

## Introduction

The Gender Action Plan 2013–2016 has been developed as part of the fourth so called **Federal Equal Opportunities Programme** («Bundesprogramm Chancengleichheit»), a nationwide project devoted to securing gender equality and equal opportunities at Swiss Universities. After a thorough assessment of the current situation of the University of Bern regarding gender equality, strengths and weaknesses as well as the percentage of women among students and staff over the timespan of 11 years (2000–2011), **7 fields of action** were determined wherein **50 different goals and measures** were defined. For a successful realisation of said goals and measures the Gender Action Plan further specifies financial aspects, quality management, and accountability. The overarching objective of the plan is the increase of female professors at the University of Bern to 25%.

## Evaluation

An external analysis by the IZFG (Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies at the University of Bern) has been carried out in order to evaluate the Gender Action Plan 2013–2016. These are some of the main results:

- The Gender Action Plan has been successfully embedded in the university's strategic plans and the faculties have established their specific Gender Action Plans for the implementation of faculty specific measures.
- The percentage of female assistant professors working at the University of Bern has significantly increased from 30.40% in 2012 to 38.50% in 2015.
- The Office for Gender Equality has taken part in 32 recruitment procedures. An upward trend can be seen in the employment of both female junior professors and female full professors.
- The varied coachings, mentoring programmes, dual career counsellings as well as courses the Office for Gender Equality offers have been popular throughout. An evaluation regarding mentoring programmes found that 75% of former mentees remain in the scientific field and would recommend taking part in a mentoring programme (Büro für arbeits- und sozialpolitische Studien, 2013).
- The offers regarding reconcilability such as the breastfeeding room and the child/parent room are appreciated and frequently used. Furthermore, the new policies concerning job-sharing as well as DCC-counselling (Dual Career Couples) enjoy growing popularity.
- The University of Bern has taken part in the annual national „Zukunftstag“ in order to combat gender stereotypes influencing the choice of studies. Over the timespan of 2008–2014, the percentage of women studying one or more MINT discipline has increased.

## 7 Main Fields of Action

- Field of Action No. **1**: Defining and institutionalising gender equality as well as quality assurance
- Field of Action No. **2**: Equal opportunity employment
- Field of Action No. **3**: Targeted promotion of female junior researchers
- Field of Action No. **4**: Reconcilability of studies, work, and care engagements
- Field of Action No. **5**: Horizontal segregation, mathematics, computer science, science & technology (MINT)
- Field of Action No. **6**: Combating discrimination
- Field of Action No. **7**: Promoting visibility of the subject of gender equality

- The 25% mark regarding the employment of female professors has not yet been reached; from 2012–2016 the percentage of female professors has gone up from 16.50% to 20.50%.
- Although gender equality is embedded within all faculties and centres, the extent of commitment to gender equality varies strongly.
- Even though the university offers support in various forms to female postdocs and junior researchers, the leaky pipeline is still very much an issue. This is mostly due to the structural conditions which remain largely unchanged (short contracts, lacking career perspectives, etc.).
- In some faculties, the promotion of reconcilability of studies, work and care engagements is not yet sufficient.
- The development of a guideline for gender-sensitive language could not be realized yet, but will be published in the near future.

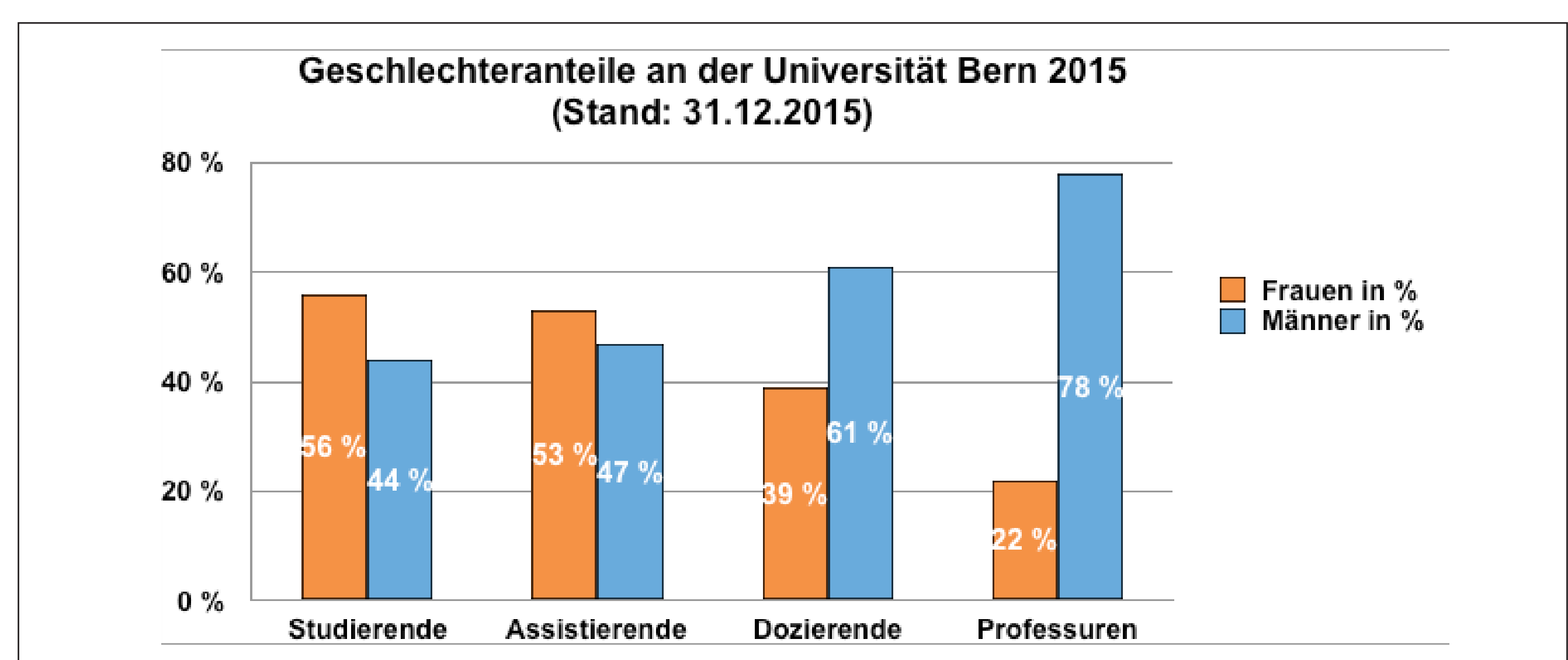


Figure 1: Percentage of men and women, University of Bern, December 31, 2015

## Prospects Gender Action Plan 2017–2020

- The main goal will be to raise the percentage of female full professors up to 25% (presently 20%).
- A new career programme for female postdocs called COMET will be launched.
- Regarding reconcilability, care aspects need to be made more present, especially to superiors.
- Cultivating more awareness regarding MINT subjects, gender-sensitive language, equal pay, and sexual harassment.
- Gender equality needs to be made more visible; the target audience lacks basic knowledge of the subject.
- Equal opportunity employment needs to be secured for all university staff, not just the professors.

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UNIVERSITÄT  
BERN

## Project Team AfG

Claudia Willen, Co-Leiterin | Lilian Fankhauser, Co-Leiterin | Sabine Höfler, wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin | Karin Beyeler, wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin | Ursina Anderegg, wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin | Silvia Schneider, Sekretariatsleitung

## Website

www.gleichstellung.ch

## References

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