



GENDER AND GENDER EQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND ACADEMIA

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- The background is a blue gradient. In the corners, there are decorative white line art elements resembling circuit boards or neural networks, with lines and small circles.
- Approaches to **gender** in higher education and research
 - Approaches to **gender equality** in higher education and research

CHANGING UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER

- Early research and policy/measures: focusing mainly on women
- Broadening the understanding of gender:
 - Gendering men, homosociability
 - LGBTIQA+ approaches
 - Intersectional approaches (sex, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability)
- Organisational approaches on gender: gendered/gendering

processes

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EXPANSION OF RESEARCH ON GENDER IN ACADEMIA

Women + Academia and Gender + Academia in international research literature 1950-2021 (entries in Google Scholar)

Year	Women + Academia	Gender + Academia
1950-69	2520	324
1970-79	6610	728
1980-89	14.400	4430
1990-99	29.300	22.200
2000-09	119.000	87.200
2010-19	248.000	230.000
2020-21	54.200	53.300



EXPANSION: SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS

Equal Opportunities International 1981

→ **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** 2010-

Women in Management Review 1985

→ **Gender in Management** 2008-

Gender and Education 1989

Gender, Work and Organisation 1994

Journal of Women and Minorities in Science and Technology 1994

International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology
2009

MULTITUDE OF DISCIPLINES ADDRESSING GENDER IN ACADEMIA

Social Sciences

Psychology

Gender Studies

Political Science

**Science and
Technology
Studies**

Philosophy

**Management and
Organization
Studies**

**Pedagogy,
Education**

Legal Studies

- Gender (in) equalities in higher education, academia, science
- Addressed by research, pedagogy, policy, legislation

HISTORY OF WOMEN IN ACADEMIA AND SCIENCE

- Exclusion:
- Women excluded from universities, learned societies and other scientific organisations for hundreds of years – only on the basis of their sex
- Scientific arguments used to argue for excluding women
- Resistance against women's entry to academia
- Resistance against female pioneers

FROM EXCLUSION TO "FEMINIZING" ?

- Globally, women have made great gains in higher education
- Women currently **majority among university students and graduates** on B.A./Master level in large parts of the world
- Over half of **new doctoral degrees** awarded to women in Europe, except in STEM fields
- Recruitment base to academic careers is "feminizing"

2000S: ARE WOMEN TAKING OVER ACADEMIA?

- Higher education continues to be gender segregated
- Globally, in 2016, **under a third** of researchers women: **29.3%** (UNESCO 2019)
 - 48.2% in Central Asia
 - 45.1% in Latin America and the Caribbean
 - 41.5 % in Arab States
 - **39.3% in Central and Eastern Europe**
 - **32.7% in North America and Western Europe**
 - 31.8% in Sub-Saharan Africa
 - 23.9% in East Asia and the Pacific
 - 18.5% in South and West Asia

GENDER PATTERNS IN SCIENCE AND ACADEMIA (1)

(VERONICA STOLTE-HEISKANEN 1991)

1. The **higher the position**, the fewer women
2. **Recruitment base** to academic careers is feminising
3. **Academic culture** has gendered elements
4. **Contradictions** between the academic/research system clock and the biological **clock**
5. Women **relatively invisible** to male colleagues in the scientific community as colleagues; visibility paradox
6. The more a scientific arena is linked to **power**, the smaller the share of women

