Career & Gender: work in progress

Meeting VWI & WUR

VWI-netwerk

WUR Gender Equality Plan 2024-2028

Intro by Margreet van der Burg

Intersectional gender developments at WUR

Tuesday 17 November 2026
Welcome 19.30 - Start 20.00
THUIS, Stationsstraat 32, Wageningen

Participation & drinks are free
Please register

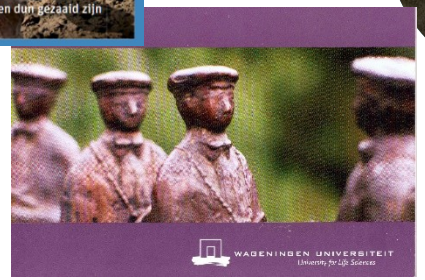
VWI is the Women Network for WUR Alumni & Professionals
www.vwi-netwerk.nl

Career and Gender: Work in Progress

Intersectional Gender Developments at WUR















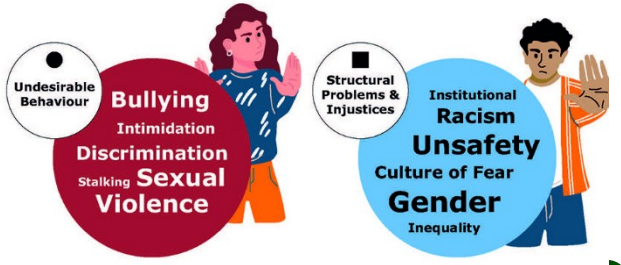
VWI lecture, 17 Nov. 2026



dr Margreet van der Burg
Gender Studies/History,
related to Food, Agricultural and Rural Research and Development - KTI-WU
Margreet.vanderBurg@wur.nl







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Please do not distribute further and respect authorship and copy rights when using quotes etc

Please get in touch if you need more references

THANKS! Margreet

Today

- **Book highlights till 2003**
  - 1970s – 1990s and need to retake
- **Post-2003: (Intersectional) Gender Studies policies – highlights**
  - From awareness to action; from policies to practices and daily routines
  - Changes in (Intersectional) Gender Balance: where do we stand?
  - Recommendations to proceed with sustainable implementation

Exchange/Discussion: Space to share and reflect on your study and career experiences.



Women, Wageningen and the World.

Sciences, study and career, 1918-2003

* women scientists
* women students
* women graduates

Still available for free,
in Dutch though, English summary

To be extended for WR and 25 years

Margreet with Marian Bos-Boers, and 40 former WU students and scientists:
Vrouwen, Wageningen en de Wereld. Wetenschap, studie en loopbaan, 1918-2003
(Women, Wageningen and the World. Science, study and career, 1918-2003).

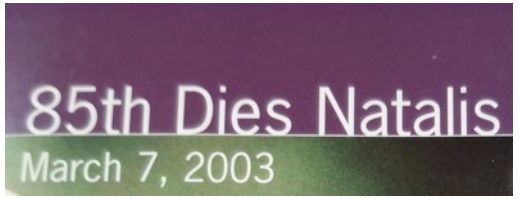


- 8000 copies for all employees and partnerships
- Dia-documentary performance on 85th Dies-festivities 2003
- Offering book to rector at Dies celebration
- Exhibition at Casteelse Poort opened at the same day
- Symposium on the future of women scientific personnel
- TV documentary of 25 minutes for TV Gelderland











Landbouwhogeschool (LH) – Agricultural College

1918 Institution of Higher Education in Agriculture (one faculty)

- Dutch Agriculture – Colonial Agriculture
- Horticulture
  - Life sciences and experimentation labs and fields
  - Social sciences: economics as serving field
  - No extension or outreach programming
- Gradually extended



1984 renamed: **Agricultural university (LUW)**

1990s formal collaboration: **University and Research Institutes = WUR**

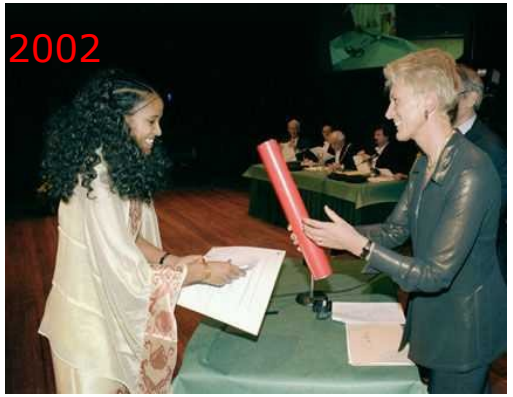
2019 Change of Ministry: **from Agriculture to Education as one of 4 Technical Universities**

Women's involvement: students

- Commemorated Story: no women students from the beginning????????
- Where to find women students?
  - First most as auditors, esp. in horticulture
    - No access as full students (certificate)
    - No intention / aim to finish study
    - No farm daughters
  - Growing numbers after 1952:
    - rural home economics and other social sciences study programmes
  - Growing numbers from 1970s onwards through
    - Farm daughters
    - Women students in international development, forestry, nutrition, animal sciences
    - Foreign women students







1917 Wageningen Women's Student Association (WVSV)

- 1901: Elise Berkhout first woman student at the Rijkslandbouwhogeschool.
- Sept. 1917: 10 women students asked for a membership of WSC CERES
- ARCHIVES: *“The (WSC Ceres) senate unanimously decided on 16 Nov. 1917 to establish a women's membership, whereby the women could not become members of the senate, were not allowed to serve on the editorial board of the Almanac or Monthly Magazine, and would only be allowed access to the pub with special permission. The girls declined the honour and, assembled at the home of Ms. Veth on* ***December 8, 1917,*** *founded the 'Wageningsche Vrouwelijke Studenten Vereeniging.”*



