

8. Bilgi University

8.1. Legislation, Curriculum, Policy, Stakeholder Analyses

Regulations, Directives, Directorates, Coordinatorship, Directorships, Application and Research Centers, mission and vision of the university, Internal Reports, Annual Reports, announcements, event calendars, course and curriculum sections on the pages of associate, undergraduate and graduate departments and programs on Bilgi University website, The ECTS Information Package, both the institutional social media accounts of the university and the social media accounts of the communities (Instagram, Facebook and Twitter), YÖK Thesis, Harman, TR Index, Web of Science indexes and databases were examined in detail to access data to monitor gender equality in the context of LGBTI+ rights in universities

Bilgi University Indicators of Discrimination against LGBTI+’s

	INDICATOR	SCORES			FINDINGS
		0	1	2	
1.	LGBTI+ Rights and Gender Equality in Academic Activities at Universities				7/10
1.1.	Number of compulsory courses on LGBTI+ rights and gender at all levels of education (associate, undergraduate, graduate, doctorate)	1			There are 16 compulsory courses.
1.2.	Number of elective courses on LGBTI+ rights and gender at all levels of education (associate, undergraduate, graduate, doctorate)	2			There are 36 elective courses.
1.3.	Academic event on gender equality in the context of LGBTI+ rights in universities	2			There are 380 publications and 29 activities, totaling 409 activities.
1.4.	The existence of gender and women’s studies departments in universities	0			
1.5.	Existence of gender and women’s research centers in universities	2			Gender Working Group BİLGİGENDER
2.	Campus Climate for LGBTI+’s				11/12
2.1.	Existence of LGBTI+ solidarity/research clubs at universities	2			Bilgi University Rainbow Society
2.2.	Status of LGBTI+ Community in Universities (official/unofficial/in the process of formalization)	2			Official
2.3.	Number of LGBTI+ specific events at universities	2			73 activities are included.
2.4.	Number of Pride Week/Month events on campuses	1			There are 2 events.
2.5.	Number of March 8 events on campuses	2			There are 8 events.

2.6.	Number and Accessibility of Gender-Free Restrooms on Campuses	2	There is 1 gender neutral and accessible toilet.
3. LGBTI+phobic and Sexist Stereotypes in Universities			7/8
3.1.	Number of campaigns and informative materials raising gender awareness in the context of LGBTI+ rights	1	Helping in Non-emergency Situations Introduction to Gender-Based Violence and Pocket Guide Training
3.2.	Number of trainings and seminars on gender equality in the context of LGBTI+ rights organized for members of the university, especially university employees and administrative staff	2	There are 24 events.
3.3	Number of statements on university websites that comply with gender equality in the context of LGBTI+ rights	2	Board of Trustees Anti-Discrimination Policy Decision; Gender Equality Decision; Internal Evaluation Reports
3.4	Number of reports on gender equality shared by universities that can be analyzed in the context of LGBTI+ rights	2	Gender Program Impact Measurement and Evaluation Report (2018); Legal Seminars on Combating Discrimination and Violence against Women: Education Evaluation and Impact Measurement Report (2019); Inclusive education: Intersectional and Interdisciplinary Perspectives Report Series (2021); Gender Equality Plan 2022-2027
TOTAL SCORE		25/30	

BILGIGender was established at Istanbul Bilgi University in 2019 under the name of Gender Studies Working Group¹³. Although it has not yet been established as a research and application center, there are centers that carry out valuable studies in this field. The Sociology and Education Studies Application and Research Center also conducts studies on inclusive education. The Human Rights Law Research and Implementation Center also has many projects and publications on gender equality both before and after 2017. The Migration Studies Application and Research Center and the Civil Society Studies Application and Research Center also incorporate a gender equality perspective in their work (conferences, academic publications and research).

The Curriculum Review of the University was carried out from the “Course Catalog” section in the “Courses” section of the web page. In addition to 36 elective and 16 compulsory courses with a total of 52 keywords in their titles, courses at Bilgi University that focus on gender equality and include more than one of the keywords of the research in their syllabi were encountered during the review process. These courses are conducted within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Communication and the Institute of Graduate Programs. It was

13 Gender Working Group BİLGİGENDER <https://gender.bilgi.edu.tr/tr/>

also observed that many organizations and individuals working on gender equality or engaged in activism were invited as guests to these lectures. In this way, it has been observed that the university components, which enable students and both the civic space and experts in their fields to come into contact with each other during the relevant course week, try to maintain a campus climate with a very positive atmosphere for all university components, especially women and LGBTI+ students.

