

Gender equity in universities and other organizations

Strategies for change and transformation

Hi!

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Goals for today

Gender equity - strategies for change in organizations

1. Understand why gender inequality still exists in organizations
2. Learn about the most important strategies and measures to address gender inequality
3. Practice: Create your own strategy

Agenda

Gender equity - strategies for change in organizations

09:45 Input

10:15 Case study - HNEE

10:25 Break

10:40 Group work: Change Agents for Gender Equity

11:30 Break

11:45 Group work: Presentations

12:15 Q&A

12:30 Lunch time

Input

Key terms and concepts

Input

Gender

Refers to the socially constructed roles, expressions and identities of women, men and gender diverse people.

Sex

Refers to a set of biological attributes including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels, etc.

Binarity

A binary gender system is based on only two genders, namely male and female.

Equity

By equality we mean that everyone has the same rights. Equity includes actual structures and circumstances.

Key terms and concepts

Input

Sexism

The structural discrimination based on gender.

Gender bias

Thoughts (and actions) that are based on gender-related stereotypes and prejudices.

Inter-sectionality

A concept that describes the overlapping and simultaneity of different categories of discrimination.

Andro-centrism

In an androcentric view, the man/the male perspective is at the center and is seen as the norm.

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

Quiz

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

What is the proportion of women in the German Bundestag?

Quiz

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

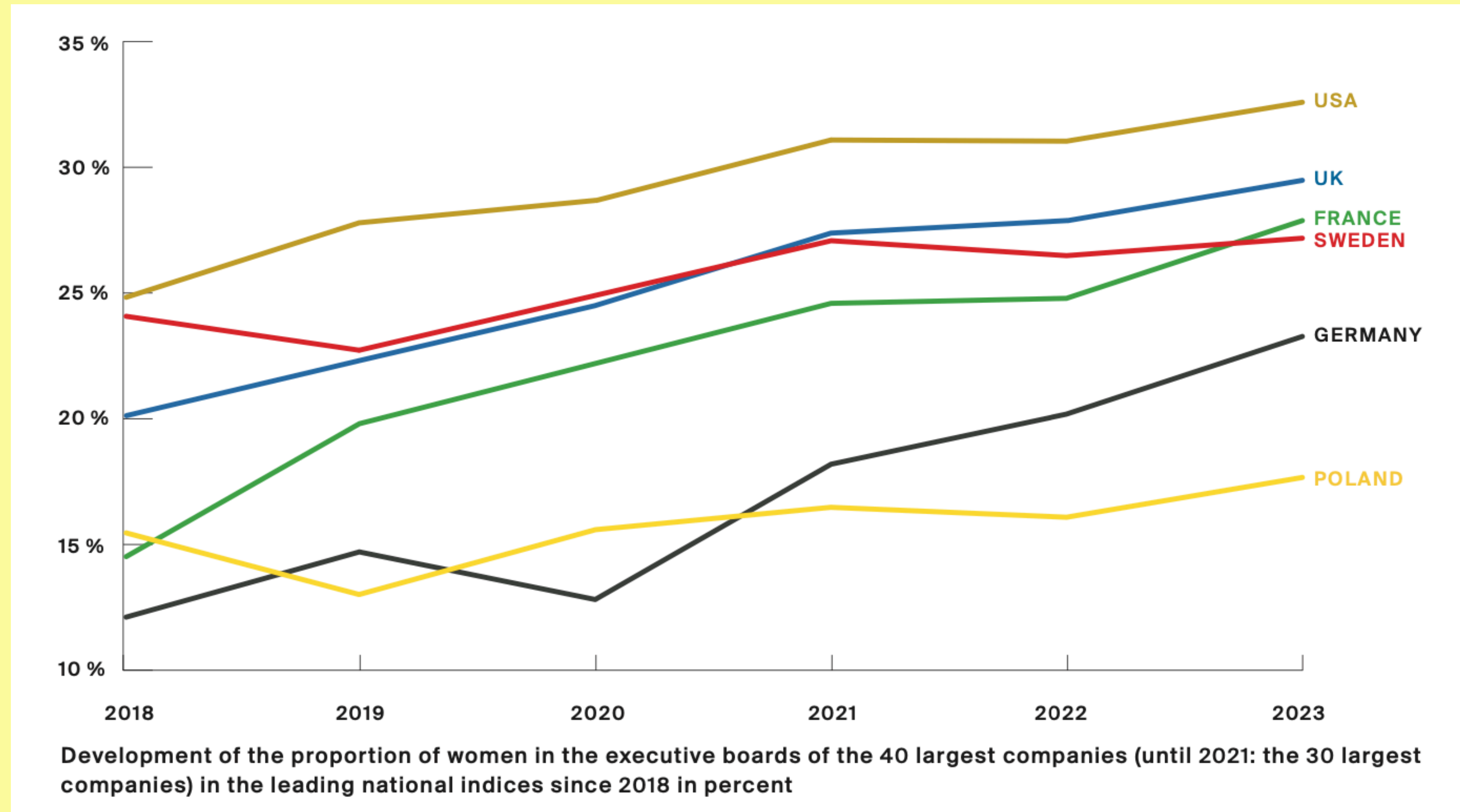
What is the proportion of women in the German Bundestag?

