

Impact Story Introduction of chairs and positions reserved to women

<p>Impact Story</p> <p>Introduction of chairs and positions reserved to women</p>
<p>Intervention Definition</p> <p>Although the numbers vary from country to country, in average women are underrepresented in science, mathematics and computing as well as engineering, manufacturing and construction (European Commission 2015). Even though the share of women in science in general has increased over the past years, the leaky pipeline phenomenon is still present (European Commission 2012). Because of the leaky pipeline, women are even more underrepresented in academic decision-making. Therefore, the gender equality intervention "Introduction of chairs and positions reserved to women" aims directly at increasing the representation of women among higher positions, such as professors (APA-OTS 2008, Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung 2016). The intervention comprises the introduction of positions and chairs, which only women can occupy. This requires an analysis of fields, divisions and levels where women are underrepresented, special funding for these positions, implementation of appropriate recruitment and funding guidelines as well as monitoring of the adherence to these guidelines.</p> <p>The Laura Bassi Centres of Expertise (LBC) in Austria are an example for a funding instrument limited to women and selection procedures that underwent gender mainstreaming. The aim of the initiative is to establish excellence centres for applied sciences led by female researchers. The initiative that started in 2009 sought to provide greater visibility for excellent women to promote gender equality and to establish a modern research culture. A key aspect is the provision of long-term funding for research centres if led by female scientists and the identification of these scientists through gender-sensitive processes (Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH (FFG) 2018). LBC accompanies measures and supports by providing training programmes in human resources management.</p> <p>An example from Germany is the female professorship programme, which grants funding to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for appointments of women to tenured professorships. The programme was established because the share of female professors in the German science system did not correspond with the higher share of graduate women in almost all fields of science in Germany. A condition for receiving the funding is the submission of a gender equality plan. The goal of the programme is to increase the number of female professors by funding up to three professorships per HEI reserved for women over a period of five years maximum.</p>
<p>Intervention Definition Short</p> <p>The intervention "Introduction of chairs and positions reserved for women" aims at introducing and ultimately providing positions and chairs exclusively reserved for women in areas in which women are underrepresented. The identification of these areas has to be conducted as part of the intervention.</p>
<p>Objectives</p> <p>(1) Increase the number of women in R&I positions</p>
<p>Output</p> <p>The short-term output of "Introduction of chairs and positions reserved to women" aims to ensure that special chairs or positions are reserved solely for women. The output is indicated through checking if and how many of the corresponding chairs or positions were established. Further immediate outputs are gender-appropriate recruitment strategies and an adaptation of existing selections / evaluation procedures as well as the implementation of gender mainstreaming and human resources development with its corresponding activities. In addition to changes in human resources and recruitment, budget allocations may</p>

indicate accompanying activities to support the organisational change process towards more gender equality.

Accordingly, in the LBC case study the outputs include changes in selection and evaluation procedures to tackle gender bias and increase gender-sensitivity. The evaluation process at LBC includes not only the current performance of an applicant but also their potential. In general, the immediate output of the LBCs is the call for and allocation of LBC funds.

In the German female professorship programme, the professorships themselves are not reserved for women but the funding will only be granted when a woman is appointed as the professor. Therefore, the direct output is the financing provided, which is reserved for the professors. Additionally, more HEIs will have a specific gender equality plan because this is required to receive the funds.

Output Short

The goal of "Introduction of chairs and positions reserved to women" is to ensure introduction of positions and chairs, which only women can occupy.

Output indicators

- 1.2.1 Improved recruitment of talented women
- 2.3.2 Gender specific research funding programme in place
- 3.1.1 Implementation of leadership development programme
- 3.2.1 Availability of positions in the organisation
- 5.2.1 Share of RPOs with female recruitment and promotion policies

Outcome

The direct effect of the gender equality intervention "Introduction of chairs and positions reserved to women" is the effective staffing of those chairs and positions and thereby increasing the number of women in management / leadership positions. Furthermore, the intervention accompanied by gender mainstreaming recruitment procedures can lead to improved career opportunities. In general, role models and gender-sensitive recruitment are expected to increase the number of female researchers on all levels.