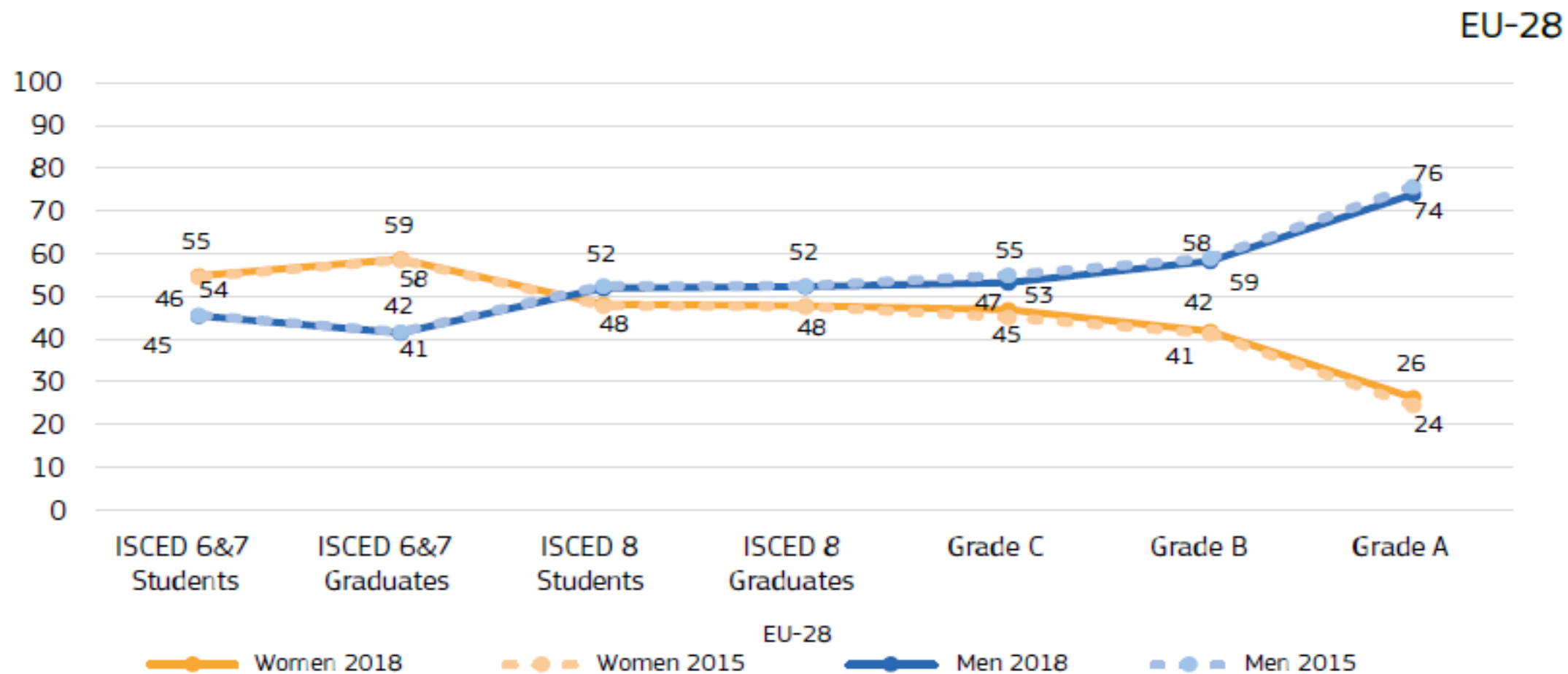
• GENDERED PATTERNS IN ACADEMIA (2)

- Horizontal, vertical, contractual **gender segregation**
- Persistent gendered disciplinary and subdisciplinary **divisions**
- **Stereotype** of researcher /academic/scientist: male
- Gendered disciplinary/departmental/research group **cultures**

