

TU Darmstadt Gender Data Report 2019



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Brief overview of key findings

Gender equality is an important matter at TU Darmstadt and is firmly embedded in the university's strategy. In order to assess the relevant developments and measures as well as be able to plan, it is necessary to conduct a systematic analysis at regular intervals. Consequently, every year, Gender Controlling, which is part of Directorate 1, collaborates closely with the team in the Gender Equality Office to produce a Gender Data Report, unveiling important key figures on gender equality at TU Darmstadt. Tables accompanied by graphic evaluations and interpretations provide easily accessible answers to questions about women's representation in various status groups. The Gender Data Report considers developments at certain points over extended periods of time and also provides figures for the TU9 universities to help rate the results.

This brief overview summarises the core findings of the 2019 Gender Data Report. The full version of the Gender Data Report is only intended for internal use within TU Darmstadt. If you are not a member of TU Darmstadt but would be interested in the more detailed results of the report, please contact the relevant staff in Directorate I at stratcontrol@pvw.tu-darmstadt.de.

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Brief overview of the core findings in the 2019 Gender Data Report

Introduction

Taking a long-term perspective, women's representation at all qualification levels and career stages at TU Darmstadt has increased in recent decades. This does not, however, exclude the possibility of short-term fluctuations and temporary trend reversals in women's representation which can often be explained by changes in the relative sizes of individual departments with differing percentages of women.

Students and women's representation

The number of students at TU Darmstadt increased significantly between 1970 and 2015. Until 1991, women's representation grew more or less in proportion to the continuing increase in student numbers. After 1991, there were fluctuations in student numbers. Initially, women's representation continued to grow until it stagnated at just under 30 percent in 2003. In the winter semester 2018/2019, a peak of 31 percent was reached.

In terms of the development of first-year student numbers, the fluctuations were more pronounced than amongst students in general. In recent decades, women's representation amongst first-year students ranged from 20 percent to 30 percent. In 2018, a new peak was reached at 32 percent.

Fluctuations in first-year student numbers eventually also translate into corresponding fluctuations in graduation figures further down the line. In the last 20 years, women's representation has ranged from 20 percent to 30 percent with a slight upward trend whereby significant differences exist between subjects. In the graduate cohort for which the most recent data are available (2017), the figure for women graduating from TU Darmstadt was 28 percent.

Doctorates and women's representation

The percentage of women completing doctorates between 1992 (approx. 10%) and 2011 (approx. 28%) almost tripled. Subsequently, the figures dropped slightly with 26 percent of doctorates being completed by women in 2017. Once again, developments vary from subject to subject although most departments report a significant increase in the proportion of women completing doctorates in the period 2010-2017 in comparison with the period 1994-2001.

Academic staff and women's representation

Women's representation on the academic staff has hardly changed in the last decade and is currently 23 percent. Depending on department, however, women's representation ranges from under 15 percent (mechanical and electrical engineering as well as information technology) to over 60 percent (humanities). With regard to the form of financing, the percentage of female academic staff in positions funded by the federal state at TU Darmstadt is somewhat higher than that of those employed in positions based on third-party funding.

Administrative/technical staff and women's representation

As early as 2010, parity had been reached between women and men in administrative and technical positions. Since then, women's representation has increased to 58 percent, at present. However, this status group comprises two groups of employees with very different proportions of female staff: at 89 percent, women's representation on the non-technical staff is significantly higher than the 28 percent of women on the technical staff.

Professors and women's representation

Accounting for just three percent in the 1990s, the proportion of women professors has increased continually since then. Growth was particularly pronounced at the beginning of the second decade of this century (from 10% to 13%) as well as in the last three years.

Currently, 56 female professors (including assistant and junior professors) are employed at TU Darmstadt, equating to 18 percent. Depending on department, the percentage of women professors differs considerably. In the departments of architecture as well as social science and history the share is nearly 50 percent.

Appointment procedures

In 2018, 35 percent of new appointments went to women, fulfilling TU Darmstadt's target of awarding one third of new appointments to women. In six of the previous seven years, the proportion of women appointed to professorships was higher than the proportion of applications received.

Committees and leadership roles

Since 2017, women have accounted for one third of the members of the Executive Board. Women's representation on the University Council, however, dropped from 60 percent in 2017 to 30 percent in 2018. Currently, women's representation on the Senate is 30 percent with a downward trend in recent years.

Women's representation on Departmental Councils reached 50 percent for the first time in 2018. The figure for female professors has remained relatively constant for many years and is currently 17 percent. Amongst scientific and administrative/technical staff there have been greater fluctuations in women's representation over time; the current figures are 38 percent and 74 percent respectively.

Comparison with TU9 and nationwide benchmarks

It is difficult to rate women's representation for the university as a whole using comparative figures from other universities of technology because both the spectrum of subjects and the relative sizes of the various subjects may differ very considerably from institution to institution. Consequently, for selected engineering and science subjects a comparison has been made with the average figures for universities in the TU9 alliance as well as nationwide benchmarks.

The results show that in most engineering and natural science subjects women's representation at the career stages under consideration (first-year, graduation, doctorate) equate very closely with the comparative figures for the TU9 universities. With the exception of electrical engineering, the proportion of female professors in the engineering sciences at TU Darmstadt is lower than the national average. In the natural sciences, however, with the exception of mathematics, the figures are higher than the national average.

Focus on junior researchers

TU Darmstadt has identified the recruitment and promotion of outstanding female staff as an important strategic goal with a particular focus on junior researchers. In order to attract and retain the best individuals, TU Darmstadt offers customised support programmes for all phases of junior researchers' careers that are tailored to their respective needs.

Women's representation on TU Darmstadt's academic staff is slightly lower amongst postdocs than amongst doctoral researchers whereby there are major differences depending on subject. During the career phase between doctorate and professorship, women's representation drops significantly in many departments. In order to pave the way to a professorship, the tenure-track professorship was introduced. Based on appointments to date, TU Darmstadt has the impression that the tenure-track model is an attractive way of recruiting women. Out of the 12 tenure-track professorships appointed at TU Darmstadt so far, five have gone to women, which means that the university has achieved its own target of 40 percent of female appointments.

Conclusion

The results of the 2019 Gender Data Report show that from a long-term perspective, women's representation at TU Darmstadt has increased at all qualification levels and career stages. Nevertheless, women remain underrepresented in many areas and status groups at the university. Further efforts are still required at all levels to continue promoting gender equality at TU Darmstadt. This year's Gender Data Report can, once again, serve as a basis for differentiated analyses at departmental level in order to identify areas for priority action. The next Gender Data Report is scheduled to appear in 2020.