32,4 %

(Statistisches Bundesamt, 2025 a)

Unequal Representation

Challenges for gender equity in organizations



(AllBright Stiftung, 2023)

Unequal Representation

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

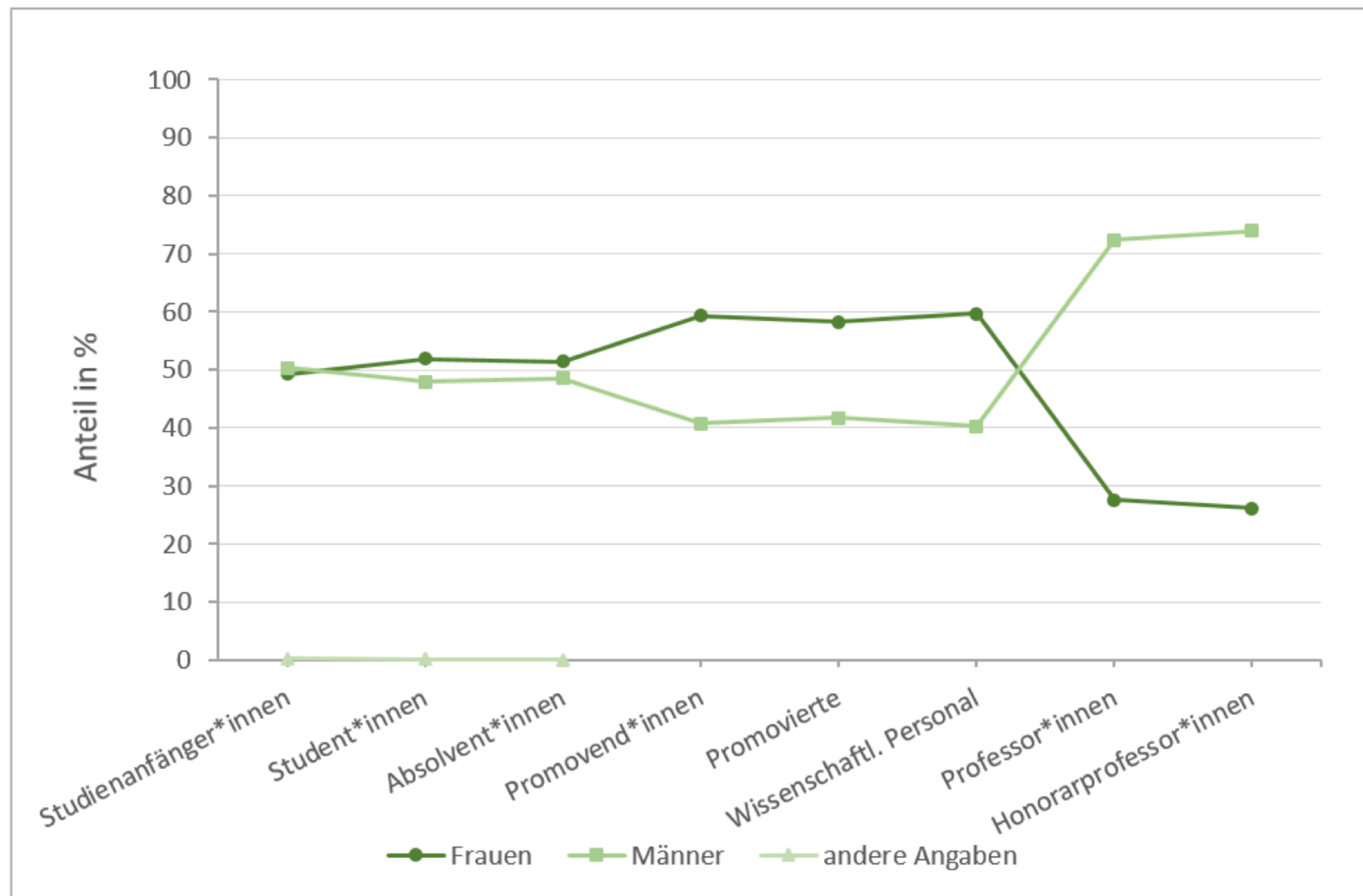


Abbildung 1: Repräsentanz in den Karrierestufen. Daten zu Studierenden vom WiSe 2022/23, zum Personal von 03/2023, zu Promovierenden und Promovierten von 06/2023.

(Wiebrock & Herold, 2023)

Quiz

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

How high was the Gender Pay Gap in Germany in 2024?

Quiz

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

How high was the Gender Pay Gap in Germany in 2024?

16 %

(Statistisches Bundesamt, 2025 b)

Quiz

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

Since professors in Germany get paid according to tariff contracts there is no Gender Pay Gap in this profession. Right or wrong?

Quiz

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

Since professors in Germany get paid according to tariff contracts there is no Gender Pay Gap in this profession. Right or wrong?

Wrong.