1933



WVSV dinner 1926



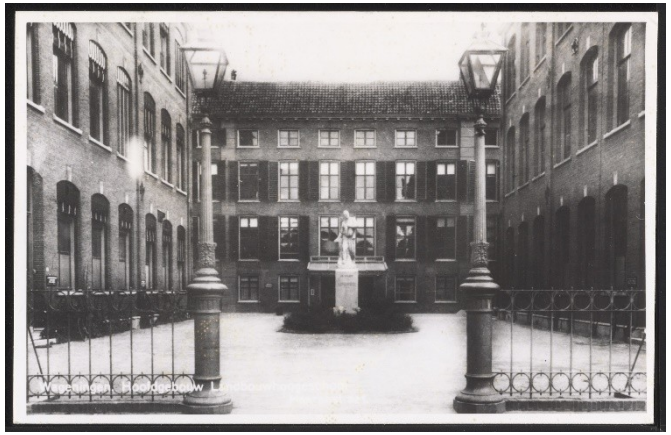
1920

NL: De senaat besloot op 16 november 1917 eensgezind een dames lidmaatschap in te stellen, waarbij de dames geen lid van de senaat konden worden, geen zitting in de redactie van Almanak of Maandblad mochten nemen en slechts met speciale toestemming toegang tot de kroeg zouden krijgen. De meisjes bedanken voor de eer en richtten, bijeengekomen ten huize van Mej. Veth op 8 december 1917 de ‘Wageningsche Vrouwelijke Studenten Vereeniging’ op.”



1953 - 7th lustrum WVSV

Headquarters up to 1990s
Bassecour - Herenstraat



1941-WVSV clubroom in Headquarters



1938 - 4th lustrum WVSV



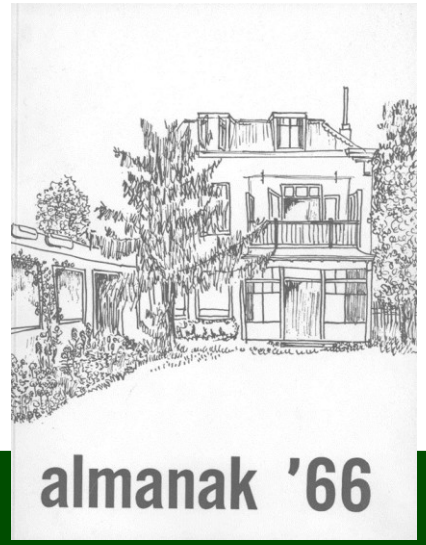




1947: Opening WVSV Club House

Niemeijerstraat 35









Changing Student life

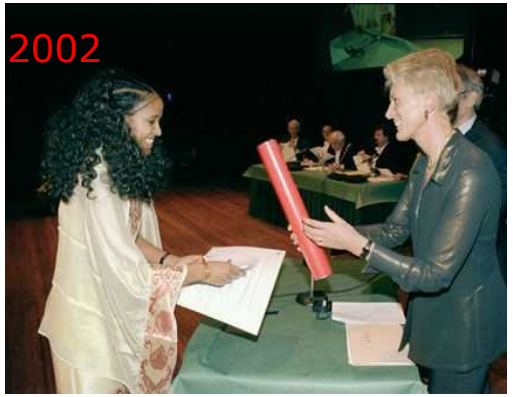
In 1970 Ceres and the WVSV merged
to become the mixed student association Ceres

Women's involvement: scientists

- Commemorated Story: no women doctors? – 1930s
- Where to find women scientists?
  - First most at labs, esp. related to seeds and plants
    - No access to leadership functions
    - No farm daughters
  - Growing numbers after 1952:
    - rural home economics and other social sciences study programmes
  - Growing numbers from 1970s onwards
    - Bernardijn ten Zeldam-Hartelust (1979): Tien Procent
      6% women scientists LH – 11% nationally
    - % Women Professors
    - Career ambitions graduated women engineers - VWI







Wageningen women PhD graduates elsewhere graduated

In Wageningen contracted, elsewhere PhD graduation

LOUISE DOYER	1914
MARIE LÖHNIS	1922
ANNIE HARTSEMA	1924
JIKKE VAN DER MEER	1925
LOES KERLING	1928
CORNELIA GOUWENTAK	1929
MARIANNE PINKHOF	1930
HELENA VINKENBORG	1931
JOHANNA FRAHM-LELIVELD	1931
CHRIS GORTER	1932
JETSKE DE ZEEUW	1938
DIRKJE REINDERS	1938
ALIDA JAARSVELD	1940
SASKIA FERWERDA	



PhD graduation dinner
Dr. Annie Hartsema, 1924







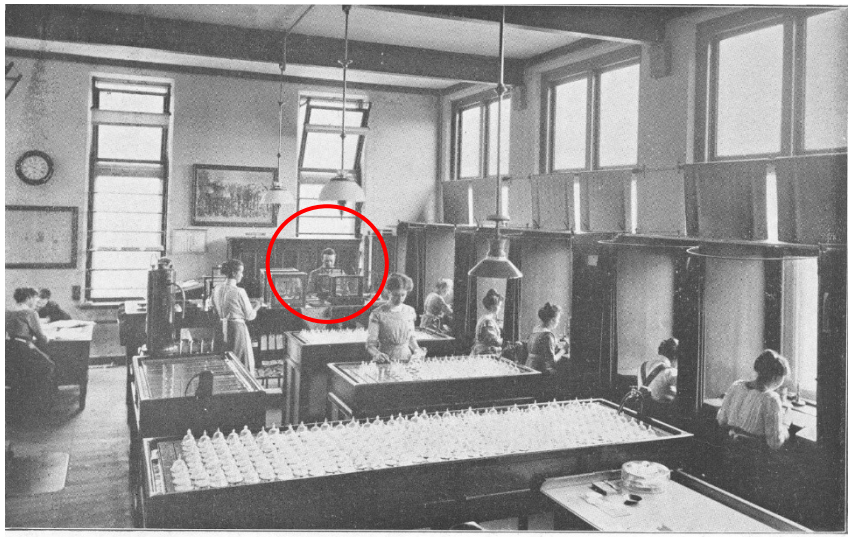
Nelly Nieuwland



First woman agricultural engineer 1919
Organic chemistry

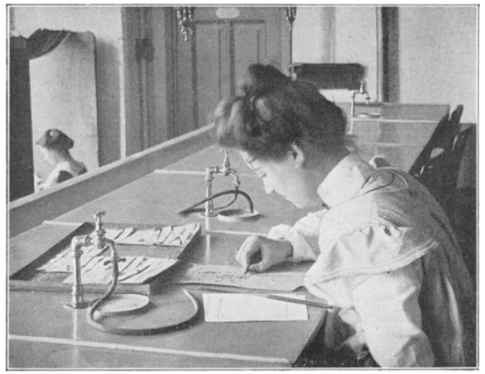


Fida Eversmann



Laboratorium van het Rijksproefstation voor Zaadcontrôle.