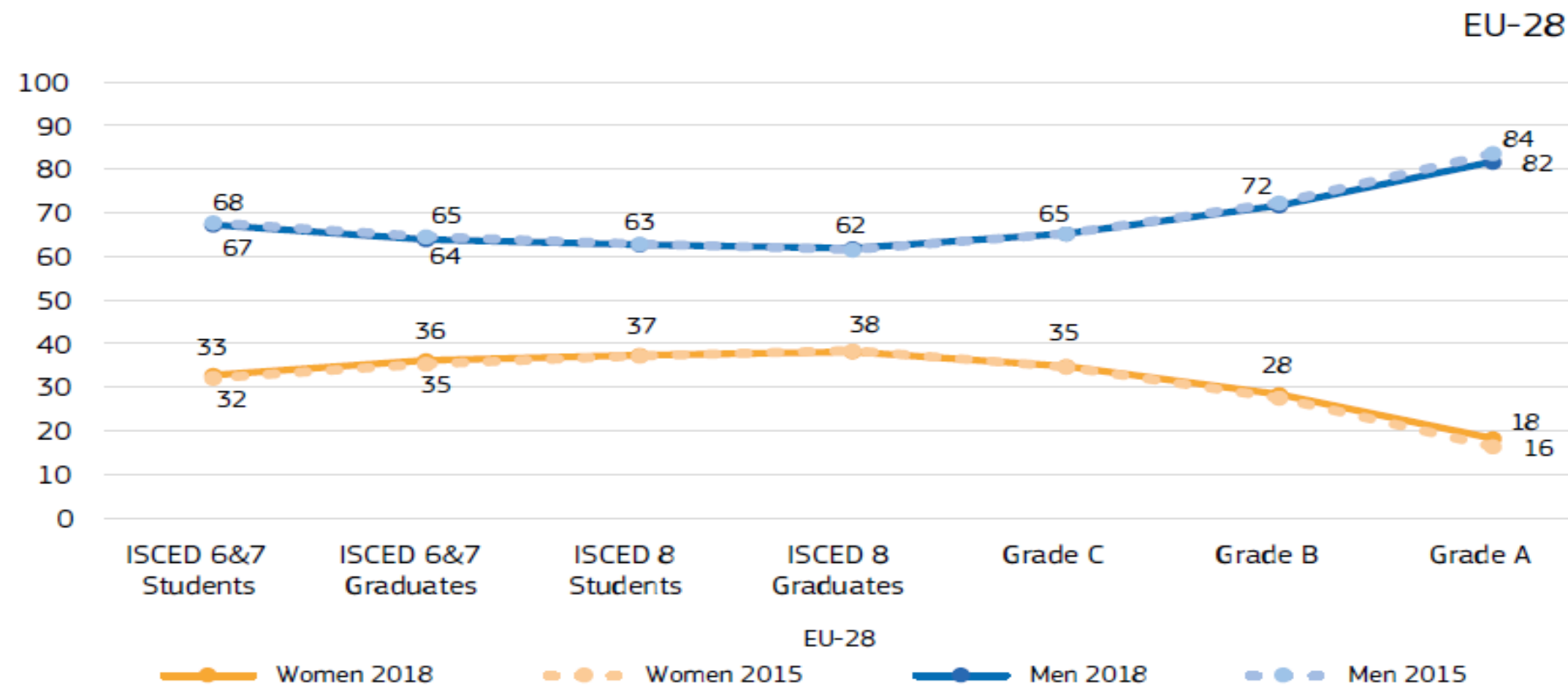
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- Gendered informal and formal **networking**
- (Unconscious) **gender bias** in evaluation and assessment
- **Sexual harassment** of students and staff, sexism, misogyny
- Gendered **career paths**
- Gendered **excellence-marked initiatives**

PROPORTION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN A TYPICAL ACADEMIC CAREER, STUDENTS & ACAD. STAFF IN EU-28 IN 2015-18 (SHE FIGURES 2021)



PROPORTION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN ACAD.CAREER IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING: STUDENTS, ACAD.STAFF IN EU 28 IN 2015-1018 (SHE FIGURES 2021)



GENDER INEQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND ACADEMIA: WHO DOES IT CONCERN?



A MULTITUDE OF GENDER GAPS IN ACADEMIA

- **EDUCATION:** persistent horizontal sex segregation of study fields
- **CAREERS:** type of contract, career advancement, work-life balance, resource allocation, pay, leading and decision-making positions, role models
- **INSTITUTIONS:** structures, policies, practices, leadership, culture
- **KNOWLEDGE:** in many fields gender dimensions not taken into account in the knowledge production and dissemination process: research content, curricula
- **UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER:** in GE policies, women mainly in focus; men not problematized as men; nor intersections of gender and other social categories: ethnicity, LGBTQ+ etc.