(Detmer, 2023)

Study on Pay Gaps in the US

Top Executive Compensation in American Environmental Nonprofits

- National study of 2,703 environmental nonprofits (2018–2020)
- Examines gender and racial/ethnic pay disparities among top executives

Key Findings:

- Gender Pay Gap: Women earned 75.4% of men's median salary (\$88,568.50 vs. \$117,468)
- Racial/Ethnic Pay Gap: CEOs of color earned 73.4%–97.6% of White CEO salaries
 - White: \$102,801 | Asian: 97.6% | Black: 96% | Latinx: 80.8% | Native American: 73.4%
- Representation:
 - Men: 51.2% | Women: 48.8%
 - White CEOs: 92% | CEOs of Color: 8%

Quiz

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

How high was the Gender Care Gap in Germany in 2022?

Quiz

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

How high was the Gender Care Gap in Germany in 2022?

44,3%

(Statistisches Bundesamt, 2024)

Gender Bias

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

1. Stereotypical assignments of characteristics
2. Double standards
3. Considering men and their perspective as the norm

Gender-based violence

Challenges for gender equity in organizations

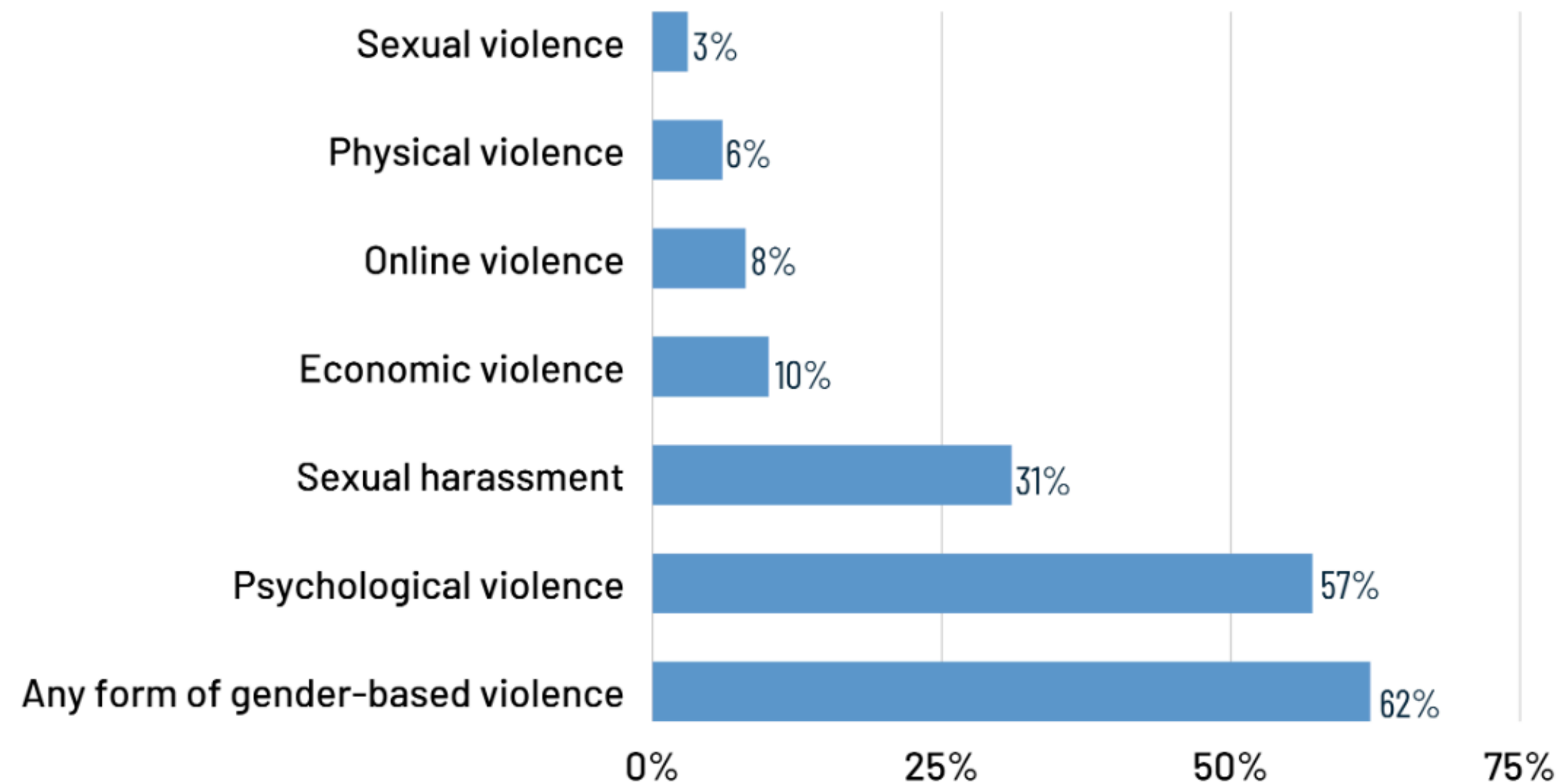
- Sexual harassment and violence, psychological violence, digital violence, physical violence, economic violence
- Based on imbalance of power -> power abuse