Laboratory State Testing station for Seed Control





Louise Doyer



Annie Hartsema

Landbouwhogeschool (LH) – Agricultural College

- WWII: food security issues → *agricultural programmes*
  Support Marshall Aid - study visits USA
- 1950s: new chairs in social sciences
  → *Rural Sociology, Rural History, Extension and Education Sciences, Philosophy, Psychology, 1979 onwards Gender Studies in Agriculture*
  - 1952 Chair in Rural/Agricultural Home Economics
  - 1969 Chair in Human Nutrition



1952 First Woman Professor chairholder

Mien Willinge Prins - Visser





Inaugural Speech Prof. drs Mien Willinge Prins-Visser, Professor in rural/agricultural home economics, 1953

1956

Second Woman Professor chairholder appointed

in Plant Sciences

Julia Gouwentak





1978 and 1979

Third and Fourth Woman Professor chairholders appointed

Lucy Timmermans (1979)
Clio Presvelou (1978)



Roaring seventies: second wave feminism!

Women's question: WU in the 1970s







- 1974-1979 University council: feminist president Ir. B.(Bernardijn) ten Zeldam-Hartelust
- 1981 Commission for women's emancipation
- 1986 Emancipation officer, especially on
  - secondary labour conditions
  - confidential officers to support in cases of discrimination and harassment
  - selection and appointment procedures
- 1991-1994 Affirmative action in favour of women
- 1996 Decentralisation: **discontinued** as special officer position
- 2014 Gender Action Plan 2x and Diversity & Inclusion policies
- 2019-2023 EU-project Gender-SMART (gender+ also education & research)





Gender SMART
Science Management of Agriculture & Life Sciences, including Research and Teaching

WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

ROARING SEVENTIES: SECOND WAVE FEMINISM!





WOMEN'S QUESTION: GENDER STUDIES



- 1979 Appointment as extraordinary professor, 0.2 Fte, Prof. Dr. G.(Geertje) Thomas-Lyclama à Nijenholt, education only + 2 half-time lecturers
- 1988 Extraordinary professor "Women in labour organisations"
- 1989 Professor for 5 years
- 1995 Chairholding professor with staff
- **1998-2000 Reorganisation→ chair group discontinued**
- 2000 3 positions for associate professor in 3 fields
- 2012 No central means, 0.5Fte still occupied
- 2019-2023 EU-project Gender-SMART (gender+ also education & research)





Gender SMART
SCIENCE MANAGEMENT OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES, INCLUDING RESEARCH AND TEACHING

WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH









Wageningse groep maakt baanbrekende documentaire

„Discussie uitlokken"

Onderzoeken

Waardering

Centraal

Onderhuids

Interieurs

Toegewijd

Restiaken

FARM WOMEN'S GROUP (1977) - BOERINNENGROEP
Later: Werkgroep Vrouwen in de Landbouw

MEMBERS COMBINING STUDY AND ACTION

from research, theatre to films

Wageningen Women's Home – Vrouwenhuis – extra slide

Women's Home: Bowlespark 26a

Vrouwenhuis, trefpunt van feminisme en emancipatie – Wiki Wageningen

- 1980 -1988, then moved to Melkhuisje, Churchillweg 39, stopped in 1991
- Meeting place of women and women's organisations in Wageningen, as in 1985:

De Vrouwen Aktiegoep, Vrouwen voor Vrede groep, Boerinnengroep (1977), groep Vrouwen en Derde Wereld (1978), groep Vrouwen voor Ekonomische Zelfstandigheid, De Rooie Vrouwen (PvdA), Vrouwen in de Bijstand, het Vormingswerk, Vrouwen tegen Sexueel Geweld, het LeBi (lesbische en bisexuele vrouwen), het LH-vrouwenoverleg, Vrouwen en Derde Wereld groep, Stichting Vrouwenraad Wageningen, Nederlandse Vereniging van Huisvrouwen, Nederlandse Bond van Plattelandsvrouwen, de Vereniging van Vrouwen met een Academische opleiding, De Soroptimisten, het Katholieke Vrouwengilde, de Nederlandse Christen Vrouwenbond, De Vrouwenbond F.N.V., De Vrouwenbond C.N.V., de Emancipatiecommissie van de gemeente en Vrouwenboekhandel Shikasta.

Het Vrouwenhuis was van 1980 tot 1991 een ontmoetings- en actiecentrum van de Wageningse Vrouwenbeweging en werd gerund door de Stichting Vrouwenhuis. Het was het trefpunt voor een groot aantal Wageningse vrouwengroepen die zich richtten op feminisme en emancipatie.

De eerste acht jaar bevond het Vrouwenhuis zich op de eerste verdieping op Bowlespark nummer 26a.Het Vrouwenhuis verhuisde in 1988 naar Churchilweg 39, waarna het pand Bowlespark werd gesloopt. 1991 werd het Vrouwenhuis gesloten en de Stichting Vrouwenhuis opgeheven.