Furthermore, it has been shown by different studies that a higher proportion of women in teams contributes to a more cooperative working environment (e.g. GEDII 2018, Bear and Woolley 2011).

Through the specific funding, the female professorship programme leads to more women in professorships and therefore in decision-making positions at HEIs. With the implemented gender equality plans, more family-friendly structures will be established which reduces care-related career obstacles for women. Options for the career and personal development of young female scientists are introduced which ensures a new generation of women in decision-making positions at HEIs. The overall objective of the programme is to change the German science system towards integrating more gender equality. Part of this goal was already achieved by the gender equality plans. Through their development and assessment gender equality is now broadly accepted among HEIs.

Outcome Short

An effect expected from "Introduction of chairs and positions reserved to women" is a different composition of teams / faculties or departments because of introducing chairs and positions reserved for women and ultimately filling them with a woman who is eligible.

Outcome indicators

- 1.1.1 Increased number of women in academic and other RTDI positions
- 1.1.1 Relative probability between the ability of men and women reaching a top position
- 1.1.2 Increased number of women in decision-making positions

- 1.2.1 Improved recruitment of talented women
- 2.2.1 Appropriate respect/recognition for (academic/scientific/leadership) work
- 2.2.3 Overall work climate
- 2.3.1 Career opportunities
- 2.3.3 Improved support to advance research career
- 3.1.1 Increased confidence and ability of leadership roles

Impact

The measure's long-term impact aims at the overall equality of women and men in science and engineering. This impact is indicated through the representation of women at all levels of qualification (as students and as professionals) and a higher number of women in top academic positions (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung 2008). Staffing special positions with women increases the visibility of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and in decision-making positions. These role models promote the attraction and retention of young women in scientific positions (European Commission 2008, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada 2016).

The Laura Bassi Centres put a focus on the establishment of role models of gender equality and, thus, make female research work more visible. It also introduces a 'contemporary research culture' characterised by a professional science management, good work-life balance and attractive career models. Therefore, the programme's impact can be seen as fulfilled when the centres sustain the initial seven-year-long funding and other research organisations try to copy parts of the LBCs management and evaluation culture.

Furthermore, it is assumed that the rising participation of women in innovation processes will increase the systematic consideration of the female perspective and, thus, a higher user-orientation and more gender-sensitive innovations (Gansefort and Jahn 2016).

In order to increase the share of female professors, the female professorship programme altered the HEIs' recruitment processes by specifically approaching female scientists for professorships as well as by the raised awareness for a gender bias in the appointment procedures. Thereby, the representation of women throughout the whole science system will be improved. Since the necessary share of women at the professorial level are not yet reached in Germany, effects on science and education were not established.

Impact short

In the long term, "Introduction of chairs and positions reserved to women" aims at securing the representation of women at all levels of qualification as well as in top academic positions (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung 2008). Simultaneously, women will gain visibility in STEM and in decision-making positions and will therefore function as role models for young women (European Commission 2008).

Impact indicators short

- 1.1.1 Relative probability between the ability of men and women to reach a top position
- 1.1.2 Increase in leadership positions by women who participated in the programme
- 1.1.2 Percentage of women in [EC] advisory groups, expert groups, evaluation panels, individual experts, etc.
- 1.1.2 Proportion of women in leadership positions
- 3.1.1 Visibility of women at the university/organisation
- 3.1.1 Women with leadership positions
- 5.2.3 Knowledge about sex and gender is incorporated into engineering innovation processes

5.3.2 Research quality: A gender dimension/perspective in research and content, in research projects, patents, agreements is integrated

5.3.3 Contributions to strengthening the gender sensitive research are made

Policy Context

The case study on the Laura Bassi Centres of Expertise in Austria (LBC) allows deriving a number of relevant context factors: First, the Austrian national research and development system is dominated by the business enterprise sector, where the share of women is traditionally very low. Second, the national prioritisation of gender equality policy, which is deemed to stagnate regarding the Austrian case study.

