

# TU Darmstadt Gender Data Report 2025

## Brief overview of results



TECHNISCHE  
UNIVERSITÄT  
DARMSTADT

Achieving gender equality remains a significant challenge – particularly within technical universities. At TU Darmstadt, fostering a culture and institutional framework grounded in equal opportunity and gender parity stands as a central strategic objective. A key ambition is to increase the representation of women in leadership and top-level academic positions, especially within the STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). This process begins with the recruitment of female students and doctoral candidates and extends through all stages of the academic career pathway up to professorships.

In recent years, TU Darmstadt has supported this effort by developing and regularly updating its Gender Data Report – a monitoring tool that presents data and trends covering the past 15 years, offering a detailed overview of developments in gender representation across all areas of the university as well as situates TU Darmstadt within the wider German higher education context through comparative analyses.

As an additional dimension of diversity, the report also considers, where available, the proportion of members of the university community who do not hold German nationalities – thus offering a more nuanced view of inclusivity beyond gender alone.

This brief summary outlines the key findings of the 2025 Gender Data Report. The full report is available in German only and can be accessed via the TU Darmstadt website. For those interested in more detailed insights, please contact the staff in Directorate I, Unit Strategic Controlling ([stratcontrol@zv.tu-darmstadt.de](mailto:stratcontrol@zv.tu-darmstadt.de)).

### Gender Data Report 2025 - Imprint

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#### Edited by

Markus Müller and Anke Watenphul (*Unit Strategic Controlling*), Elisabeth Wiedekind and Uta Zybell (*Gender Equality Office*)

#### Graphic design

Hausgrafik GBR

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## Introduction

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The Gender Data Report 2025 highlights both the progress and ongoing challenges TU Darmstadt faces in fostering gender equality and diversity. It provides a comprehensive overview of the university's developments since 2010, focusing on the proportion of women and, where available, individuals of non-German nationality across the university. Over the past 15 years, both the share of women at all qualification levels and the proportion of university members without German nationality have shown a steady upward trend.

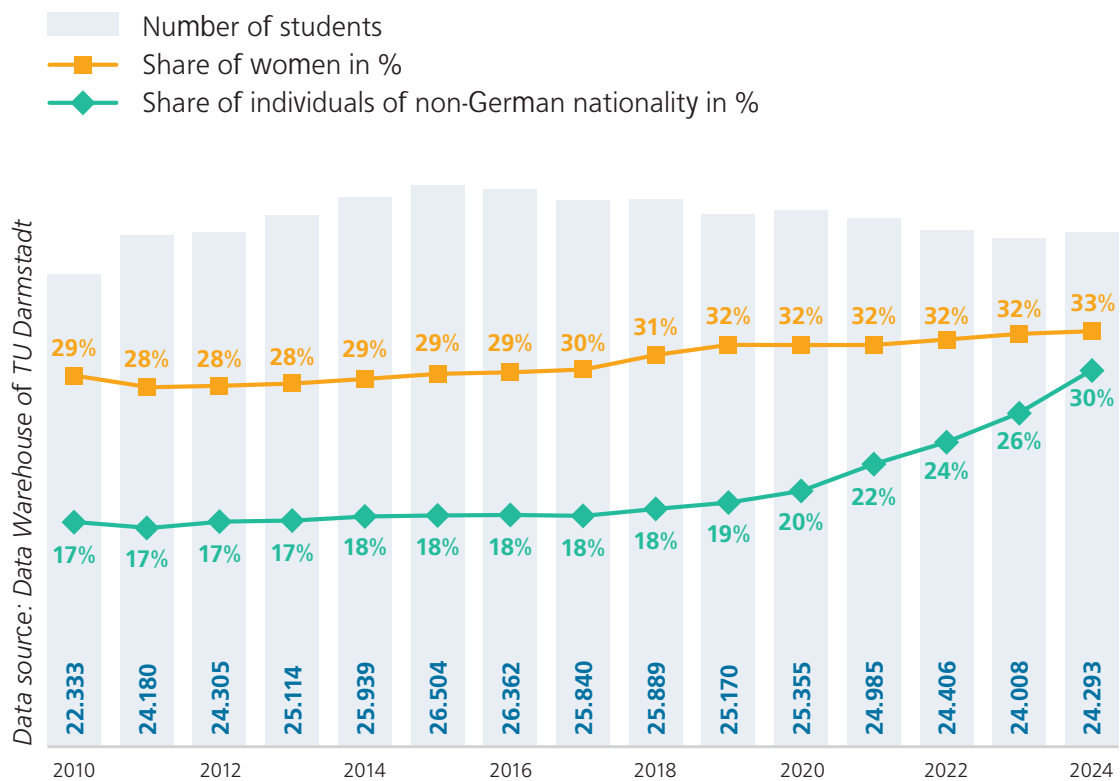
Short-term fluctuations or temporary reversals in these trends typically reflect shifts in the relative size of departments with differing percentages of women. Overall, the proportion of women across the status groups ranges from 25 to 34 percent, while among administrative and technical staff, it stands at no less than 57 percent. The share of individuals of non-German nationality spans from 6 percent amongst the administrative and technical staff to 30 percent among the students at TU Darmstadt.

