



Gender Equality in Higher Education Institutions

A Collaboration between Portugal and Iceland under the EEA Norway Grants

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WOMEN'S FORUM FOR THE ECONOMY & SOCIETY Building the future with **women's vi**

Iceland 'bes

12 October 2010 | **Busines**

Why is Iceland the world's global leader in gender equality?

WIP Women in Parliaments Global Forum

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Industry and doing something positive about it.

RIKK

INSTITUTE FOR
GENDER, EQUALITY
AND DIFFERENCE



UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

The University of Iceland

- ‘always wants to be at the forefront of gender equality’ (2011).
- Equality ‘a guiding principle in the University’s work’ (2018)



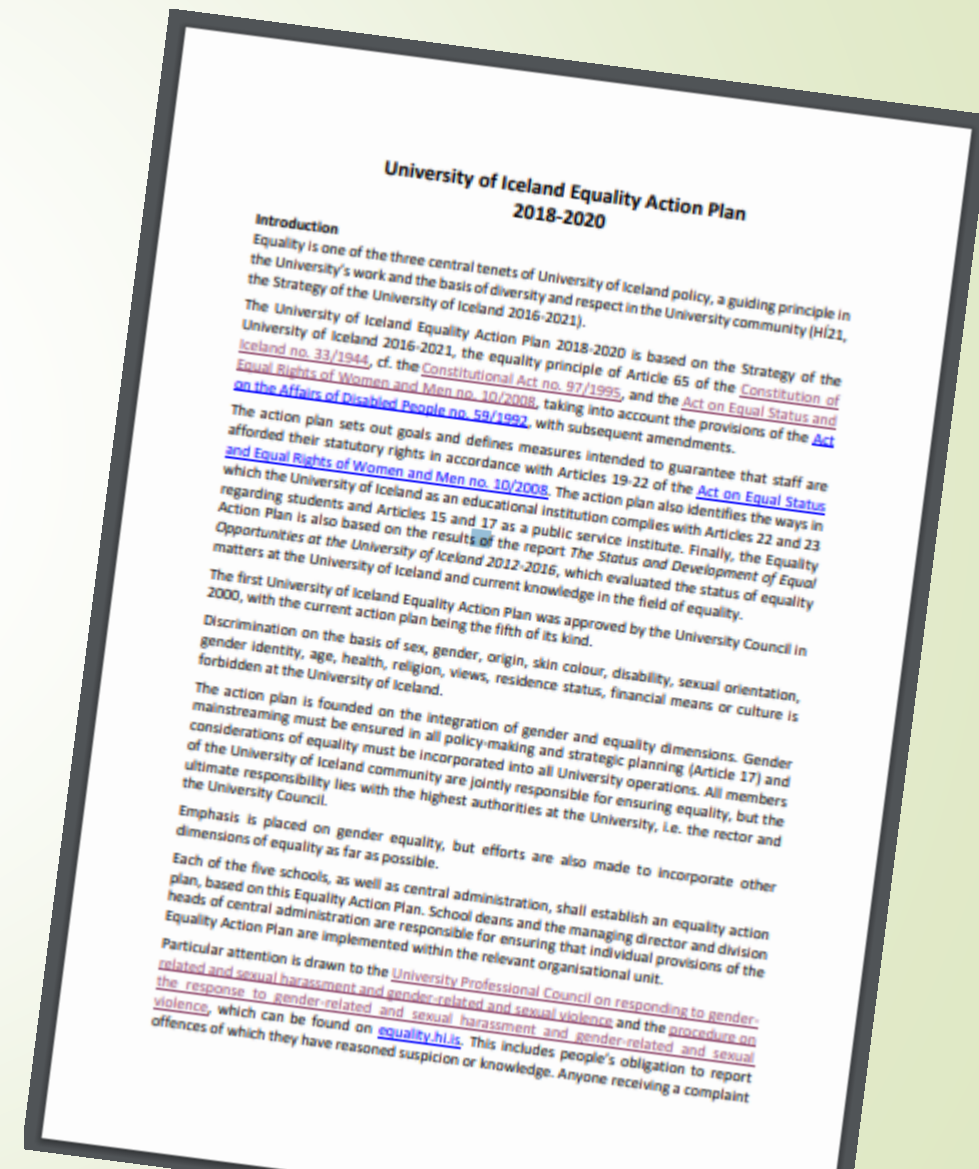
Policies

- Policy of the University of Iceland, 2006-2011
- The Policy of the University of Iceland, 2011-2016
- University of Iceland Equal Rights Policy, 2013-2017
- The University of Iceland staff handbook
- The University of Iceland Human Resource Policy
- Strategy of the University of Iceland, 2016-2021



Policies

- Since 2000: Equal Opportunities Policy
- Newest action plan from 2018.
- The action plan dictates that each of the five schools at UI must have their own particular action plan and policy:
 - School of Education
 - School of Engineering and Natural Sciences
 - School of Health Sciences
 - School of Humanities
 - School of Social Sciences