Het Vrouwenhuis, Bowlespark (Foto Anneke Rot)

De tweede Feministische Golf spoelt aan

Eind jaren 70 'spoelt de Tweede Feministische Golf aan op de Wageningse Rijnoevers'. Vrouwen gaan zich steeds meer positioneren ten opzichte van mannen. Ze willen zich onafhankelijk organiseren, los van alle bestaande, door mannen gedomineerde instituties. Barbara van Koppen (1955) studeerde op dat moment Voedingswetenschappen aan de Landbouw Hogeschool en herinnert zich die tijd nog goed: "Er kwamen in die tijd steeds meer vrouwengroepen. Ook vóór mijn tijd was er al de Boerinnengroep (1977) en de groep Vrouwen en Derde Wereld (1978), maar voor mijzelf begon het met de Kontramienen. Dat was een koor speciaal voor vrouwen, opgericht als feministische tegenhanger van het 1 Mei koor. Ik had zelf toen nog het idee dat feminisme niets voor mij was, maar het vrouwenkoor leek me wel wat. Mijn vriendin en huisgenoot nu, Barbera Oranje, had de naam Kontramienen bedacht. Vanuit het koor raakte ik ook breder betrokken bij de vrouwenstrijd en natuurlijk ook bij het Vrouwencafé"



Democratisation - pictures 1981

🌍 more global solidarity

♀ enrolment of more women

Ecological protest





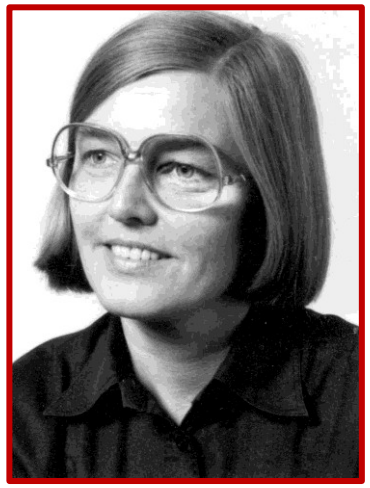


Here 1981:
Calling out for
Women's solidarity

Music by the choir
Kontramienen

Wageningen activities















CAMPAIGNS and DIDACTICS

Girls into the technical study programmes

1976: 25% of total

1983:
In 1 year from
31.7 to 40% girls
as first year
students





Wagenings Hogeschoolblad, Sept. 1983

LH „girlsschool"

De Landbouwhogeschool blijkt dit jaar bijzonder in trek te zijn bij meisjes. Bijna vier op de tien eerstejaars is vrouw. Verleden jaar was dat met 31.7 procent vrouwelijke eerstejaars nog bijna tien procent minder.

Wat de reden voor de vrouwelijke animo ook mag zijn, duidelijk is dat niet de versoepeling van de toegangseisen voor de maatschappij- (M)richtingen bepalend is voor de verschuivingen, zoals soms verondersteld wordt. Voor de M-richtingen, compleet met versoepelde toegang, alleen VWO-wiskunde was verplicht, meldden zich maar zeven studenten meer aan dan vorig jaar.

Vooral de teelt- en technische (F-) richtingen zijn verantwoordelijk voor de damesaanwas. Dit jaar is 44,6 procent van de 587 T-eerstejaars van het vrouwelijk geslacht. De 112 biologie-proppedanten kennen een gemiddeld percentage meisjes, van de 79 M-eerstejaars is de meerderheid vrouw en alleen de L(andschaps)-richtingen blijven nog een mannenbolwerk. Viervijfde van de 234 L-ers is mannelijk.

Op dit moment hebben zich 1012 eerstejaars ingeschreven. Meetellen van de laatkomers van komende maand wijst volgens het college van bestuur op een lichte stijging van het totale aantal, vergeleken met vorig jaar. Daarmee is aan een jarenlang dalende trend een einde gekomen. (W. T.)



Klaartje Mulder en Antien Hardon-Baars:

Twee praatpalen voor vrouwen met problemen in studie- en werksfeer

. . .„LH is nog steeds een mannenbolwerk".

„. . .als ik het er in mijn vrije tijd bij moet doen, ben ikzelf mijn eerste klant. . ."

Wageningens Hogeschoolblad 5 Aug. 1983



Student advisor

De Landbouwuniversiteit tolereert geen ongewenste intimiteiten en discriminatie.

Studenten: vertrouwensvrouw Tineke de Boer telefoon (08370) 83593

Personeel: vertrouwensvrouw Marian Bos telefoon (08370) 83487 (maandag 10.30 - 12.30: (08370) 84553)

1983

First CGIAR women's conference

Present: Lydia Res and Antine Hardon-Baars

Gelia Castillo



WOMEN IN RICE FARMING SYSTEMS CONFERENCE • 26-30 September 1983
The International Rice Research Institute, Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines

First Women Honorary Doctors

1978 first: Ester Boserup



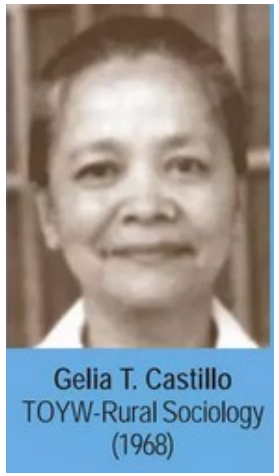




1983 second: Gelia T. Castillo

coordinator of the Women in Rice Farming Systems project under the Asian Rice Farming Systems Network

Miracle or Cadillac Rice???





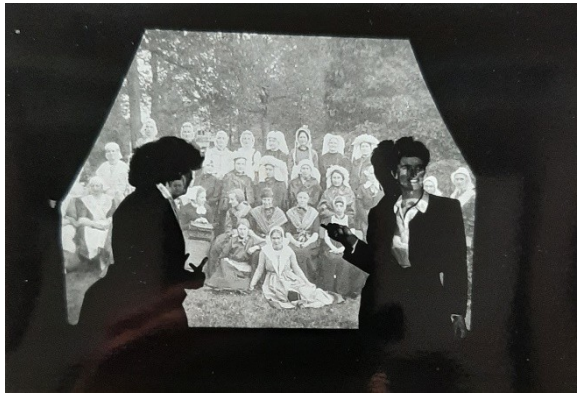
Now 5!