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## Students

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In the winter semester 2024/25, a total of 24,293 students were enrolled at TU Darmstadt – reflecting a year-on-year increase of 1.2 percent. The proportion of female students increased slightly to 33 percent, while the share of international students climbed for the sixth consecutive year, reaching a new peak of 30 percent.

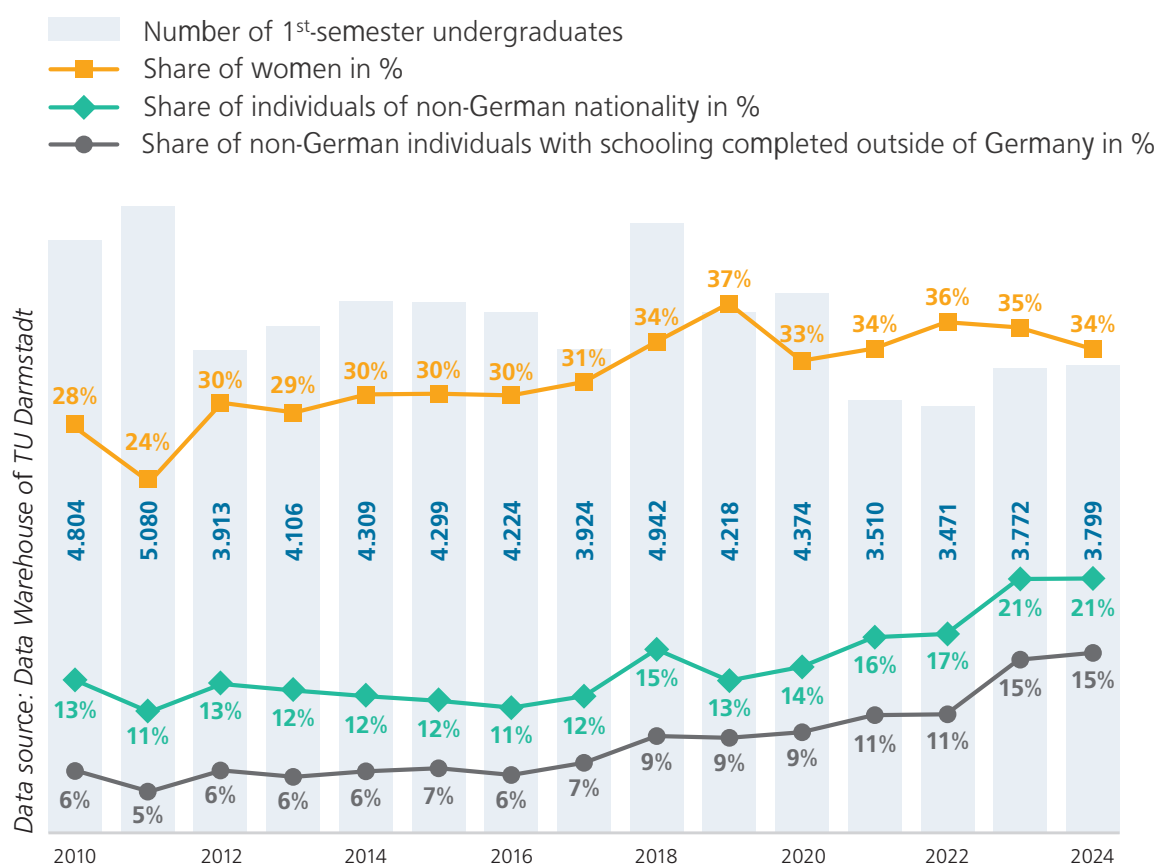


In 2024, overall female share among Master's students was 32 percent. This figure was slightly higher amongst those who completed their schooling outside of Germany (33%) than amongst those who completed their schooling in Germany (31%). Notably, marked subject-specific differences emerge: in the Departments of Law and Economics and Computer Science, the share of international female students is two to two-and-a-half times higher than that of their counterparts educated in Germany.

## First-semester undergraduates

Between 2009 and 2024, the number of newly enrolled undergraduate students at TU Darmstadt showed periodic fluctuations. The peak was reached in 2011 with 5,080 new undergraduates. The comparatively low figures in 2021 and 2022 – 3,510 and 3,471 respectively – can be largely attributed to the reintroduction of the nine-year Abitur in Hesse, replacing the previous eight-year model.

Following an increase in the previous year, the number of first-semester undergraduate students stabilised in 2024 at 3,799. At 34 percent, the current proportion of women is slightly below last year's level. The share of students without German nationality remains unchanged at 21 percent. Similarly, the proportion of international first-year students who completed their schooling abroad remained at 15 percent.



