

None of the universities observed records a women prevalence among teaching staff, especially considering the highest role like full or associate professor. Indeed, women tend to be locked to the role of researcher, and they struggle to get ahead and make a career.

These results confirm that there is a phenomenon of vertical segregation in the academic context.

Then, to respond to RQ2, that is below written:

What are the positive actions taken by Italian universities in gender budgeting to improve gender equality?

To summarize the most frequent positive actions implemented by the universities involved in the sample, the authors read all the latest gender budgets available on the university’s official website. They reveal that the most frequent positive actions planned by the universities in the sample and reported in the gender budgets are the following:

1. The promotion of the workplace well-being
2. Fight against straining and mobbing, harassment and discrimination
3. The improvement of a work-life and study-life balance
4. The availability of training
5. The implementation of a listening desk
6. Equal opportunities in research

Table 18 shows, in detail, the universities that present in their gender budgets each positive action.

Concerning the first positive action, the improvement of workplace well-being, in most cases it consists of monitoring the level of stress, mapping the problems in the workplace, identifying the main problems that affect the rejection of students who do not pass the exams, organizing training activities, and preventing mobbing.

For instance, the University of Florence, together with the University of Naples “Federico II,” concerning the implementation of workplace well-being, highlights how essential it is that the positive actions planned do not remain on paper. They have to be rooted in the culture of the university. What does it mean? It means that internal stakeholders (teaching and TA staff) and external ones (students) have to be perfectly aware of the strategic direction of promoting workplace well-being. For

Table 18 Positive actions shown in the gender budgets of the universities observed

	<i>Action 1</i> The promotion of the workplace well	<i>Action 2</i> Fight against straining and mobbing, harassment and discrimination	<i>Action 3</i> The improvement of a work-life and study-life balance	<i>Action 4</i> The availability of training	<i>Action 5</i> The implementation of a listening desk	<i>Action 6</i> Equal opportunities in research
University of L'Aquila	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
University of Basilicata	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
University of the Mediterranean Reggio Calabria	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
University of Naples "Federico II"	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
University of Bologna "Alma Mater"	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
University of Udine	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
University of Rome "Sapienza"	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
University of Genoa	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
University of Brescia	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
Polytechnic University of Marche	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Polytechnic of Turin	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓
University of Foggia	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓
University of Catania	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
University of Florence	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗

(continued)

Table 18 (continued)

	<i>Action 1</i> The promotion of the workplace well	<i>Action 2</i> Fight against straining and mobbing, harassment and discrimination	<i>Action 3</i> The improvement of a work-life and study-life balance	<i>Action 4</i> The availability of training	<i>Action 5</i> The implementation of a listening desk	<i>Action 6</i> Equal opportunities in research
University for Foreigners of Perugia	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
IUAV University of Venice	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓

this purpose, these universities constituted a quick means of communication within the scientific community by activating a phone number that everyone can use to report any disease, inequality, and mobbing. In particular, this listening channel was advertised by the University of Florence by printing bookmarks and distributing them for free within the university.

As of positive action 2, different strategies were identified to avoid unjustified gender inequalities, exasperated forms of control, and harassment that can damage personal dignity. Thus, most of the actions planned by the universities of the sample concerned the set of conferences, workshops, and study days to spread this culture within the university and prevent the previously mentioned disease. For instance, in 2018, two meetings aimed at preventing mobbing were organized at the University of Florence.

As far as positive action 3, in the sample considered, in most cases, the work-life and study-life balance is linked to the opportunity of using suitable structures to reconcile personal and professional needs. Hence, some universities provide to their employee some facilities for their children (such as nursery schools); in other cases, the same purpose is pursued through some agreements with public and private entities for easy access to external facilities for children and care and assistance services for the older people and people with disabilities. An attractive solution is promoted from the University of Foggia, which since 2013 has helped teaching and technical-administrative staff to take care of their children when, in the summer months, schools are closed. Indeed, the University of Foggia set up a socio-pedagogical project that welcomes the children of university employees from three to ten years old.