Gender-based violence

UniSAFE Survey in Europe



- Over 42.000 responses
- In 15 European countries



Prevalence of any form of gender-based violence and by form of gender-based violence

Source of data: Lipinsky, Anke; Schredl, Claudia; Baumann, Horst; Humbert, Anne Laure; Tanwar, Jagriti; Bondestam, Fredrik; Freund, Frederike; Lomazzi, Vera (2022). UniSAFE Survey – Gender-based violence and institutional responses. GESIS – Leibniz Institut für Sozialwissenschaften. Data file Version 1.0.0, <https://doi.org/10.7802/2475>

Gender-based violence

UniSAFE Survey in Europe



UniSAFE
ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
IN RESEARCH AND ACADEMIA - TOOLKIT

Minoritised groups

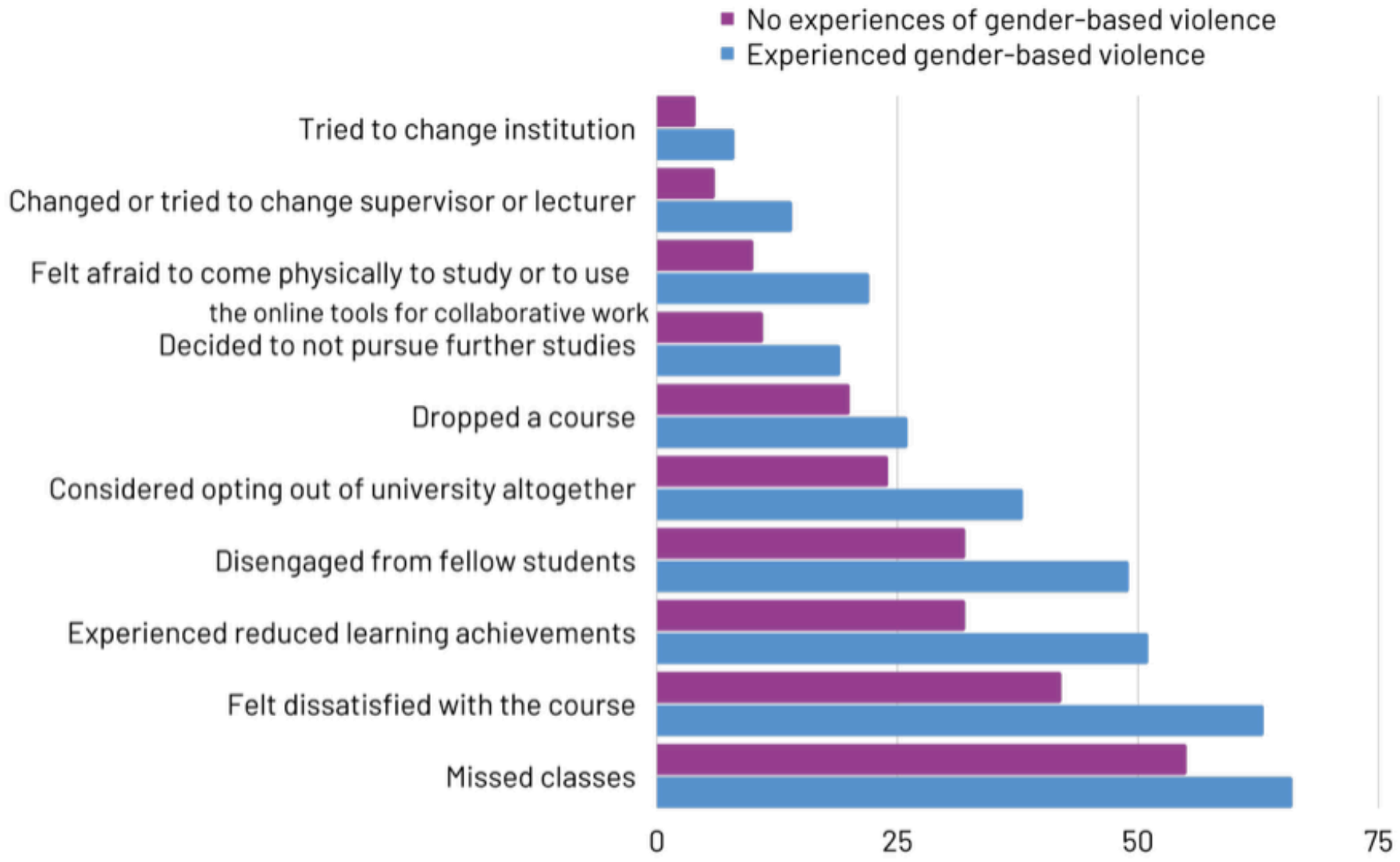
Respondents who identify as LGBTQ+* (68%), who reported a disability or chronic illness (72%), and those belonging to an ethnic minority group (69%) **were more likely to have experienced at least one incident of gender-based violence**, compared to those who do not identify with these characteristics.