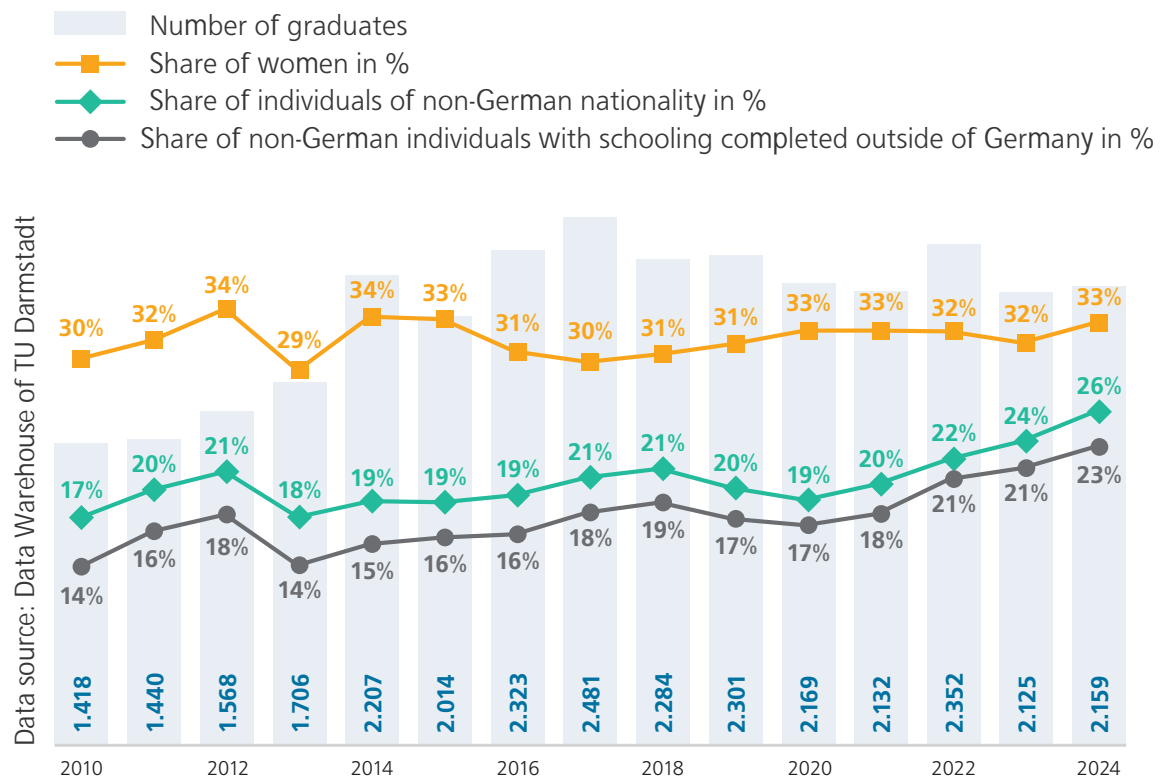
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## Graduates

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Over the past 15 years, the number of graduates from Master's and teaching degree programmes at TU Darmstadt has risen markedly. In contrast, the proportion of women among graduates has remained relatively constant, ranging between 29 and 34 percent. The current figure stands at 33 percent.

In 2024, the share of graduates who do not hold German nationality reached a new high of 26 percent. Likewise, the proportion of non-German graduates who had completed their schooling outside of Germany rose to a record of 23 percent.



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## Doctoral candidates

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In 2024, a total of 2,274 doctoral candidates were enrolled at TU Darmstadt – a slight decline compared to 2020. The proportion of women increased by four percentage points, reaching 30 percent, although substantial subject-specific disparities remain across the university's departments. In Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, and Computer Science, the share of women remains comparatively low, at around 14 percent. By contrast, in Human Sciences, Biology, and Architecture the figure exceeds 50 percent.

Several departments are also characterised by a high degree of internationalisation. Notably, 44 percent of the doctoral candidates in Materials and Earth Sciences, 31 percent in Architecture, and 30 percent in Computer Science do not hold a German nationality. Overall, the share of doctoral candidates of non-German nationality at TU Darmstadt account for 22 percent.