Regarding the fourth positive action, namely the staff training, many universities implemented research groups to develop educational tools and methods for improving equal opportunities and gender equality and fighting gender and race stereotypes. A worthy initiative was taken by the University of Naples “Federico II.” In January 2010, it established an interdisciplinary laboratory of studies and research named “DGF”¹ that offers constant training to promote collective well-being within the university and outside. For instance, it supports families with disabilities, separation problems, and families where different cultural and ethnic matrices intersect. Hence, the laboratory’s stakeholders are represented not only by university members but also other teaching staff of every order and degree, students, regardless of their study title, and all parents.

The fifth positive action, namely the implementation of a listening desk, is a widespread tool within the universities of the sample analyzed. It supports staff and students that have psychological distress in their work or study path, and it is helpful when conflicts arise at the workplace, stress increases, motivation declines and other strictly work or study problems happen. The listening desk aims at conducting

¹The acronym stands for the Italian words “Donne, Genere e Formazione,” namely “Women, Gender and Training.”

individual interviews to build a helping relationship to reorganize the person's resources and develop strategies to cope with difficult situations.

Finally, the sixth positive action consists of improving equal opportunities in research, and it is pursued by elaborating evaluation and merit criteria for access to university scientific research funds. In this context, the action taken by the University of Foggia should be mentioned since some research activities were set to spread gender equality. For instance, a research group on gender pharmacology was established at the Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine to analyze gender differences in responding to drugs and the role of gender in the different responses to natural substances. In addition, the University of Foggia dedicated an Erasmus 2010–2011 program (Life along learning program) entitled "Teaching methods for the education of adult women." Later, the University of Foggia proposed other Erasmus programs related to gender equality. Finally, we report the activation of

the course of pedagogy of gender differences and the course of the history of gender education in the curriculum Education and Training of the Department of Humanities.

Once understood which are the most frequent positive actions programmed in the gender budgets of the Italian public universities considered in the sample, we can move on to RQ3, which is here recalled:

RQ3. What is the level of integration between positive actions favoring gender equality and the programming of financial resources needed to implement such actions in the gender budgets of the sample?

To answer RQ3, it is necessary to understand the level of integration between the programming of positive actions and the financial resources allocated to such actions.

Indeed, to implement the strategic actions planned by the universities in the gender budget to improve gender equality, the universities have to allocate economic and financial resources for each of these solutions.

The gender budget can, in fact, become a concrete strategic tool for gender equality only if it is based on adequate and appropriate economic and financial planning.

In particular, the gender budget has to respect the following characteristics:

1. on the one hand, it is necessary to define all the actions that universities must implement to realize the gender equality strategy truly.
2. on the other hand, the planned actions have to be supported by allocating economic and financial resources.

The definition of positive actions, to which point 1 refers, consists of explaining the initiatives that the universities intend to implement, so it refers to an intentional dimension.

Whereas the identification of the financial resources, which point 2 mentions, represents the shift from the intentional to the executive dimension.

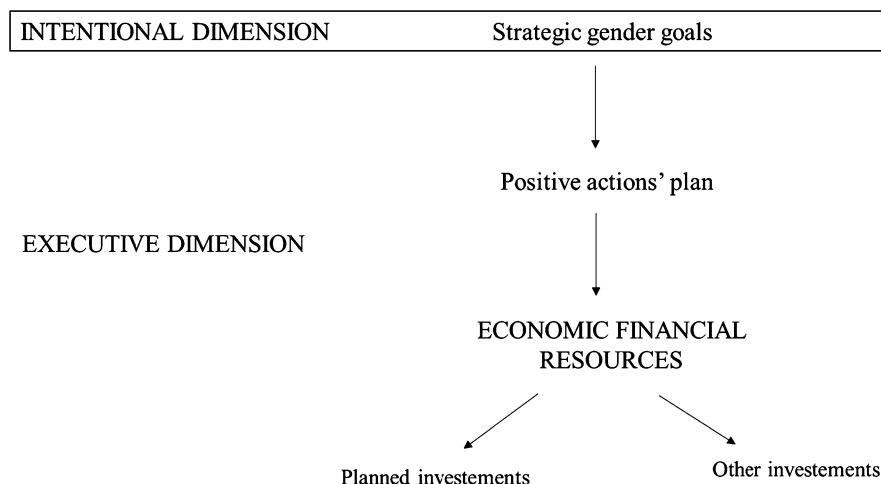


Fig. 1 The shift from the intentional to the executive scope in the gender equality strategy

Thus, only by planning the financial resources suitable for covering the expenses necessary for the implementation of positive actions, the universities can carry out a gender equality strategy.