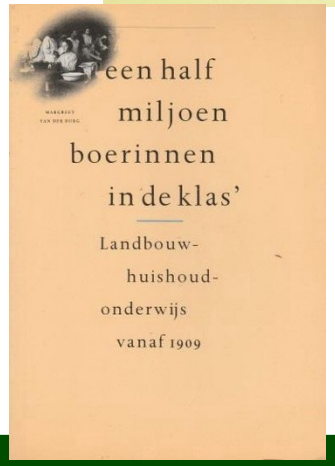


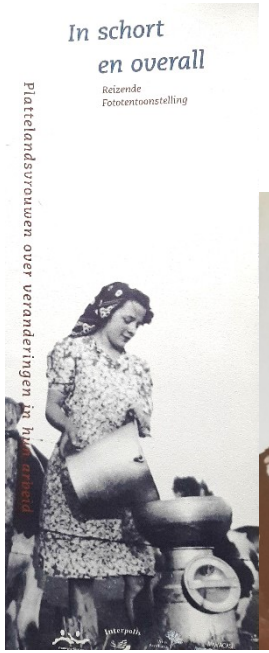
Hotel 'de Wereld'
Generaal Foulkesweg 1

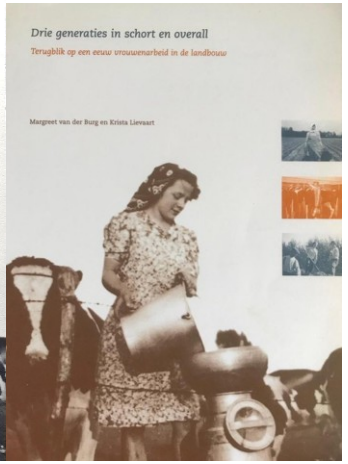
Used to be site for Studium Generale











1998

Storm-van der Chijs Fund:
Awards and activities

to encourage women in pursuing their career in research and research management



WAGENINGEN UR
For quality of life



A High Tea for Diversity. Ingredients for a new WUR-blend?
Workshop for chairholders, organized by Storm-van der Chijs Fund with WUR Rector Prof.dr.ir. Martin Kropff, 10 March 2008, Klein Auditorium in former WUR Aula



2004

2008

Since 1998

Awarding
Storm-van der Chijs Fund

Every two years:

- Nominations and Awarding Ceremony: Stipends to most talented WU women PhD candidates
- Storm-van der Chijs Lecture or Event
- Update of WUR m/f state-of-affairs
- Other activities







2017

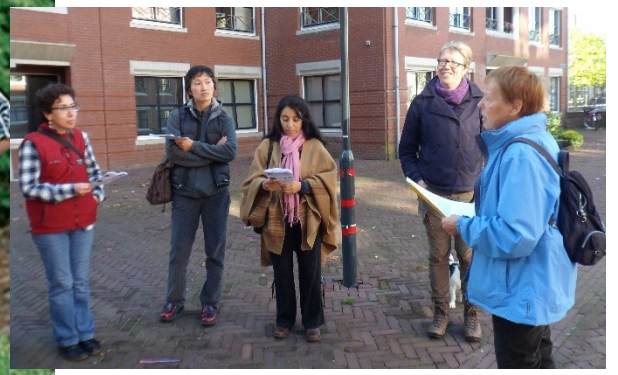


2004

GENDER STUDIES





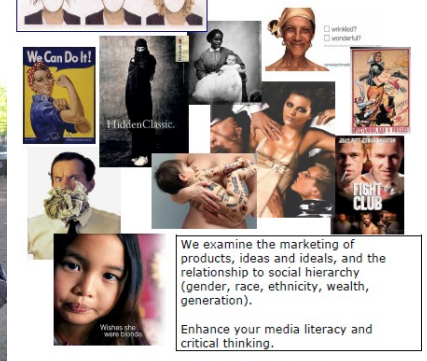


Gender, Culture, Consumers and Markets:
Critical Historical and Socio-cultural Feminist Perspectives

2nd Period 2012
Leeuwenborch C82/C79
Course SCH-20306



How you see yourself and are viewed and treated by others is in part linked to media images.

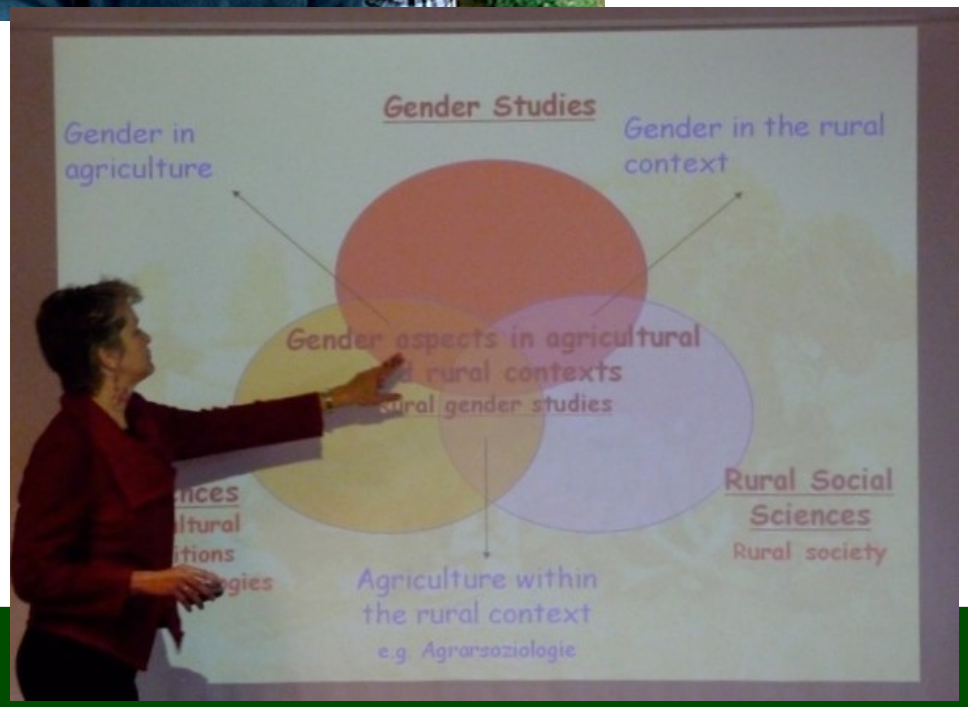


We examine the marketing of products, ideas and ideals, and the relationship to social hierarchy (gender, race, ethnicity, wealth, generation).