Bilgi University Rainbow Community (Bilgi Rainbow) is an official university community and works on LGBTI+ rights. Another factor affecting the positive campus climate at Istanbul Bilgi University is the activities and models developed by stakeholders and student organizations working in various fields in terms of gender equality. In addition, 29 events organized by the university were directly focused on LGBTI+ and nearly 100 civil society activities were carried out. The impact of Bilgi Social Incubation Center is very important in this.

The Bilgi University Gender Equality Plan (2022-2027) was developed to analyze the current situation in gender equality and to make improvements in this area. Within the scope of projects and research conducted at Bilgi University, reports on gender equality and LGBTI+ rights have been published¹⁴. A review of the statements and activities carried out by the Bilgi University administration reveals that the Board of Trustees has adopted an Anti-Discrimination Policy¹⁵ and Gender Equality Policy¹⁶ are available. Similarly, the Institution's Internal Evaluation Reports (2017-2022) include policies supporting gender equality and the importance of these steps.

Bilgi University LGBTI+ Rights Access Indicators

	<i>INDICATOR</i>	<i>SCORES</i>			<i>FINDINGS</i>
		0	1	2	
1.	Gender Equality in the Context of LGBTI+ Rights in University Legislation, Directives and Policy Documents	10/12			
1.1.	Number of regulations and directives referring to CEDAW and Istanbul Convention	2			Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention Unit Directive, Gender Equality Plan 2022-2027

¹⁴ Bilgi University ASOS-KADAV Gender Program Impact Measurement and Evaluation Report <https://insanhaklarimerkezi.bilgi.edu.tr/tr/projects/47-asos-kadav-toplumsal-cinsiyet-program-aralk-2017-haziran-2018> and Law Seminars on Combating Discrimination and Violence against Women: Training Evaluation and Impact Measurement Report <https://insanhaklarimerkezi.bilgi.edu.tr/tr/publication/53-kadna-yonelik-ayrmlk-ve-siddetle-mucadelede-hukuk-seminerleri-egitim-degerlendirme-ve-etki-olcumu-raporu/>

¹⁵ Bilgi University Board of Trustees Anti-Discrimination Decision dated 01.10.2012 and numbered 879.

¹⁶ Bilgi University Gender Equality Policy Decision dated 01.10.2012 and numbered 879.

1.2.	Number of references to concepts such as “gender” and “sexual orientation”, “gender identity” in legislation, directives and policy texts	2	Gender Equality Plan 2022-2027; Policy Document on Preventing Sexual Harassment and Assault; Sociology and Education Studies Application and Research Center web page, Gender Working Group web page; Gender Studies Scientific Impact Oriented Area of Excellence; Student Clubs Directive; Community Service Policy; Inclusion, Equality and Inclusion Policy
1.3.	Number of regulations, directives and policies referring to Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals	2	Directive on Priority Areas Research Projects Support Program; Sustainability Policy; Internal Evaluation Report 2022
1.4.	Number of regulations supporting gender equality	2	Human Rights Law Application and Research Center Regulation
1.5.	Number of universities’ anti-discrimination policies on gender, gender identity and sexual orientation	2	Board of Trustees Anti-Discrimination Resolution; Gender Equality Policy Document; Gender Studies Area of Excellence with a Focus on Scientific Impact, Policy Document on Preventing Sexual Harassment and Assault; Inclusion, Equality and Inclusion Policy, Internationalization Policy; Community Service Policy
1.6.	Clear and understandable indication of the ways of name change in Diploma Graduation Certificates	0	
2.	Collaborations and Activities of Universities with NGOs to Draw Attention to GE		4/4
2.1.	Number of campaigns, joint work, events, collaborations with NGOs and diversity in terms of GE (diversity of organizations, diversity of partnerships)	2	A total of 84 collaborations were realized, including 65 NGOs, 6 local governments, 2 professional chambers and 11 governments and their institutions.
2.2.	Number of models created and implemented with NGOs	2	In total, 27 models have been implemented.
3.	Institutionalization of Combating Violence and Harassment in Universities: Sexual Harassment and Assault Units		10/10
3.1.	Presence of active Sexual Harassment and Assault Unit in universities	2	Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention Unit
3.2.	Clear and understandable indication of the ways to apply to the Sexual Harassment and Assault Units at universities	2	Unit Directive and web page