The following chart outlines what has been stated above (Fig. 1):

The authors analyzed the sample to verify in which and how many gender budgets the gender equality strategy was not only intentional but was supported by financial planning.

In particular, the gender budgets of the sample were analyzed to check whether there was evidence of indicators of expenditure to cover the planned actions.

Table 19 summarizes the results of the analysis.

As it is clear, in most cases, the gender budgets of the sample considered did not contain any information about the resources allocated to gender equality policy actions.

The only worthy exceptions are listed below:

1. University of Foggia
2. University of Brescia
3. IUAV University of Venice

In particular, the University of Foggia shows in its 2016 gender budget (the last one available) a table containing the costs in euros of the different categories for 2013–2015 classified by gender.

Table 20 shows these results.

The table shows that concerning the students, costs incurred for women are always higher.

Similarly, as for the category of technical, administrative staff, costs incurred for women are always higher, whereas, concerning teaching staff, costs incurred from the universities for males are more consistent.

Table 19 Gender expenses indicators in the gender budgets of the universities in the sample

University	Gender expenses indicators	Description
University of L'Aquila	X	There are no expense indicators
University of Basilicata	X	There are no expense indicators
University of the Mediterranean Reggio Calabria	X	There are no expense indicators
University of Naples "Federico II"	X	There are no expense indicators
University of Bologna "Alma Mater"	X	There are no expense indicators
University of Udine	X	There are no expense indicators
University of Rome "Sapienza"	X	There are no expense indicators
University of Genoa	X	There are no expense indicators
University of Brescia	✓✓	Cost of components; economic resources necessary for the implementation of positive actions
Polytechnic University of Marche	X	There are no expense indicators
Polytechnic of Turin	X	There are no expense indicators
University of Foggia	✓	Cost of components
University of Catania	X	There are no expense indicators
University of Florence	X	There are no expense indicators
University for Foreigners of Perugia	X	There are no expense indicators
IUAV University of Venice	✓	Cost of components

Indeed, the university staff's analysis of the gender budget shows that full professors, associate professors, and researchers on fixed-term contracts are predominantly male, while among assistant professors, the female component prevails. This phenomenon confirms the consistency of vertical segregation that allows women to access the academic career (as researchers) but prevents them from reaching higher levels (full professor or associate professor).

As far as the technical-administrative staff, however, it can be observed that the prestigious roles of directors and high professional staff (EP category), the male component always prevails, while in all other roles, numbers are reversed.

Furthermore, analyzing the students, it emerges that female students represent the majority (64% in 2013 and 2014, and 62% in 2015).

There is, therefore, a problem of vertical segregation, which makes women have a lower income than men.

However, in response to our RQ3, although the gender budget of the University of Foggia, compared to the other gender budgets of the sample considered, may appear innovative because of the statement of costs classified by gender of the

Table 20 Costs of the different categories of the University of Foggia, classified by gender, years 2013–2015

Components	2013		2014		2015	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
Rector	–	33,466	–	33,466	–	33,466
Pro-rector	13,387	10,877	13,387	10,877	13,387	10,877
Department Director	8367	41,833	8367	41,833	8367	41,833
Academic Senate's member	10,709	53,546	13,387	50,869	16,964	48,191
Member of the board of director	4351	39,156	8701	34,805	13,052	26,104
President of the evaluation of department organism	–	7179	–	7179	–	7179
Member of the department evaluation organism	4859	14,578	4859	14,578	4859	14,578
President of the board of Auditors	–	9571	–	9571	–	9571
Full member of the board of Auditors	14,578	–	14,578	–	14,578	–
Department governance organism	56,250	210,206	63,278	203,178	70,306	191,799
Full Professors	1,740,000	8,700,000	1,856,000	8,236,000	1,856,000	8,004,000
Associate Professors	2,923,20	4,222,400	3,248,000	4,141,200	3,248,000	4,790,800
Researchers	5,278,000	4,988,000	4,988,000	4,814,000	4,814,000	4,408,000
Researchers on fixed-term	92,800	139,200	139,200	232,000	603,200	696,000
Teaching staff	10,034,000	18,049,600	10,231,200	17,423,200	10,251,200	17,898,800
General director	–	125,886	–	125,886	–	125,886
Category EP	603,200	788,800	603,200	788,800	556,800	788,800
Category D	2,088,000	1,426,800	2,088,000	1,357,200	1,983,600	1,357,200
Category C	3,103,000	2,407,000	3,016,000	2,407,000	2,987,000	2,291,000
Category B	417,600	371,200	417,600	371,200	417,600	348,000
Collaborators and language experts	162,400	46,400	162,400	46,400	162,400	46,400
TA staff	6,374,200	5,166,086	6,287,200	5,096,486	6,107,400	4,957,286
Students	37,799,282	21,262,096	38,388,553	21,593,561	37,291,982	22,856,376
Total	54,263,732	44,687,988	54,970,231	44,316,425	53,990,888	45,904,261