Enhance your media literacy and critical thinking.

Course starts Mon. 29 Oct. 2012:
Mon., 15.30; Wed. and Thurs.; 13.30, C 82 / C 79





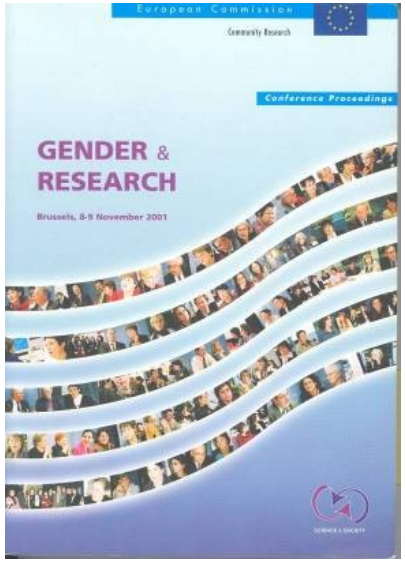


BSc Minor WU.GAS

Gender Aspects in Sustainable Food Systems

Courses		Period, MO/AF
1.	**SCH-50406** Rural Gender Studies	P1, morning
2.	**SCH-51806 (was RHI 53306)** Food Heritage and History: Food, Gender and Cultural Heritage Governance	P1, afternoon
3.	**YSD-50806** Global Food Security	P2, morning
4.	**IWE-33806** Gender and Natural Resources	P3, morn./aftern.

EU - EU Treaty (1999)



To eliminate gender inequality and advance gender equity

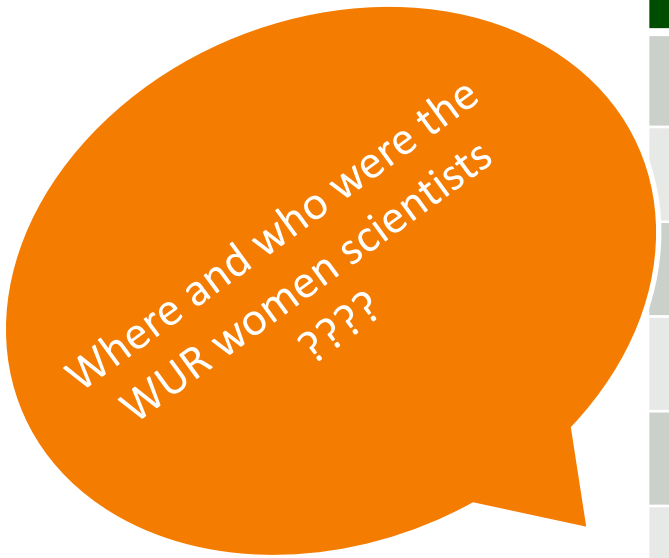
Gender mainstreaming EU research policies

= to advance research:

- **by women** (equity- inclusion/participation)
- **for women** (inclusion in research agenda)
- **about women** (gender analysis)



Increasing recognition of women scientists?! – extra slide



	Nº women Chairholders	Nº women Honorary doctorates, total and %
1953	1	0 of 15 = 0%
1963	2	0 of 19 = 0%
1973	2	0 of 24 = 0%
1983	2	2 of 33 = 6%
1993	5 = ca 3-4%	3 of 41 = 7%
2003	6	3 of 49 = 6.1%
2008	10 = 9,9%	3 of 51 = 5.8%
2013	8	3 of 54 = 5.5%
2018	15 = 16,4%	4 of 58 = 6.8%
2023	19 = 26,6%	5 of 61 = 8.2%

Retake after 2004

- 2005/6: **HRM Research**
  on career progress and leaving of women at Wageningen UR (Nienke Vellema & Alet Leemans)
  plus **WUR council (COR/SSC) note**
  'Towards more women in academic and management positions in Wageningen UR'



- Inclusion in **Wageningen UR plan 2007-2010**

➢ 2007: **Installation klankbordgroep** Loopbaanbeleid vrouwen (Career policy for women)
Martin Scholten (chair), Anke Niehof, Thea Hilhorst, Mieke Kleijn, Geartsje Oosterhof, Bert Holtslag, Jan Delpeut



- 2008: 10 March presentation **report: 'Meer vrouwen naar topposities'**
  (More women into top positions), to take stake in:
  - stimulating the pool of young academic women,
  - facilitating the development of their talents and qualities
  - to achieve an input of at least 30% of women into higher positions

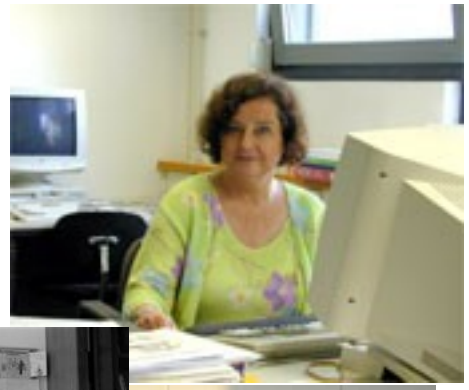


- 2011: **Update:** Taken in, but not solidly embedded in HRM policies
  - Advantage of focussing on talents of young women not yet supported organisation-wide.
  - Charter Dekker not signed by Wageningen UR / Strategic Plan 2011-2014 no specific focus

2013 – slowly growing support to gender balance



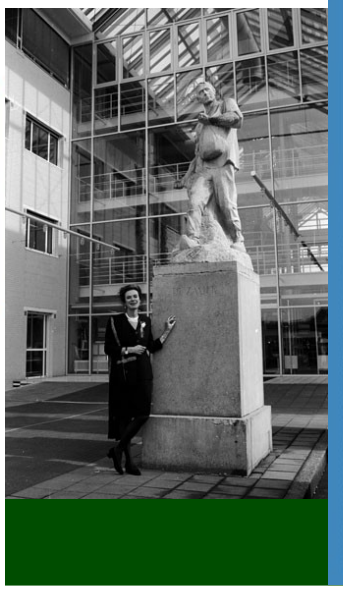














WAGENINGEN
For quality of life

Gender Action Plan 1, 2014-2016

Gender Action Plan 1, 2014-2026, by temporary manager with Monitoring Group:

- **Awareness** sessions (mindbugs) - 260 participants
- Selection/recruitment and promotion (**BACs**)
- Resources on Intranet
- **Mentoring** program for women
- **Good practices, role Models**: Book Inspiring Women at WUR → group of ambassadors





"I like your looks, Ramsey. You're hired."