Gender-based violence

UniSAFE Survey in Europe



Study-related consequences for students since they started working at their institution, by whether or not they experienced gender-based violence



Source of data: Lipinsky, Anke; Schredl, Claudia; Baumann, Horst; Humbert, Anne Laure; Tanwar, Jagriti; Bondestam, Fredrik; Freund, Frederike; Lomazzi, Vera (2022). UniSAFE Survey - Gender-based violence and institutional responses. GESIS - Leibniz Institut für Sozialwissenschaften. Datenfile Version 1.0.0, <https://doi.org/10.7802/2475>

Strategies

Input

- Female Empowerment
- Gender Mainstreaming
- Diversity Management
- Anti-discrimination

Female Empowerment

Strategies

- Strategy: Promotion of women to counteract gender inequalities
- Measures: Mentoring programs, training, quotas
- Goal: Compensate for disadvantages and lost opportunities
- Challenges: Reinforces a binary gender view and shifts responsibility to women

(Stiegler, 2005)

Gender Mainstreaming

Strategies

- Strategy: Changing structures to integrate gender equity as a cross-sectional task
- Focus on organizational framework, incorporating gender issues in all decision making processes
- Measures: Gender consulting, capacity building
- Challenges: High aspirations, difficult to fully implement

(Stiegler, 2005), (Blome et al., 2013)

Diversity Management

Strategies

- Highlights diversity as a value and opportunity
- Common in the private sector, now adopted in universities
- Seven diversity dimensions in Germany: Gender, ability and disability, sexual orientation, social background, nationality, race, religion/worldview, and age
- Measures: Corporate values, diversity manager, campaigns, trainings
- Challenges: hardly reflects on the cultural and historical causes for the different/ diverse perspectives

Anti-discrimination

Strategies

- Strategy: address and counteract multiple forms of discrimination
- Legal basis: General Equal Treatment Act (AGG, 2006) in Germany
- Goal: create an environment where discrimination can be addressed openly
- Measures: complaints office, individual consulting, trainings, campaigns
- Challenges: taboo topic, defensive reactions, consequences from complaints difficult to implement

Strategies

Summary

- Female Empowerment: Targeted support
- Gender Mainstreaming: Structural change
- Diversity Management: Valuing differences
- Anti-discrimination: Addressing discrimination