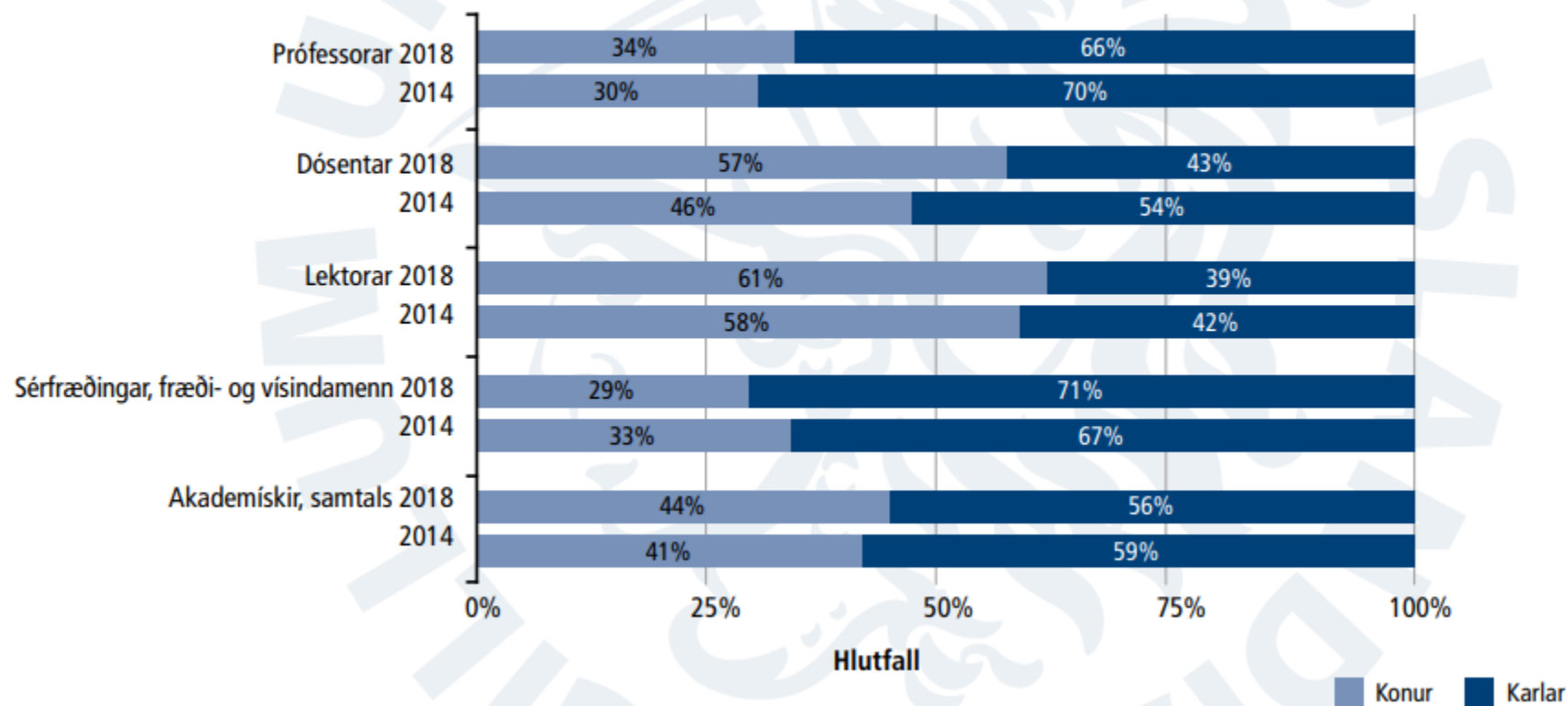


Numbers remain discouraging

- 2019: 12.524 students, **66.5% women, 33.5% men.**
- STEM: 59% men, 41% women
- SSH: 30% men, 70% women
- Icelandic men generally do not have to attend university to secure high future incomes

I. Mannauður

I.3. Kynjaskipting í akademískum störfum 2014 og 2018



The Neoliberal Academy

- 1980s: Political development towards emphasis on privatisation and economic globalization
- Academia: Global ranking systems of central importance
- New public management / new managerialist strategies
- Public service institutions -> corporation-like entities



- Government funding tied to graduate students and research output (since 2000)
- 'increase [the] number of papers published in respected international peer-reviewed journals ... by 100%' (2006)
- 'specific goals on research and innovation' (2011)
- Evaluation System for Public Universities (2013).



Work/Life Balance

- The university endeavors to provide the conditions employees need to coordinate their professional and familial obligations.
- Employees shall be offered the chance of a temporary time commitment reduction if familial obligation demands it.
- This shall not affect their professional advancement.
- Employees shall be offered flexible working hours if familial obligation demands it.
- The university encourages fathers to make use of the opportunities to coordinate professional and familial obligation.

- Women academics afraid of going on maternity leave
- Do not take full maternity leave
- Constantly feel guilty
- Expected to work even when they had a sick child at home or in the hospital.
- Women end up taking on family responsibilities.

Smidt, T. B., Pétursdóttir, G. M., & Einarsdóttir, Þ. (2017). How do you take time? Work–life balance policies versus neoliberal, social and cultural incentive mechanisms in Icelandic higher education. *European Educational Research Journal*, 16(2–3), 123–140.

Rafnsdóttir, G. L., Heijstra, T.M. (2013). Balancing Work–family Life in Academia: The Power of Time. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 20(3): 283-296.





Policy change or system change?