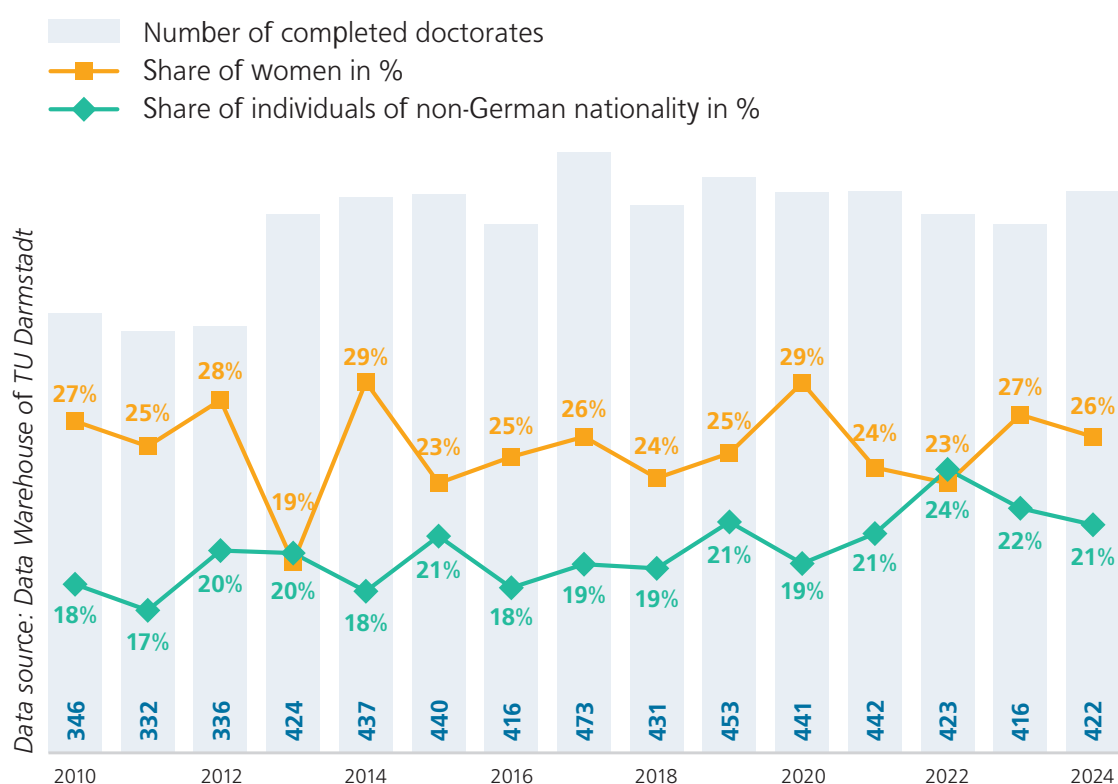
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## Doctorates

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In 2024, a total of 442 doctoral degrees were awarded at TU Darmstadt. Of these, 26 percent were completed by women and 21 percent by international candidates. The departments of Physics, Chemistry, Materials and Earth Sciences, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, and Computer Science accounted for a particularly high number of completions, although gender representation and levels of internationality varied considerably across disciplines.

Over the past five years, women completed more than half of all doctorates in the departments of History and Social Sciences, Human Sciences, Biology, and Architecture. During the same period, approximately 40 percent of doctoral degrees in Materials and Earth Sciences as well as in Architecture were awarded to individuals of non-German nationality.



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## Early career researchers – junior research group leaders

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The Gender Data Report focuses on early career researchers who lead junior research groups at TU Darmstadt – these include groups funded by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR), the Helmholtz Association, and the Emmy Noether Programme of the German Science Foundation (DFG), as well as Athene Young Investigators and ERC Starting Grant recipients.

In 2025, a total of 29 early career researchers led junior research groups at TU Darmstadt. Women accounted for 31 percent of group leaders, while 34 percent held non-German nationality. At present, junior research groups are established in ten of the university's thirteen departments, with the highest concentration – six groups – based in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology.

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## Academic staff

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Among the academic staff across all departments and central facilities at TU Darmstadt, the proportion of women rose by one percentage point to 27 percent compared to 2020. During the same period, the share of staff members of non-German nationality increased by seven percentage points, likewise reaching 27 percent.

Female academics are particularly well represented in the departments of Law and Economics, History and Social Sciences, Human Sciences, Biology, and Architecture. In contrast, women remain markedly underrepresented in the academic staff of Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, and Computer Science.

Notable levels of internationalisation can be observed in the departments of Materials and Earth Sciences and Computer Science, where 58 percent and 38 percent, respectively, of academic staff do not hold German nationality. Within TU Darmstadt's central facilities, the current proportion of women among the academic staff stands at 16 percent, with 14 percent of the staff members holding non-German nationalities.

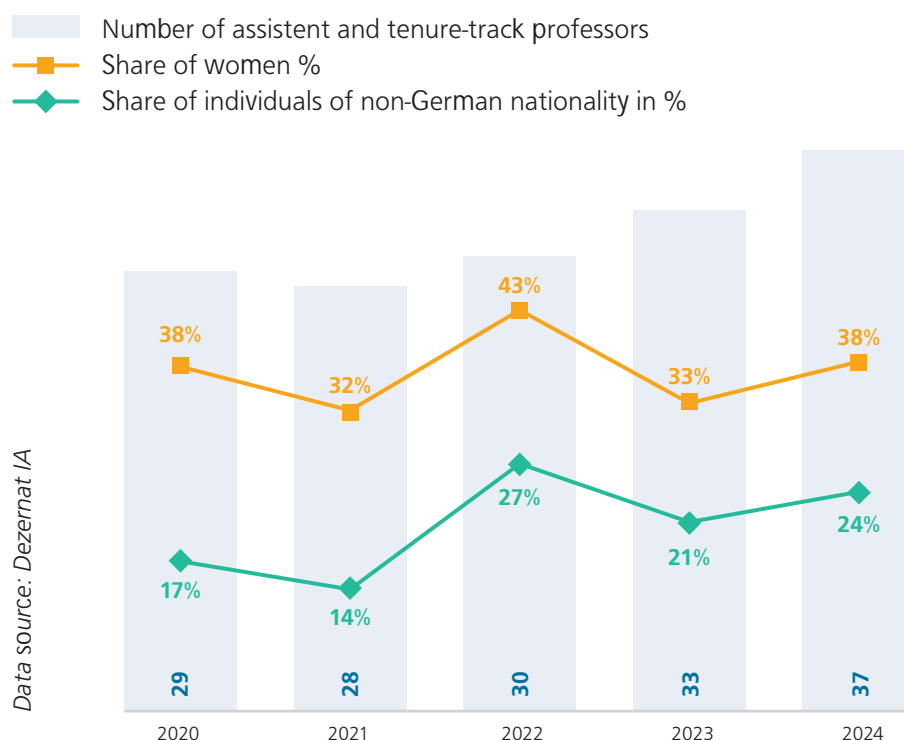
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## Assistant and tenure-track professors