3.3	Existence of a university website where information on Sexual Harassment and Assault Units can be obtained	2	https://ctsob.bilgi.edu.tr/tr/
3.4	Existence of content in Sexual Harassment and Assault Units on assisting access to justice, guidance, psychological support, etc.	2	Gender Equality Plan 2022-2027 and Unit Directive and web page
3.5	Number of trainings and/or seminars on issues such as harassment and mobbing	2	There are 28 events.
TOTAL SCORE		24/26	

Among the *main goals, mission and vision* of Bilgi University are the values of respect for universal rights and freedoms, pluralism and diversity in the relevant thematic area. The University's core principles also emphasize non-discrimination, pluralism and diversity. In line with these principles and values, anti-discrimination policies other than the aforementioned decisions of the Board of Trustees were also examined. With policies such as Inclusion, Equality and Inclusion Policy, Social Contribution Policy, Internationalization Policy, gender equality is institutionally targeted and efforts are being made to institutionalize this perspective.

The Student Clubs Directive and the Policy Document on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Assault include discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation. In addition, activities, organizations or statements that violate or are incompatible with human rights and freedoms or ethical principles and rules, or that lead to the violation of the aforementioned, are specified as one of the violations of the general rules to be followed in club activities. These guidelines, together with the Anti-Discrimination Resolution and the Inclusion, Equality and Inclusion Policy, are a guiding policy work among the universities monitored so far, on how to respond to discrimination, harassment and bullying at universities.

When the Credit System Undergraduate and Associate Degree Education and Examination Regulations and the Graduate Education and Training Regulations are examined, although information on various situations is shared on the web page prepared to provide information on graduation and diploma procedures, no explanation on the name change in the diploma has been found.

Bilgi University has an actively functioning Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Prevention Unit since 2015 and a Policy Document on Preventing Sexual Harassment and Assault¹⁷. These documents are well-prepared in terms of content and have a detailed content, such as a focus on gender equality, information on the application mechanisms at the university in case of gender-based discrimination, harassment and violence, and information on support against gender-based discrimination, violence or sexual harassment and assault, regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation. The unit has its own comprehensive website where information on how to apply, support mechanisms and information on harassment is shared. Within the scope of preventive and protective activities, the Psychological Counseling Unit continues its activities in cooperation with the Sexual Harassment and Assault Units¹⁸.

The striking difference of Bilgi University among the universities analyzed in this monitoring study is that it conducts activities in terms of gender equality with a total of 84 stakeholders and

17 Bilgi University Policy Document on Preventing Sexual Harassment and Assault, 26.06.2015.

18 Bilgi University Institutional Internal Evaluation Report 2022.

implements 27 models. These models focus on law, human rights, youth, violence, gender, discrimination and education. Of these models, schools (e.g. the Human Rights Law Summer School at BİLGİ) and projects (e.g. the Young Voices Project), together with network development activities, are important activities through which the university ensures its sustainability.

8.2. Scales on Discrimination against LGBTI+ Persons and Access to Rights

A total of 73 people, including 46 students, 14 academic staff, 1 administrative staff and 12 alumni of Bilgi University, participated in the study. The 73 people who participated in the research were asked 16 questions on the Discrimination Against LGBTI+ Persons Scale and 19 questions on the Access to LGBTI+ Rights Scale and were expected to answer Likert-type responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The findings obtained from the analysis of the participants' responses to the questions are shown below. The findings below were obtained by converting the averages of the participants' responses into 100 values.