WHY PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY IN ACADEMIA AND HIGHER EDUCATION

- ***Human rights perspective***

Each individual should have a right to realize his/her potential regardless of gender; inequality is a human rights violation

- ***Human capital/research system perspective***

Best talents & brains should be recruited regardless of gender – “equality equals quality”; loss of talent

- ***Societal /national economy perspective***

High societal investments in educating and training women should not be wasted – inequality as an (national) economical issue

- ***Epistemological perspective***

A more diverse scientific community produces more multifaceted research and raises different questions – equality produces better knowledge

GENDER (IN)EQUALITY IN ACADEMIA AND SCIENCE INCREASINGLY ON THE AGENDA IN:

- Major international organisations: *UN, UNESCO, OECD, EU*
- International scientific organisations: *European Science Foundation, EUA*
- Ministries of Education, Science and Innovation
- National Research Councils and other key funding organisations:
- Leading scientific journals: *Nature, Science, Lancet*
- University Rectors' national and international organisations
- Leading Universities: *MIT, LERU – League of European Research Universities*
- Trade unions of university teachers and researchers
- *Student Unions*

GENDER IN HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULA

Dual developments, double strategy

Women's Studies and Gender Studies as an emerging discipline (BA, MA, Doctoral programmes, individual courses)

Gender approaches and modules integrated in **traditional disciplinary programmes** and **interdisciplinary** programmes

GENDER IN HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULA

- Large diversity in Europe and globally
- **Different developments** in different national contexts and over time
- Impact of state feminism (Nordic countries)
- Impact of feminist movements
- Anti-genderism and anti-feminism (Russia, Hungary etc.)

GENDER-SENSITIVE HIGHER EDUCATION PEDAGOGY

- Awareness of hidden curriculum and unconscious bias
- Gender dynamics in classroom (seating, group divisions etc.)
- Inclusion, interaction, participation
- Gender stereotypes concerning students
- Student evaluations of teachers and gender bias
- Harassment and bullying
- Language
- Integration of gender aspects in higher education pedagogy training

RESEARCH ON GENDER INEQUALITY IN ACADEMIA: FRAMEWORKS

Key focus on

- Individuals (mainly women)
- Academic organisations
- Knowledge

KEY FOCUS AREAS OF RESEARCH

Segregation: students,
academic staff

Careers: recruitment,
retention,
advancement

Power:
decision-making
gate-keeping
leadership

Climate & Culture:
belonging, wellbeing,
harassment, bullying

Knowledge: research,
curricula, pedagogy,
outreach

Policy: equal
treatment, gender
equality, diversity

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN ACADEMIA

- **Sexual harassment**
- from "problem with no name" and individual concern up to 1980s → a gender equality, work and studying environment issue in the 2000s

Specific characteristics of academia

- Male-dominated hierarchical structures
- Lots of young women (students) and older men in powerful positions in the same organisation (but also harassment between students)
- Long-term dependent relationships (Ph.D. supervision)
- Early career & researchers in precarious positions specifically vulnerable

UNISAFE – HORIZON2020 PROJECT ON SH&GBV

- **UniSAFE: making universities and research organisations safe from gender-based violence**
- **3 year** project: February 2021 – January 2024
- **9 partners**, multidisciplinary teams, coordinator ESF & Örebro University
- Mapping legislative and policy **contexts**
- Collecting quantitative and qualitative **evidence** on GBV
 - **Survey** in 46 RPOs in 15 European countries
 - **Case studies** on university responses and infrastructure in 15 European countries
- Producing **recommendations, toolbox and training** for RPOs
- H2020 **Empower stakeholders** across Europe to implement effective policies

UNISAFE'S DEFINITION OF 'GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE' THAT ENCOMPASSES MANY FORMS OF VIOLENCE, VIOLATIONS AND ABUSE

- Physical violence
- Sexual violence
- Psychological violence
- Economic violence
- Sexual harassment
- Gender harassment
- Online violence / cyberviolence / digital violence
- Technology facilitated violence
- Coercion and coercive control
- New forms of violence and harassment?