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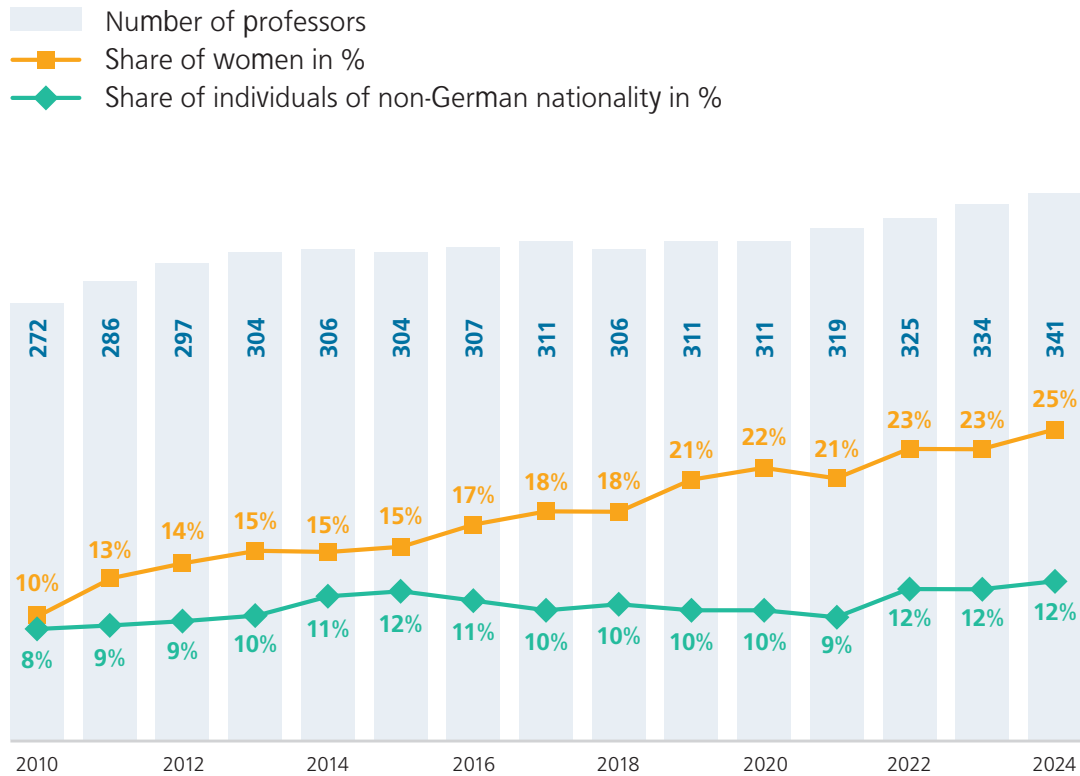
At present, TU Darmstadt employs 37 assistant and tenure-track professors. Women make up 38 percent of this group, while 24 percent hold non-German nationalities. These early-stage professorships are represented across all departments at the university.

The Department of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology currently leads in this regard, with five assistant or tenure-track professors. It is followed by the Departments of Mathematics, Physics, and Civil and Environmental Engineering, each hosting four assistant or tenure-track professors.



## Professors

Over the past 15 years, the number of professorial positions at TU Darmstadt has increased from 272 to 341. Currently, 84 of these professorships are held by women – including assistant and junior professors. Compared to the previous year, the proportion of female professors rose by two percentage points to 25 percent. The share of professors with non-German nationality remained steady at 12 percent, matching again the record level of the previous year.



Data source: Data Warehouse of TU Darmstadt; Share of non-German individuals: Dezernat VII

Between 2020 and 2024 alone, the number of female professors increased by 17. Notably, the Departments of Human Sciences and Civil and Environmental Engineering achieved significant progress, increasing the proportion of women in their faculties by ten and thirteen percentage points, respectively. Gender parity has been reached in the faculties of History and Social Sciences, Human Sciences, and Architecture.