Source: Miur teacher registry and website www.unifg.it

Table 21 Expenses for salaries of teaching and research staff by gender

Role	Average net remuneration	Average net remuneration	Absolute value of gap	Percentage of gap
	F	M		
Full professors	57,756.57	75,632.40	17,875.82	30.79
Associate professors	52,009.90	55,034.42	3024.51	12.09
Assistant professors	51,259.00	47,721.55	-3547.45	-6.92
Researchers on fixed-term	31,167.57	37,796.65	6629.08	21.27
Total	192,203.04	216,185.02	23,981.96	12.48

Source: Gender budget 2019, IUAV University of Venice

Table 22 Expenses for salaries of managerial and technical-administrative staff by gender

Category	Average net remuneration	Average net remuneration	Absolute value of gap	Percentage of gap
	F	M		
Category C	21,940.13	26,321.16	4381.03	19.97
Category D	28,232.18	30,844.86	2621.68	9.29
Category EP	38,737.64	42,990.56	4242.92	10.95
Directors	74,293.29	70,618.64	-3674.64	-4.95
Category C on fixed-term	21,225.54	20,202.27	-1486.67	-7.01
Category D on fixed-term	7711.99	23,840.05	2621.68	n.c.
Directors on fixed-term		70,618.64		n.c.
Total	185,088.78	285,632.78	6085.32	n.c.

Source: Gender budget 2019, IUAV University of Venice

different categories, still it is not qualified as a suitable tool to provide preventive information about the gender-differentiated expenditure.

Indeed, the gender budget of the University of Foggia reports only an ex-post and not an ex-ante distribution of costs by gender.

As of the university of Venice, it includes in its gender budget two tables to differentiate by gender the funds destined to

1. Remuneration of teaching and research staff
2. Remuneration of managerial and technical-administrative staff

In particular, Table 21 shows the expenses for the remuneration of teaching and research staff, while Table 22 shows the remuneration of managerial and technical-administrative staff divided by gender.

Moreover, there are some significant gender differences regarding the remuneration of the staff at the University of Venice.

Table 23 Costs of professors and researchers, 2019

Role	Total		Women		Men	
	N	Costs ^a (€)	Costs (€)	Costs/total costs (%)	Costs (€)	Costs/total costs (%)
Full Professors	167	15,351,760	3,436,262	22.38	11,915,498	77.62
Associate Professors	230	14,787,760	4,895,850	33.11	9,891,910	66.89
Assistant Professors	108	6,527,450	30,990,991	47.35	3,436,459	52.65
Researchers on fixed-term (B)	42	1,974,838	772,715	39.13	1,202,123	60.87
Researchers on fixed-term (A)	50	1,451,060	772,336	53.23	678,724	46.77

^aCost net of social security contributions

In particular, as far as the teaching group, among full professors, a gap of 31% is recorded in favor of men; among associate professors, the gap measures 12%; whereas, among researchers, the gap amounts to 21%.

Like in the University of Foggia, a 7% gap favoring women is recorded among assistant professors. Overall, there is a 12% gap in favor of men.

Once again, the data seem to confirm that vertical segregation affects women more frequently than men.

Referring to technical-administrative staff men's salaries remain higher than women's, but only at the high professional level, whereas in the executive categories, the situation is the reverse.

In addition to this information about the distribution of expenditure by gender, there is no economic and financial resources plan referring to positive actions necessary to implement the gender equality strategy.

As widely stated, to translate the strategy into concrete actions, a valid plan of economic and financial resources devoted to these actions is essential.

In the sample observed, the only gender budget that appears innovative is the one drawn up by the University of Brescia.