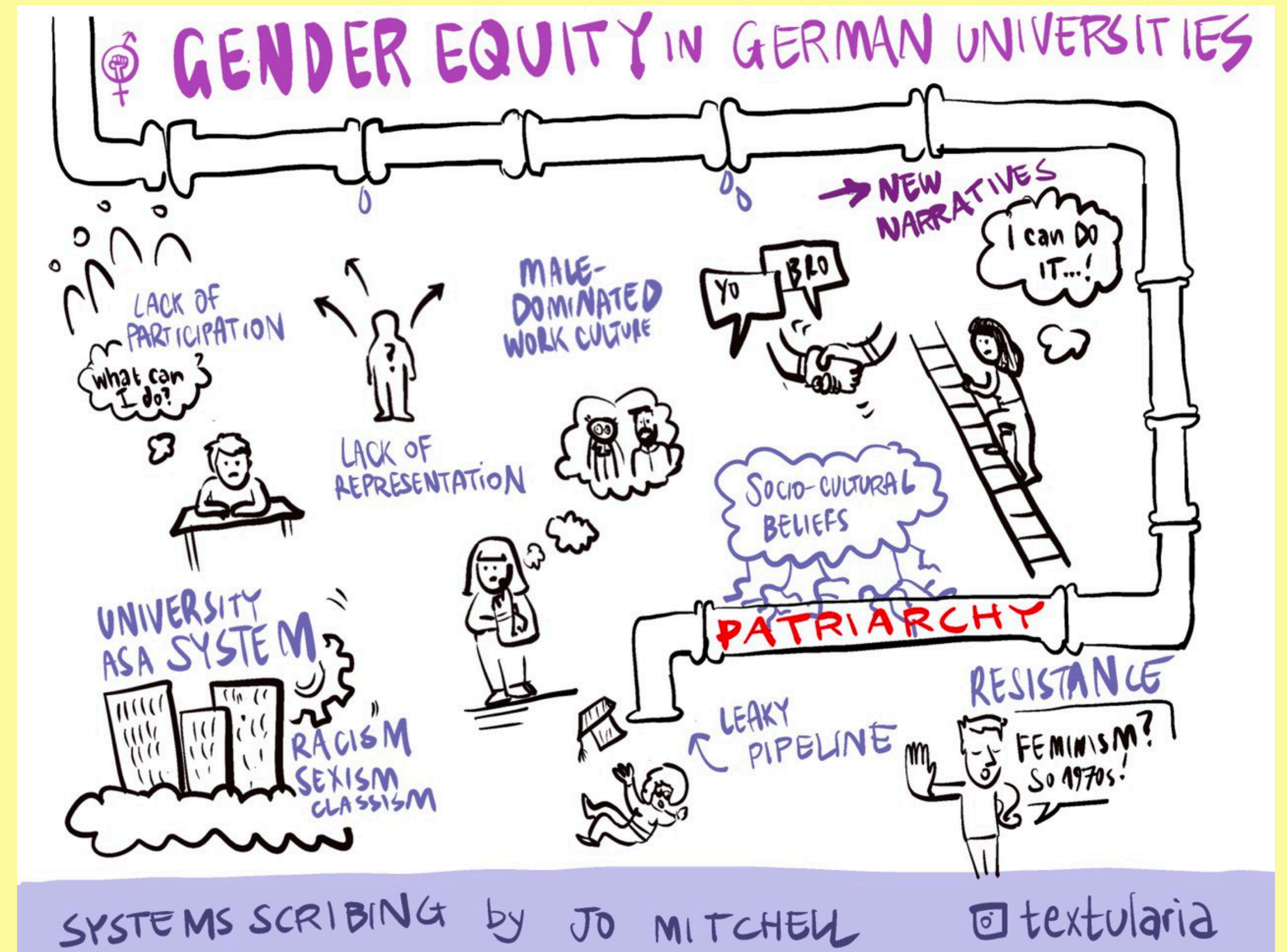
Case study

Master thesis

HNEE as a case study

Transforming work culture - how can we achieve a more gender equitable working environment in German universities?

Exploring work culture of universities with a focus on sustainability with a systems thinking approach



„At the Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development, sustainability is lived and jointly shaped in teaching, research, transfer, and administration. The university develops application-oriented solutions for a sustainable link between society and the environment“

The mission statement of HNEE (2023)

Research Questions

Master thesis

1. Situation analysis

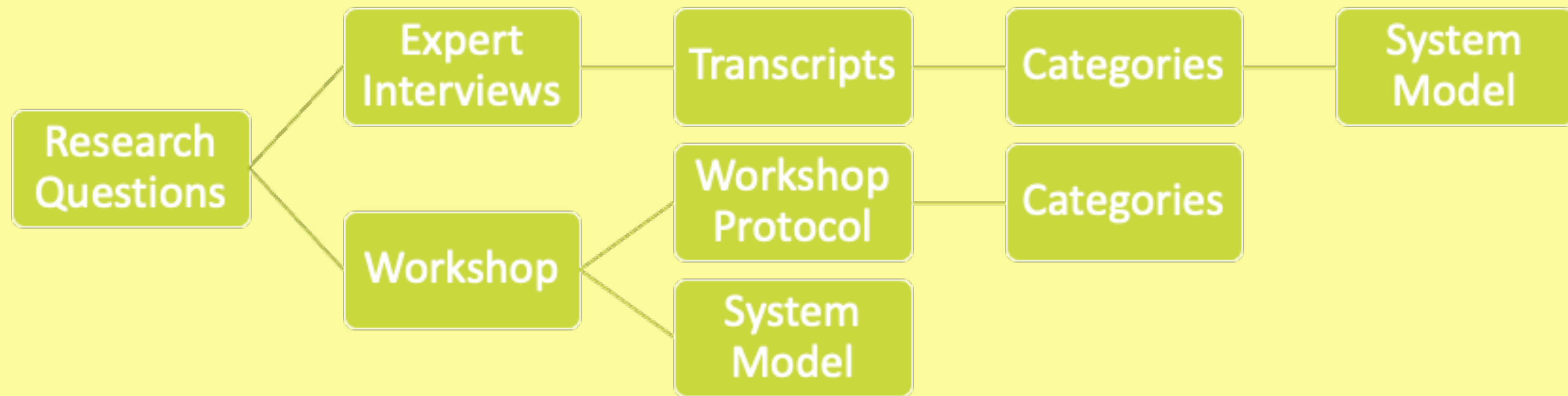
- a. How is gender equity managed at German universities with a focus on sustainability?
- b. Is gender equity seen as part of the concept of sustainability?