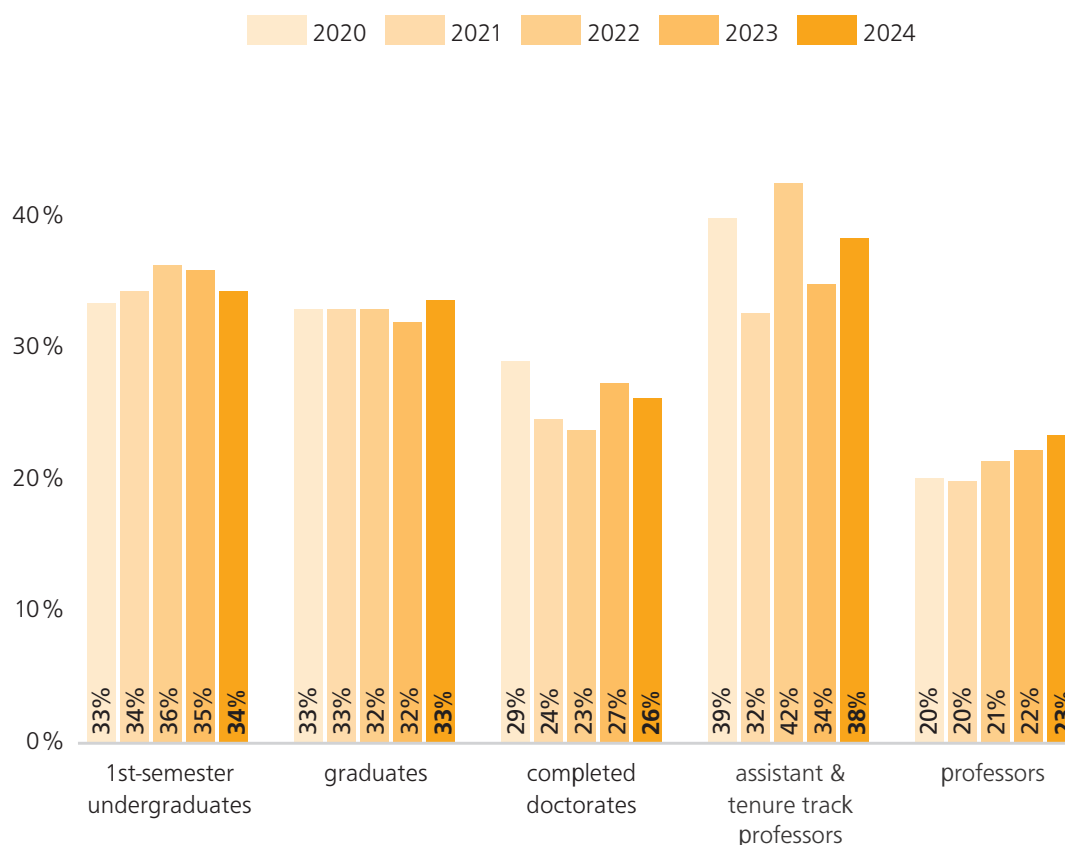
The departments of Human Sciences, Physics, and Computer Science are especially international, with more than 20 percent of their professorial staff holding non-German nationalities.

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## Academic career stages

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At TU Darmstadt, as at other German universities, the share of women declines steadily along the academic career path – from the entry into undergraduate study to tenured professorships. This trend is known as 'leaky pipeline'. An exception is found among assistant and tenure-track professors at TU Darmstadt, where the share of women is notably higher than among those having completed their doctoral degrees.



In 2024, the proportion of women remained virtually unchanged between the first undergraduate semester (34%) and graduation (33%). However, a significant drop of seven percentage points was observed between graduation and the doctorate. Since their introduction in 2018, tenure-track professorships have played a key role in reversing the decline with further career progress: in 2024, women accounted for 38 percent of these positions. In the long term, this positive development at the intermediate career level is expected to improve the gender balance in tenured professorial positions. Nonetheless, with women holding just 23 percent of tenured professorships in 2024, only around one in five such positions at TU Darmstadt is currently occupied by a woman.

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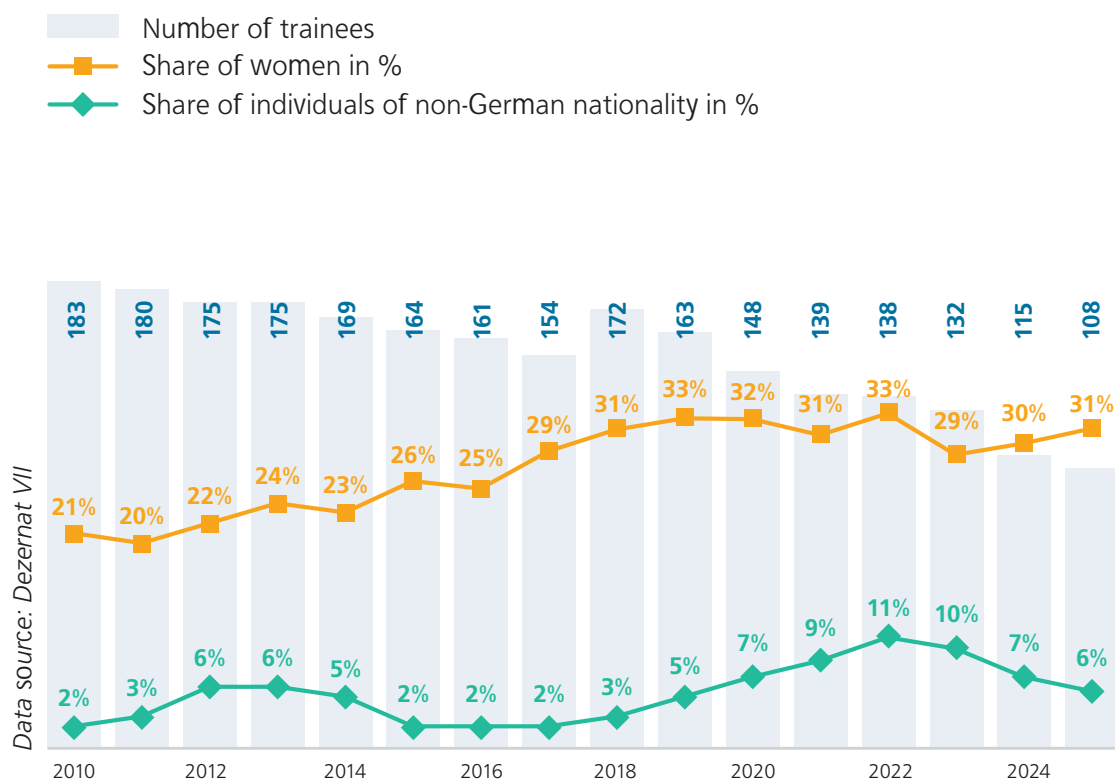
## Trainees