As part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) 2016 = PPP approach - Inclusion Workgroup

- 25% female professors in 2020
- 80 vacancies filled in relation to participation law in 2018 (special needs)
- Growth rate of 20% women in management positions in 2018 versus 2016
- Increase of our international corporate culture by means of English language policy, integration and community building online and offline.
- Development of intercultural skills by training, international and intercultural experiences, etc.



WUR Strategisch Plan 2015-2018: *'Mixed teams*, *with a good representation of a broad range of competencies* ***are more productive, more innovative and more collaboration-oriented.*** *This enhances the* ***quality of our teaching and research***, *better contributes to societal needs and helps in the development of new business. For this reason, we are carrying out an action plan for gender balance, and also want to enhance cultural diversity.*

Statue '*Take my Knowledge*'



'Take my Knowledge' was commissioned by the Network for Women Wageningen Engineers **(VWI) to commemorate its 25th anniversary in 2014**:
handed to rector Prof.dr.ir. Martin Kropff as encouragement to WUR to appoint more women into professor positions.

Artist Petra de Vree explains about her sculpture:

- Each layer of this strong talented woman's dress has a meaning
- 1st layer refers to the earth, processing soil and agriculture, WUR's foundation.
- 2nd layer expresses literacy. Letters of WUR's first female professor's name, Mien Visser, are included to inspire women to follow her footsteps. Additional spirals in different skin tones stand for WUR's international character and refer to growth, progress and development.
- 3rd layer is opened to allow looking through the sculpture; it emphasizes that an open attitude is needed to enable change
- The upper dress part shows details of structures in nature, such as cells, seeds, leaves,etc.
  It refers to the knowledge and experience of this talented woman.
  With her hand she offers her knowledge in the shape of brains of which structure is also reflected in the hat surrounding her head.





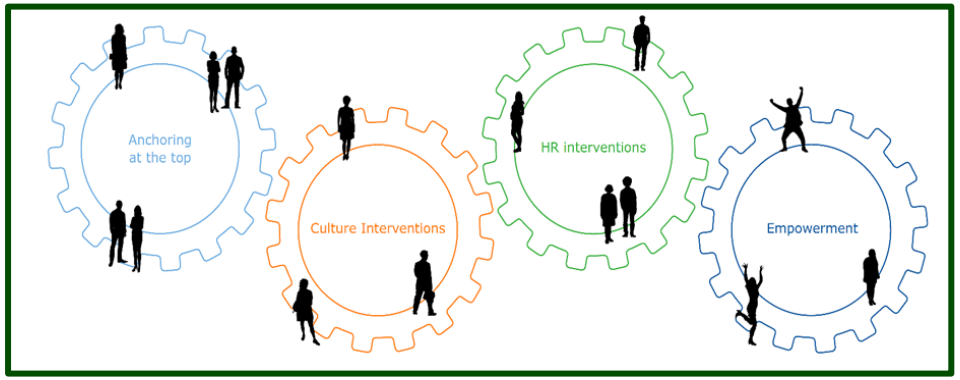
See also: https://www.petradevree.nl/the-meaning-of-take-my-knowledge/

Gender Action Plan-2, 2017-2019



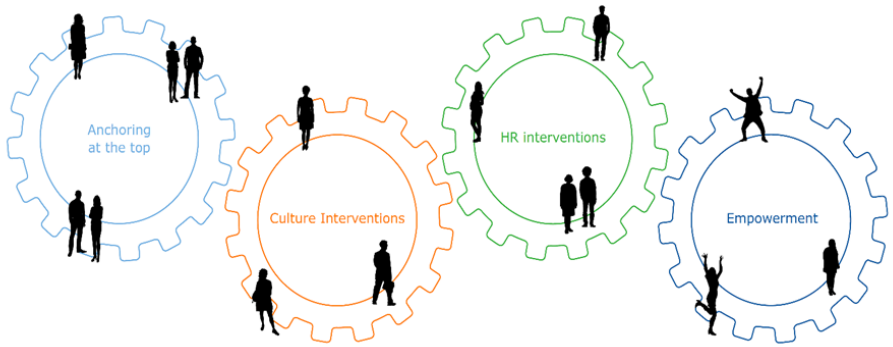
Gender Action Plan 2, 2017-2019, from awareness to action through

- Infographic: overview gender HR activities
- Different training programs: **Awareness to Action** for HR advisors, managers and teams
- Mentoring program – central/decentral: matching
- **Group Model Building:**
  - Pilot at Plant Sciences; resulted in 10-point action plan
  - Other departments will follow, perhaps in light version
- **Textio:** online tool to check English written vacancy texts
- **Workshops**: e.g., Stratego for women, profiling for women
- **Plans:** to continue, integrating Gender-SMART activities, towards GEP



Meanwhile attempts to revitalize Gender Studies as academic field not successful

- 'Should come from bottom-up' while elsewhere many examples (e.g., EU, CGIAR, BMGF)



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

– extra slide

Managerial staff involved in selection procedures should be aware of unconscious choices and preferences.

Workshop: Awareness in selection procedures

For: HR directors and HR advisers, BAC members involved in selection procedures

The aim of the workshop is for selectors to realise that we all have biases. Therefore, we need to take this into consideration during recruitment and selection procedures.