2. What are key hurdles preventing universities from establishing better gender equity?

3. What measures are needed to establish gender equity in German universities with a focus on sustainability?

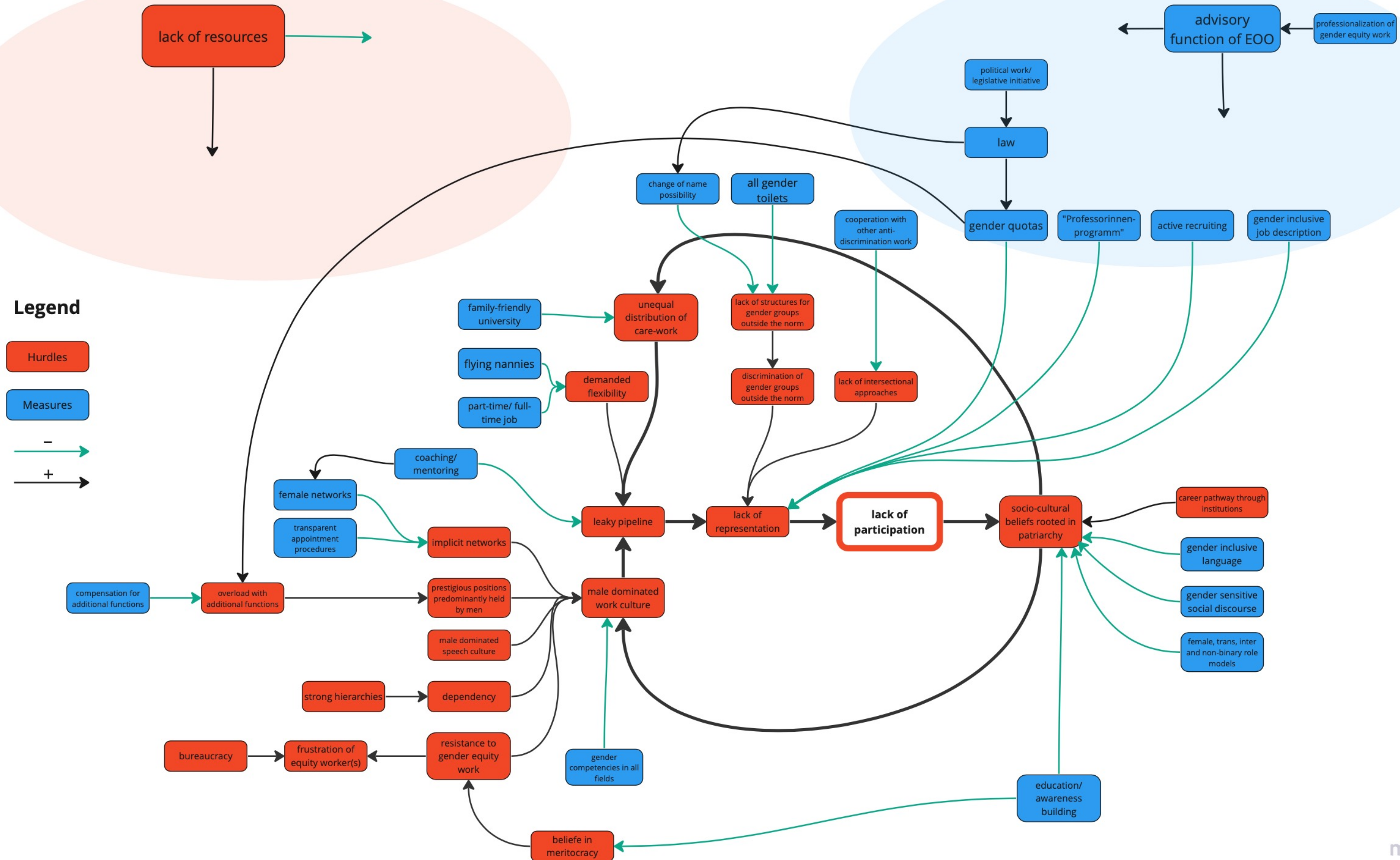
Process of the research

Master thesis



“In this respect, we cannot think about sustainability as a principle of justice if we do not think about gender equity as well.” - I4