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Over the past 15 years, the number of trainees at TU Darmstadt has declined almost continuously. In 2025, the total stood at 108. While this downward trend has shown only slight year-to-year variation, the proportion of female trainees has developed in the opposite direction – rising almost steadily to 31 percent. Currently, six percent of all trainees do not hold a German nationality. The

decline in trainee numbers reflects a broader national trend observed across many sectors in Germany, driven in part by demographic change and the growing demand for highly qualified specialists.

Female trainees are particularly well represented in the “Administration and Libraries” sector, where they make up 68 percent of trainees. However, this is also the smallest training sector at the university. By contrast, the share of women remains significantly lower in IT (19%) and in commercial-technical training (11%). The IT sector is the most popular one among trainees of non-German nationality, who account for eight percent of the trainees there.



## Administrative and technical staff

Women make up 57 percent of the administrative and technical staff at TU Darmstadt. With the exception of the departments of Physics, Civil and Environmental Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering, the share of women well exceeds 50 percent. In central services, women account for 48 percent of the staff, while in the university’s administration, it’s 61 percent.

Currently, six percent of administrative and technical staff at TU Darmstadt do not hold a German nationality. In the departments of History and Social Sciences, Chemistry, and Materials and Earth Sciences, this proportion is notably higher, exceeding ten percent.

## Appointment procedures

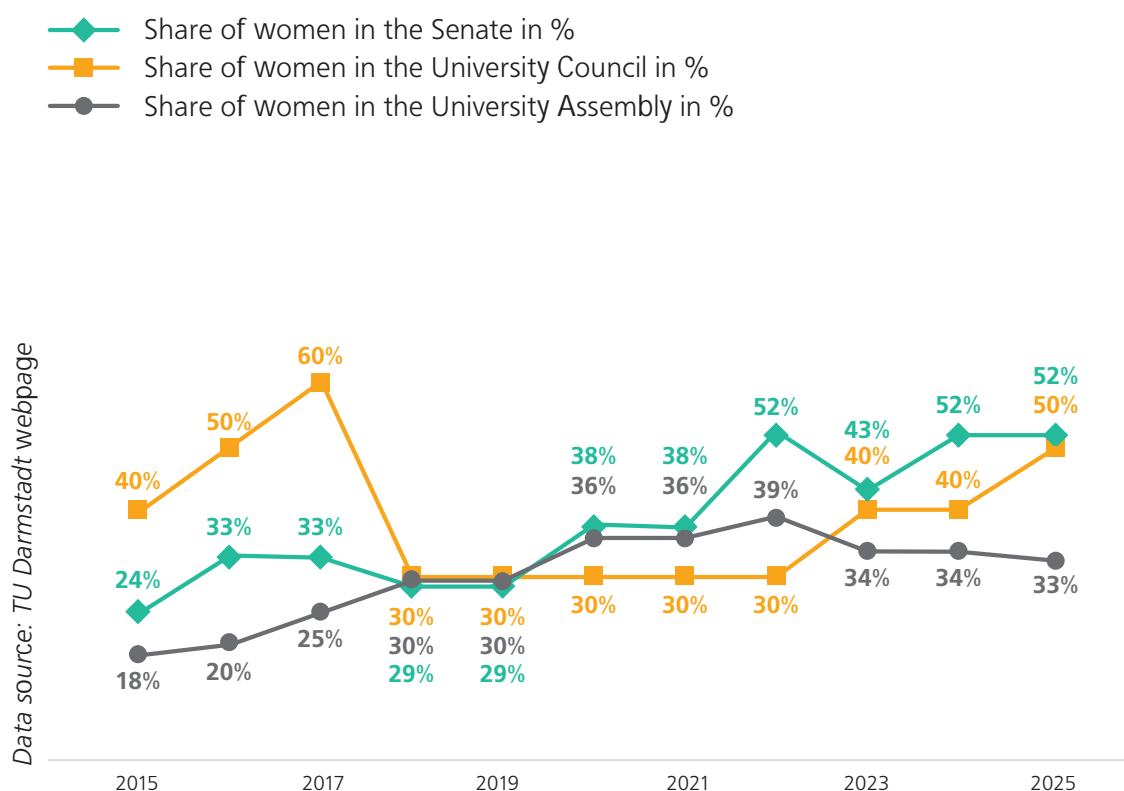
In 2024, women accounted for 26 percent of all applicants for professorships at TU Darmstadt. Among those invited to interviews and further on included on appointment shortlists, the share of women was 36 percent in each case. Ultimately, six women were