The University of Brescia, in fact, in the definition of positive actions aimed at implementing the gender equality strategy, illustrates not only the distribution of expenses related to the teaching and technical-administrative staff but also the economic forecasts necessary to implement the planned actions.

Tables 23, 24, and 25 show, respectively, the costs incurred for professors and researchers, the costs for research fellows, Adjunct Professors and language experts, as well as the costs incurred for technical and administrative staff.

Here too, the differences in staff remuneration of women and men are consistent.

In particular, the composition of teaching staff records a 55.24% gap in favor of men among full professors, a 33.78% gap among associate professors, a 5.3% gap among Assistant Professors, and a 21.74% gap among researchers on fixed-term (B). There is, however, a 6.46% gap in favor of women among researchers on fixed-term (A).

Table 24 Costs for research fellows, Adjunct Professors, language experts, 2019

Role	Total		Women		Men	
	<i>N</i>	Costs ^a (€)	Costs (€)	Costs/Total costs (%)	Costs (€)	Costs/Total costs (%)
Research fellows on 31.12.2019	120	1,939,847	1,009,328	52.03	930,518	47.97
Research fellows managed during the year	184	2,488,476	1,248,160	50.16	1,240,315	49.84
Adjunct Professors	836	8,930,191	333,843	37.38	559,175	62.62
Language experts	4	73,520	34,835	47.38	38,685	52.62

^aCost net of social security contributions

Table 25 Costs of technical and administrative staff, 2019

	Role	Total		Women		Men
	<i>N</i>	Costs ^a (€)	Costs (€)	Costs/Total costs (%)	Costs (€)	Costs/Total costs (%)
Directors	0	0	0	0	0	0
Directors on fixed-terms	3	193,260	89,535	46.33	103,724	53.70
Category EP	26	1,114,424	707,407	63.48	407,016	36.52
Category D	128	4,377,903	2,683,213	61.29	1,694,689	38.71
Category C-B	333	8,284,555	5,520,339	66.63	2,764,215	33.37

^aCost net of social security contributions

Concerning the category of research fellows, Adjunct Professors and language experts, a 2.35% gap in favor of women is recorded only among research fellows in 2019 and those managed during the year. In contrast, there is a remuneration gap favoring men in the category of Adjunct Professors and language experts.

Again, as shown for the universities of Foggia and Venice, the remuneration differences among technical-administrative staff show a gap in favor of women only for the high-skilled roles while the situation is the opposite for managerial positions.

The innovative element is represented by Table 26, which shows the economic resources needed to maintain the actions aimed at reducing gender inequality mentioned above and the requests for the resources needed to develop the actions already implemented and for new actions. Finally, Table 27 shows the summary of economic forecasts for the three-year time period 2021–2023.

In light of the findings shown in Tables 26 and 27, we can state that the University of Brescia is the only one truly alert to obtain the information about the level of integration between positive actions and the financial resources allocated to implement them. The gender budget, thus, becomes an integral part of the University's planning and interpretation tools, which interacts with the primary management documents and affects their elaboration.

Table 26 Economic resources necessary for the implementation of Gender Budgeting actions, year 2021

Type of action	Action	Actor	Stakeholders involved	Economic forecasts 2021			Total
				Maintenance	Development	New implementation	
Work-life and study-life balance	Contributions to access to the nursery school and to support the families with diseases	GAC ^a	Teaching staff, researchers, TA staff	40,000.00	10,000.00		50,000.00
	Summer centers	GAC	Teaching staff, researchers, TA staff	45,000.00	10,000.00		55,000.00
	Facilitations for transports	GAC	Teaching staff, researchers, TA staff	10,000.00			10,000.00
	Total action			95,000.00	20,000.00		115,000.00
Actions to contrast the horizontal segregation	Orientation about gender education	GAC	Primary and secondary first grade schools based in Brescia/Local school office			10,000.00	10,000.00
	Orientation to increase the applications for the study courses on areas underrepresented	GAC	Secondary schools of second grade schools based in Brescia			10,000.00	10,000.00
Gender lessons	Economic contributions for students' applications for the study courses where they are under-represented	GAC-Students secretariat	Secondary schools of second grade schools based in Brescia			10,000.00	10,000.00
	Total action					30,000.00	30,000.00
	Classes to sensitize about gender topics	GAC	Students of the University of Brescia			5000.00	5000.00
	Training courses to improve the quality of leadership and	GAC	Teaching staff, researchers, TA staff	5000.00		5000.00	10,000.00