Gender equity in German universities



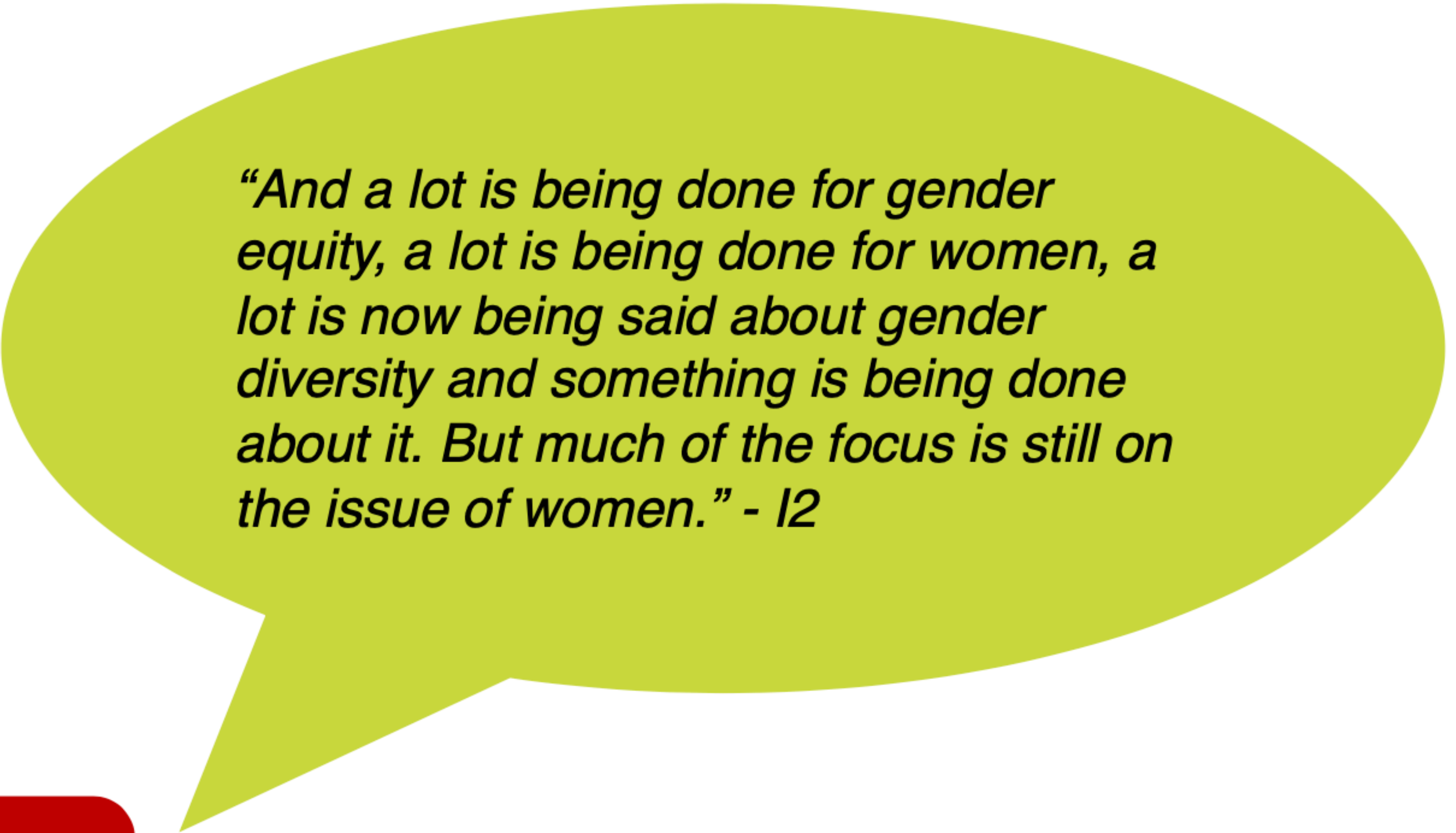
Lack of resources

“So, I think from an economic point of view it needs much, much more money.” - I1

“Well, if I could dream, what it would really need would be more resources, of course. More staff, more financial resources.” - I2

“(...) that's really..., well sometimes it seems like in a textbook to me, so that some women really say I have introduced something that somehow didn't find any consideration, then they continued talking for half an hour and then a male colleague introduced the same thing and then all of a sudden they had found the solution.” - I2

Male dominated
speech culture



“And a lot is being done for gender equity, a lot is being done for women, a lot is now being said about gender diversity and something is being done about it. But much of the focus is still on the issue of women.” - I2

Lack of structures for
gender minorities

“I think that a Muslim woman with hijab, the higher she rises, she is much, much more exposed to discrimination. That is simply not considered at all.” - I1

Lack of intersectional
approaches

Workshop at HNEE

Key results

- Decision-making power concentrated on men at HNEE combined with the clear guiding principle of sustainability is not compatible
- Lacking problem awareness
- Lack of resources

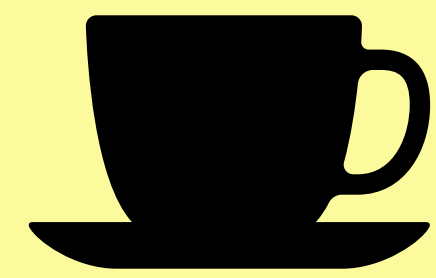


Workshop at HNEE

Desired measures

- Awareness building
- Gender communication strategy
- Gender sensitive review of bachelors and masters content/curricula





Break

Group work: Change Agents for Gender Equity



Group work

Case studies

- 3 groups
- 50 min
- Think of HNEE as a case study
 - 1. Step: Analysis of the problem (20 min)
 - 2. Step: Plan a strategy with a set of measures (20 min)
 - 3. Step: Prepare your presentation (with optional role play) (10 min)



Group work

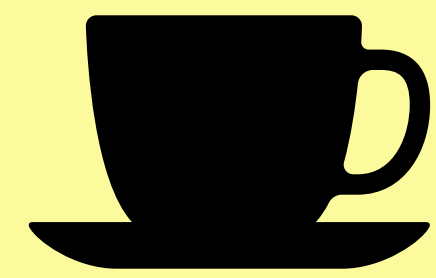
Case studies

- Form three groups working on different goals:
 1. Achieving parity in professors appointments
 2. Creating an inclusive work and study environment for trans*, inter* and non-binary people
 3. Implementing gender-sensitive curricula

Examples

Gender Equality Plan, Diversity Strategy

- **Gender Equality Plan of HNEE 2023 - 2026:** https://www.hnee.de/fileadmin/global-content/themen/hochschule/strategiepapiere/hnee/Gleichstellungskonzept-HNEE_2023-2026.pdf
- **Gender Equality Plan of the University of Potsdam 2023:** [https://www.uni-potsdam.de/fileadmin/projects/gleichstellung/Dokumente/Gender Equality Plan 2022 english.pdf](https://www.uni-potsdam.de/fileadmin/projects/gleichstellung/Dokumente/Gender_Equality_Plan_2022_english.pdf)
- **Diversity Strategy of the University of Potsdam:** [https://www.uni-potsdam.de/fileadmin/projects/gleichstellung/Bilder/Aktuelles/2024/KfC Diversity-Strategy WEB.pdf](https://www.uni-potsdam.de/fileadmin/projects/gleichstellung/Bilder/Aktuelles/2024/KfC_Diversity-Strategy_WEB.pdf)



Break

Presentation of the Case Studies

Any Questions?

Thank you!

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