POLICY: MULTIPLE ARENAS TO ENGAGE WITH GE & DIVERSITY

- **Recruitment** (job profiles, advertising, assessment criteria, procedures)
- **Job descriptions** (research, teaching, administration)
- **Career advancement** (criteria, career support, career breaks, mentoring)
- **Collaborations** (research groups, research centres, networks, mobility)
- **Resource allocation** (strategic initiatives, awards, mobility support)
- **Work & studying environment** (well-being, non-discrimination, anti-harassment)
- **Work-life balance** (working time, distance work, parental leave, care leave)
- **Leadership** (leadership training, integration of GEDI in all leadership)
- **Gender dimension** in research content, curricula, research & education evaluation
- **Image** of the organisation (web portal, events, flyers, ambassadors, role models)

NORDIC COUNTRIES: TOP PERFORMERS IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

- High investment on **R&D (Research & Development)** as share of GDP: Sweden (3.39% in 2019 highest in Europe), Denmark, Finland, in global top-10
- Large share of **highly educated in working age population**; especially women
- **Global innovation index 2020**: Sweden 2nd, Denmark 6th, Finland 7th
- **Global competitiveness index 2019**: Sweden 8th, Denmark 10th, Finland 11th

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... AND OVERALL SOCIETAL GENDER EQUALITY

- **Global Gender Gap Report 2021 by World Economic Forum**
 - 1 Iceland, 2 Finland, 3 Norway, 4 New Zealand, 5 Sweden
- **Gender Equality Index by European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) 2021**
 - Sweden, Denmark, France, Finland

NORDIC COUNTRIES: **POLITICAL WILL** TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY IN SOCIETY, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

- Gender equality legislation and national machineries from the late 70s
- Generous societal provisions for **parenting**:
"best countries to be a mother" (Save the Children 2015)
- Sweden, Finland Norway top the Girls' opportunity index (Save the Children 2016)
- "Women in academia and research " early to the political agenda: late 70s – early 80s
- Ministry level committees and reports on women/gender in academia since the early 1980s (S, FI, No, DK), currently (No, Sw, FI)

... POLITICAL WILL

- Gender equality planning mandatory
- Sweden and Norway: Gender equality mentioned in the Higher Education legislation
- Sweden: Gender mainstreaming duty for public authorities and universities
- Sweden: Gender equality monitoring in ordinances of public research funding organisations

RESOURCES

- **EU gender and science reports and projects**
- EU She Figures Statistics (latest 2021) on gender and science
- **Science Europe gender activities**
<https://www.scienceeurope.org/policy/policy-areas/gender-diversity/>
- **ELSEVIER (2017) Gender in the global research landscape**
<https://www.elsevier.com/research-intelligence/campaigns/gender-17>
- **The Nordic region – a step closer to gender balance in research? Tema Nord 2013:544**
<http://www.norden.org/da/publikationer/publikationer/2013-544>

....RESOURCES

- League of European Research Universities (LERU) (2019) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at Universities <https://www.leru.org/publications/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-at-universities>
- League of European Research Universities (LERU) (2018) Implicit Bias in Academia – a Challenge to the meritocratic principle and what to do about it <https://www.leru.org/publications/implicit-bias-in-academia-a-challenge-to-the-meritocratic-principle-and-to-womens-careers-and-what-to-do-about-it>
- **Gendered innovations portal**, <https://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/>
- GenPort – European portal for research, policy and action on gender and science broadly defined, www.genderportal.eu
- Drew, Eileen, and Siobhán Canavan (eds.) (2020) *The Gender-sensitive University: A Contradiction in Terms?*. Taylor & Francis. (open access)

UNISAFE

- UniSAFE Horizon2020 project on gender-based violence in universities and higher education
- <https://unisafe-gbv.eu/>



• Thank you!

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