

TU Darmstadt Gender Data Report



Brief overview of key findings

Gender equality is a major element of TU Darmstadt's development strategy, which also means that systematic controlling in this regard is indispensable. The Women Professors' Programme II (the federal and state-level programme to increase the number of women professors and promote gender equality), which was acquired by the Gender Equality Office, made it possible to institute a gender controlling programme that is assigned to the University Strategy Unit in Directorate I. In close cooperation with the gender controlling activities conducted by the Gender Equality Office, the first gender data report was drawn up during the first half of 2018. It provides insight into key metrics of gender equality at TU Darmstadt and reflects quantitative gender ratios based on the figures currently available. In the future, the gender data report will appear at regular intervals, highlighting a different focus topic each year. It will serve as a basis for evaluating gender relations in the various sectors of TU Darmstadt and for initiating a conversation about possible options for action.

The following is a summary of the key findings in the 2018 gender data report. The full version is only intended for internal use within TU Darmstadt. If you are not a member of TU Darmstadt, but would be interested in more detailed results of the gender data report, please contact the relevant staff in Directorate I at stratcontrol@pvw.tu-darmstadt.de.

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Brief overview of the Gender Data Report 2018

Introduction

From a long-term perspective, women's representation at TU Darmstadt has increased across all qualification levels and career stages. Short-term fluctuations and trend reversals at overall university level have mostly been due either to external factors (such as the end of military conscription) or to changes in the relative sizes of individual departments, where there are great differences in the percentage of women.

It is difficult to put these overall figures into perspective by comparing them to other universities of technology because the range of subjects as well as relative sizes of individual subjects can vary significantly between universities. Therefore, our gender data report also includes a comparison of certain selected engineering subjects to the averages in the alliance of TU9 universities. It reveals that the percentages of women at TU Darmstadt deviate only slightly from TU9 averages for the career levels start of studies, graduation, doctorate, and professorship.

Students and percentage of women

The number of students at TU Darmstadt has increased significantly, in particular since the 1970s. Until 1991, the women's ratio grew in proportion to the overall increase in student numbers. From the 1950s until the turn of the new millennium, the women's ratio grew from approx. three per cent to approx. 30 per cent. It has since remained relatively stable with minor fluctuations.

In terms of the evolution of first-year student numbers, fluctuations over the past 40 years have been more significant. If a new cohort of first-year engineering students is small, the women's ratio at TU Darmstadt overall tends to increase at the beginning of the term, whereas a strong new engineering cohort will lower the percentage of women university-wide. Over time, however, we have witnessed an overall increase in the percentage of female students. Currently, the share of women amongst first-year students at TU Darmstadt is about 30 per cent.

Fluctuations in first-year student numbers eventually also translate into corresponding fluctuations in graduation figures further down the line. Over the 25-year-period under consideration, women's ratios increased and have now reached just under 30 per cent, with significant differences between the various subjects.

PhDs and percentage of women

The percentage of women completing PhDs has almost tripled, from about ten per cent in 1994 to about 28 per cent in 2011. Since then, these figures have dropped slightly. In 2016, 23 per cent of doctorates were completed by women. Once again, developments vary widely between the subject areas. The departments of physics, chemistry, material science and geosciences as well as mechanical engineering, for instance, doubled their percentage of women's PhDs in the period 2010-2016 compared to the period 1994-2001.

Academic staff and percentage of women

The proportion of women on the academic staff has increased slightly in the last few years and is currently about 23 per cent. In two departments (social studies and history as well as the humanities), women account for more than 50 per cent of the academic staff.

Administrative and technical staff and percentage of women

In this status group, the percentage of women varies widely between the two employment categories of technical and non-technical staff. In the category of non-technical staff, the percentage of women tends to be very high. The women's ratio across the entire status group is currently 57 per cent.

Professorships and percentage of women

The proportion of female professors has grown continuously since the 1990s (3%), with significant increases in the early 2010s (from 10% to 13%) as well as in the past two or three years. Currently, TU Darmstadt employs 56 female professors (including junior professors), equating to an overall share of 18 per cent. The proportion of women professors varies significantly depending on the department. The Department of Architecture is the only department at TU Darmstadt that enjoys gender parity amongst its professors, making it a nationwide model.

Appointment procedures

In 2017, the proportion of women amongst new appointments was 25 per cent, which is lower than the previous year and lower than the average of the last six years. Between 2012 and 2017, about 19 per cent of applications in appointment procedures at TU Darmstadt involved female applicants. The percentage of women who were invited to interview was greater than the percentage of women amongst all applications received: an average of 25 per cent over the period under discussion. Between 2012 and 2017, *ad personam* procedures were conducted for 25 professorships, amongst them nine procedures involving women.

Committees

In 2017, the proportion of women amongst Executive Board members reached one third for the first time. The percentage of women on the University Council has currently risen to 60 per cent.

Leadership roles

The percentages of women on Departmental Councils for students and professors remain at a relatively constant average of 42 per cent and 17 per cent respectively. Amongst scientific and administrative-technical staff, the women's ratio has been subject to greater fluctuations over time and is currently 34 per cent and 74 per cent respectively.

Focus topic

This year, the gender data report focused on what is called the 'leaky pipeline', a term describing the decline in the percentage of women as they rise through various qualification levels and career steps. Overall, the leaky pipeline effect is evident in TU-wide figures for the qualification levels of first year, graduate and postgraduate, albeit with variations over time.

The various departments have, however, evolved differently. For instance, the disciplines of mechanical engineering as well as electrical engineering and IT have actually witnessed a 'reverse' leaky pipeline effect for the career stages of first year, graduate and postgraduate – in other words, the percentage of women increases as students rise through the levels. Beyond the postdoc level, however, this trend tends to go into reverse again.

Conclusion

The results of the 2018 gender data report show that from a long term perspective, TU Darmstadt's percentages of women have increased at all qualification levels and career steps. However, women remain underrepresented in many areas and status groups at the university. Especially in terms of appointments and postdoctoral studies, but also at other levels, continued gender equality efforts are required to further promote gender equality at TU Darmstadt. The gender data report can serve as a basis for differentiated analyses at departmental level and to identify priority action areas.

The next gender data report will focus on a new topic and is scheduled to appear in 2019.