appointed to professorships at the university, representing 46 percent of all appointments.

With this results, TU Darmstadt surpassed its self-imposed target of appointing at least one-third women to professorships for the sixth consecutive year. Nonetheless, the persistent gender imbalance in the applicant pool remains a central challenge for future recruitment efforts.

## Committees and leadership roles

In 2025, the proportion of women on TU Darmstadt's central bodies of academic self-governance – Senate, University Council, and University Assembly – showed varying degrees of representation. Gender parity was maintained or achieved in the Senate (52%) and the University Council (50%), while the University Assembly remained at a considerably lower, yet stable, level of 33 percent female representation.



On the Executive Board, women held two of the eight positions, including the presidency, amounting to a 25 percent share. The proportion of female heads of directorates rose to 44 percent, while women continued to lead 69 percent of the directorial units. All five presidential staff units were headed by women, in contrast to central services, where the figure stood at 30 percent.

Within the faculties, women remained underrepresented among the deans, accounting for just 18 percent. However, 71 percent of managing department directors were women. None of the three research fields currently has a female speaker, although women comprise 33 percent of their managing directors.

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## Comparison with TU9 and nationwide benchmarks

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A comparison with other German universities regarding the proportion of women across the various stages of academic qualification within TU Darmstadt's departments – and, where applicable, disciplines – helps to position the findings outlined above within the broader landscape of German higher education. Suitable benchmark institutions are the TU9 Universities and, on professorial level, a nationwide benchmark.

In nearly all disciplines, the share of women declines from entry into undergraduate study through to professorial level – a phenomenon commonly referred to as the 'leaky pipeline'. The degree to which this trend is observed varies considerably by subject: in some cases, it is marginal, in others quite pronounced.

The academic culture at TU Darmstadt encompasses three broad domains: engineering, natural sciences, and the humanities and social sciences.

In the field of engineering, the picture is mixed and highly dependent on the specific department. In Architecture at TU Darmstadt, the share of women across all career stages ranges from 50 to 65 percent, whereas the national benchmark data indicates a more pronounced leaky pipeline. A similar pattern is evident in Civil and Environmental Engineering, where the representation of women at TU Darmstadt – between approximately 30 and 45 percent – is consistently higher than at the reference institutions. With two notable exceptions, however, the share of women in Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, and Computer Science remains below 20 percent at both TU Darmstadt and the benchmark universities across all qualification levels.

Within the natural sciences, Chemistry and Biology show a distinctly evident leaky pipeline, both at TU Darmstadt and the reference universities. Of all departments in this overarching field at TU Darmstadt, Biology stands out: the share of women from first-semester undergraduates to PhD graduates reaches peak values exceeding 60 percent. Yet at professorial level, the figure drops sharply to just around 20 percent. In other natural sciences departments, apart from a few isolated exceptions, the proportion of women remains below 40 percent and steadily decreases at each subsequent academic stage.

A varied picture also emerges in the humanities and social sciences, both at TU Darmstadt and at the reference institutions. Here, no clear leaky pipeline is discernible. At TU Darmstadt, Pedagogy shows a particularly high proportion of women – over 70 percent. In Sociology, the representation of women across all career stages is significantly higher (between 60 and 73 percent) than at the benchmark universities. In contrast, in Economics, the proportion of women across career stages ranges between 20 and 30 percent.

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## Conclusions

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The Gender Data Report 2025 shows that, in the long term, women's representation in most status groups at TU Darmstadt is developing positively. This year, too, in various areas, new records were reached or repeated. Despite this, in many areas of the university women are still under-represented.

Achieving a measurable increase in the proportion of women across all qualification and career levels, as well as in various status groups, requires genuine transformation. To realise the vision of a consistently gender- and opportunity-equitable university, data must be critically examined – particularly in relation to working culture, mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination, bias, stereotypes, and power dynamics.

The TU Darmstadt Gender Data Report showcases success stories and ongoing challenges and, within the university, serves as a guideline for indicating further fields of action.

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## Sources

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The data presented here derive from the various official statistical reports prepared by TU Darmstadt, supplemented in part by our own databases. The comparative data of the TU9 Universities ([www.tu9.de](http://www.tu9.de)) and all German universities were acquired from the German Federal Statistical Office DESTATIS.