(continued)

Table 26 (continued)

Type of action	Action	Actor	Stakeholders involved	Economic forecasts 2021			Total
				Maintenance	Development	New implementation	
	teamworks management, with a gender perspective						
	Total action					10,000.00	15,000.00
Actions to contrast mobbing, harassment and discrimination	Trusted advisors	GAC	Teaching staff, researchers, TA staff	6000.00			6000.00
Gender research	European and national research	Departement research centres		130,000.00			130,000.00
	Total action			130,000.00			130,000.00

Source: Gender Budget of the University of Brescia, 2020

^aGAC stands for Guarantee Act Committee

Table 27 Economic resources necessary for the implementation of gender budgeting actions, years 2021–2023

Type of action	Action	Actor	Stakeholders involved	Economic forecasts		
				2021	2022	2023
Work-life and study-life balance	Contributions to access to the nursery school and to support the families with diseases	GAC ^a	Teaching staff, researchers, TA staff	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
	Summer centers	GAC	Teaching staff, researchers, TA staff	55,000.00	55,000.00	55,000.00
	Facilitations for transports	GAC	Teaching staff, researchers, TA staff	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
	Total action			115,000.00	115,000.00	115,000.00
Actions to contrast the horizontal segregation	Orientation about gender education	GAC	Primary and secondary first grade schools based in Brescia/Local school office	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
	Orientation to increase the applications for the study courses on areas underrepresented	GAC	Secondary schools of second grade schools based in Brescia	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
	Economic contributions for students' applications for the study courses where they are under-represented	GAC-Students secretariat	Secondary schools of second grade schools based in Brescia	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
	Total action			30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00
Gender lessons	Classes to sensitize about gender topics	GAC	Students of the University of Brescia	5000.00	5000.00	5000.00
	Training courses to improve the quality of leadership and teamwork management, with a gender perspective	GAC	Teaching staff, researchers, TA staff	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
	Total action			15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
	Trusted advisors	GAC	Teaching staff, researchers, TA staff	6000.00	6000.00	6000.00

(continued)

Table 27 (continued)

Type of action	Action	Actor	Stakeholders involved	Economic forecasts		
				2021	2022	2023
Actions to contrast mobbing, harassment and discrimination	Total action			6000.00	6000.00	6000.00
Gender research	European and national research	Departement research centres		130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00
	Total action			130,000.00	130,000.00	130,000.00
	Total actions			296,000.00	296,000.00	296,000.00

Source: Gender Budget of the University of Brescia, 2020

^aGAC stands for Guarantee Act Committee

5 Conclusions and Future Lines of Research

This research work focused on the analysis of a sample of gender budgets drawn up by selected Italian public universities to analyze, on the one hand, state of the art regarding the actions planned to contrast gender inequality and, on the other hand, to verify the level of integration between these positive actions and the allocation of economic and financial resources.

The analysis was conducted on a sample of 16 universities, representative of all the regions of the Italian territory. As previously mentioned, the Valle d'Aosta (as there is only one private University), Molise, Sardinia and Trentino-Alto Adige (as their website do not show any gender budget) were not involved in the group of Italian regions.

The empirical analysis allows us to draw the following conclusions. Firstly, the phenomenon of vertical segregation is still very widespread in Italian public universities, both in the teaching and technical-administrative staff components. Indeed, findings show that it is more difficult for women to reach senior positions (full professor and associate) and managerial roles (high-skilled roles).

Secondly, a joint effort by the analyzed universities is appreciated to program positive actions to carry out a gender equality strategy. The strategic actions planned by the universities are usually oriented towards workplace well-being and work-life balance.

Thirdly, it emerged that there are almost no ex-ante economic-financial forecasts of positive actions. The University of Brescia is the only one that provides a preventive indication of the resources needed to implement positive actions to carry out a gender equality strategy. Without economic planning, the gender strategy cannot be efficient, and the gender budget remains just a reporting tool to record the gender differences among the various categories. Hence, future research lines can aim to sensitize all universities to consider the gender budget as an active tool of gender equality through synchronized planning between the strategy and the economic-financial resources.

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