Bilgi University Discrimination Scale Scores for LGBTI+ Persons

1	LGBTI+ persons are not subjected to verbal violence within the university.	64,6	Violence	71,37
2	LGBTI+ persons are not subjected to physical violence within the university.	86,4		
3	LGBTI+ persons are not subjected to psychological violence within the university.	60,2		
4	LGBTI+ persons are not subjected to sexual harassment within the university.	74,2		
5	LGBTI+ persons who are discriminated against within the university can express this freely.	77,6		
6	During the courses, the lecturer observes gender equality.	81,6	Academic Activities	80,788
7	Students observe gender equality during lessons.	78,6		
8	Course contents take gender equality into account.	82,8		
9	LGBTI+ persons do not face discrimination in classes.	80,6		
10	Extracurricular academic activities (seminars, workshops, etc.) LGBTI+ persons are not discriminated against.	82,8		
11	LGBTI+ persons are treated equally when communicating with academic staff at the university.	82,2		
12	LGBTI+ persons are treated equally when communicating with students at the university.	80,2		

13	LGBTI+ persons are not subjected to discrimination in dormitories.	54,6	Housing 55,41
14	In dormitories, LGBTI+ persons are treated equally when communicating with dormitory management.	54	
15	In dormitories, LGBTI+ persons are treated equally when communicating with dormitory staff.	53,6	
16	In dormitories, LGBTI+ persons are treated equally when communicating with students staying in dormitories.	59,4	
			SCORES 72,09

As can be seen in the table above, members of Bilgi University gave 71.37 points to the Discrimination-Violence sub-dimension, which consists of 4 questions about LGBTI+ individuals being subjected to violence at the university, 80.788 points to the Discrimination-Academic Activities sub-dimension, which consists of 8 questions about being subjected to discrimination during academic activities, and 55.41 points to the Discrimination-Housing sub-dimension, which consists of 4 questions about students being subjected to discrimination in dormitories. As a result of the answers given to the questions in the scale, the total score for Bilgi University was calculated as 72.09.

Bilgi University does not have a student dormitory, but there are private dormitories recommended by the university on its website. Among the 73 participants from Bilgi University, 2 of them lived in KYK dormitories, 14 of them lived in private student dormitories, and 57 of them did not live in dormitories. For this reason, the housing questions answered by the participants are explained by their experiences or impressions of the dormitories where they reside.

Bilgi University Access to LGBTI+ Rights Scale Scores

1	LGBTI+ rights are freely defended at the university.	77,2	Assembly and Advocacy 80,43
2	Activities related to LGBTI+ rights are carried out freely at the university.	77,8	
3	LGBTI+ themed activities are carried out freely at the university.	80,6	
4	LGBTI+ students at university can come together to defend LGBTI+ rights.	88,4	
5	LGBTI+'s at the university can be organized into student communities.	87,4	
6	Pride at the university can be organized freely.	67,6	
7	LGBTI+ persons can express themselves freely within student communities.	83,8	Safe Space 82,01
8	Classrooms are safe for LGBTI+ students.	85,4	
9	Common areas (e.g. cafeterias, canteens, libraries, study halls, laboratories, dining halls, sports facilities and similar socialization areas) are safe for LGBTI+ persons.	83	
10	Administrative buildings are safe for LGBTI+ persons.	77,6	

11	The university administration is knowledgeable about LGBTI+ rights.	61,4	University Members Perception and Attitude	62,15
12	Administrative staff are knowledgeable about LGBTI+ rights.	64,6		
13	University security guards are knowledgeable about LGBTI+ rights.	52		
14	The university administration observes gender equality when communicating with students.	69,6		
15	Administrative staff observes gender equality when communicating with students.	68,4		
16	University security guards observe gender equality when communicating with students.	56,8		
17	Students have knowledge about LGBTI+ rights.	78	Peer Behavior	78,45
18	Students observe gender equality when communicating among themselves.	76,8		
19	In the circle of friends, LGBTI+ issues are discussed in a positive atmosphere.	80,6		
			SCORES 74,59	

As can be seen in the table above, Bilgi University members scored 80.43 for the Assembly and Advocacy sub-dimension, which consists of 7 questions about organizing opportunities at the university, and 82.01 for the Safe Space sub-dimension, which consists of 3 questions about the university being safe for LGBTI+s, The responses to the Perception and Attitude of University Members sub-dimension, which consists of 6 questions about the thoughts and behaviors of university members towards LGBTI+ students, were 62.146, and finally, the responses to the Peer Behavior sub-dimension, which consists of 3 questions measuring the attitudes of peers towards LGBTI+ students, were 78.448. As a result of the answers given to the questions in the scale, the total score for Bilgi University was calculated as 74.592.