Third, study choices generally differ a lot between men and women in higher education. This has a high impact on future proportions of men and women in the scientific field and therefore on the available pool of skilled workers. Related to this there are, fourth, persisting traditional gender roles and public family benefits. Those lead to a disproportionate share of women working part-time. The LBC case study also broaches this lack of human resources especially in STEM fields and limited career opportunities of women. In the economic field, there are positive aspects to be observed, too, like the regulation that bigger companies have to have at least 30% women in their supervisory boards.

Regarding the context of the female professorship programme in Germany, gender equality policies are generally well developed. However, they focus too much on the professional equality of women and neglect the causes for gender inequality in the private sphere. Although there have been some changes in supporting a work-life balance, social and fiscal policies still reinforce the traditional male breadwinner model. Men and women with high socio-economic resources have gained options to reconcile care work and paid work, however, this is not the case for lower-income families. Therefore, gender equality was only improved among families with higher incomes (Menke 2017). Furthermore, especially in the STEM fields, female students are underrepresented which leads to the overall low share of female scientists in those fields. The financial organisation of the programme itself can also hinder its success; since 50% of the funding is provided by the respective federal state and the financial capacity of the federal states in Germany vary significantly.

Organisational Context

The case study on the Compliance Centers for Excellent Technologies (COMET) states that a decline of interest in gender equality by the Austrian companies after the economic crisis can be observed. In periods of economic recession, companies appear to concentrate on their technological core business, thus, reducing investments into human resources measures. This retarding effect is to some degree equalised by shortages on the Austrian labour market that motivate companies to put gender equality on their agenda and to become an attractive employer. Another aspect regarding the organisational context is that the vertically segregated labour market as well as organisational structures dominated by men discourage women to enter those male dominated fields. In order to approach this problem various gender equality measures do exist. If they use reserved quotas for women, they often face a lot of resistance because it is assumed that women would be judged according to their sex and not their scientific capabilities or intellectual value (European Commission 2008) which also applies to chairs and positions reserved to women. Therefore, discrimination against women occupying these positions and perceived discrimination against men might rise. To avoid these effects the senior management needs to provide legitimacy to such measures by demonstrating its commitment to it (EIGE 2016, Cacace et al. 2015). Success also relates to programme justification. Generally speaking, affirmative action justifications which reactivate group identities, are more vulnerable to backlash than diversity management justifications which aim at creating a competitive advantage for the organisation as a whole (Kidder et al. 2004).

The Laura Bassi Centres combine the pursuit for gender equality with measures to implement good research management and an employee-oriented organisational culture. The coupling of these two aspects enhances the inner-organisational legitimacy of the programme. So to say, women may not be the leaders per se, but the programme enables them to be. Accompanying evaluations provide evidence for the better performance of the women leaders or allow counteracting within time – of course, setting at the same time a high pressure on the leaders to fulfil the high performance and role model expectations.

The HEIs in Germany are highly autonomous; therefore, their commitment to gender equality cannot be forced by legally binding measures. Positive incentives, like the female professorship programme, must be sufficient. Furthermore, the HEIs' structure with faculties and the HEI management can be a barrier for gender equality because several organisational levels have to be targeted in order to achieve a sustainable change. Nevertheless, a criterion for the programme's acceptance and success is that the women who are appointed as professors still compete through the regular appointment process. This also protects the female professors from any doubts concerning their suitability for the position. However, in the Netherlands a similar programme was introduced and the deans of some universities still voiced concerns that the programme would lead to a stigmatisation of the appointed women (Erasmusmagazine 2018).

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