By: Esther Mollema/Direction

Workshop: Selection without prejudice

For: HR directors and HR advisers

This is a follow-up to the previous workshop Gender Awareness, which focused on the awareness of personal biases.
In addition to acquiring insight, knowledge, and skills, there are specific tips and steps to take to decrease the influence of stereotypes in recruitment and selection procedures. This training programme is mainly focused on action.

By: College for Human Rights

Workshop: BAC members

For: BAC members involved in selection procedures

Strengthening and changing the culture, awareness, and possibly standards and values in organisations.

Book: Inspiring women at Wageningen University & Research

For: Everyone

Role models are essential for scientists at the beginning of their careers in order to get an idea of what their future career might look like. Women in particular benefit from female role models that inspire them and disprove stereotypes. Wageningen University & Research has created this book about women at different stages of their careers.

Dialogue sessions: Group model building diversity

For: All sciences groups

Group Model Building – often in a few sessions – is a method whereby a management team, a team of stakeholders, or a group of professionals gain insight into the various causes of an organisational problem (such as in the area of Gender and Diversity) and the possible solutions.

By: Stakeholders and external supervisors

By: Training agency: In Touch
Monic Bührs, author of several successful management books.

Awareness of gender bias, advice on which interventions to use to strengthen the gender balance.

Recruitment and selection

For: All sciences groups

A product of "Selection without prejudice". This recruitment and selection method aims to support selectors in recruiting and selecting the right new colleagues. Objectives related to these have been included in strategic personnel plans and annual plans. Sustainability and corporate social responsibility take high priority in this.

App: Check English-language job vacancies for gender balance and quality

For: All sciences groups

Following the training programmes "Selection without prejudice" and the desire to utilise more clearly defined tools in order to start using Textio at WUR. It is a user-friendly tool that helps to improve English-language job vacancies. It provides concrete suggestions regarding gender balance and the quality of the vacancy when compared to similar vacancies.

Allowing employees to work on solving problems themselves and improving their own position.

Programme: Mentor-mentee

For: Everyone

The aim of the "mentor-mentee" programme is to promote women to higher positions within the university and research institutes.

By linking women/mentees – with their career-related goals – to a mentor, awareness is created and this can positively impact the career of the mentee.
HR corporate and the Gender contacts (within HR) have agreed that the decentralised HR adviser will match the mentee and the mentor. Are you looking for a mentor? Please contact your HR adviser.

Workshop: "Stratego for women"

For: All women (also mentees) who want to learn how to "play the game" in a strategic way.

The way decision-making processes are shaped is determined by the majority. In most organisations, this happens to be men. If women want to achieve higher positions in companies, or would like to be asked for interesting projects, they should know what those rules are. That does not necessarily mean modifying the rules, but instead, playing the game in a strategic way. This is why HR corporate has organised the workshop "Stratego for women".

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Toward an inclusive and gender-responsive WUR

© Storm-van der Chijs Fund, 23 May 2017

Your voice !



Diversity
Everyone is individual and different

Equality
Equal access to opportunities

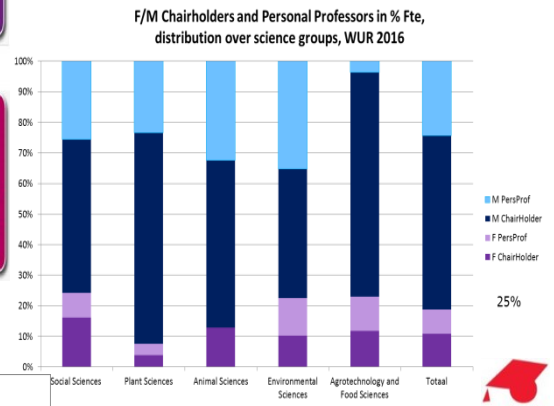
Inclusion
Inclusion is a sense of belonging: feeling respected, valued for who you are; feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that you can do your best at work







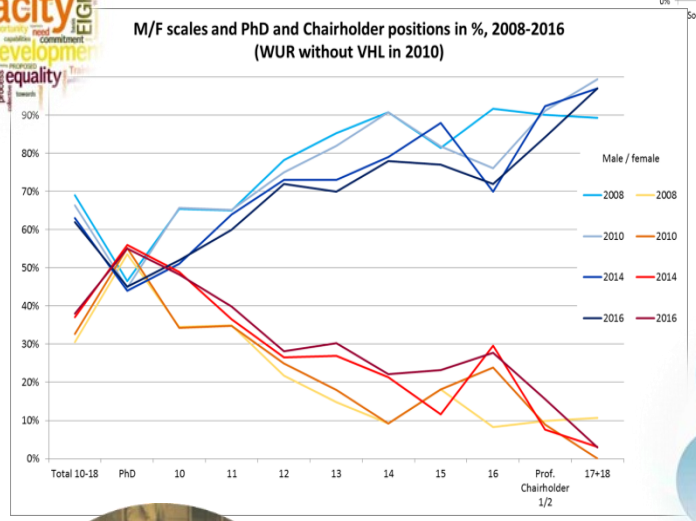




25%



Yes!





!?









EU project at WUR - Jan 2019 - 2023

Gender SMART is an H2020 project (grant agreement No 824546).
It is granted under the "Science with and for Society" programme.
It has 3 million euros of EU funding over four years.

Gender-SMART: EU project focussing on the agricultural, food and life sciences

Presenters:
Margreet van der Burg (WUR)
Joyce van der Velde (WUR)











- 4 year, to achieve sustainable structural change
- cooperation required Gender-SMART, WUR, EU, Worldwide!

New WUR Gender+ Equality Plan based on lessons learned Gender-SMART: EU project at WUR 2019- Dec 2022

Gender+ integration

- 4 year funded by EU-HORIZON 2020 to enhance structural change
- Commitment highest management in advance
- Each partner: tailor-made Gender Equality Plan (WUR: *Towards a Gender-SMART WUR, 2020-2022*)
- WUR as working & learning site and in **'doing science'** (RRI)



Approach/principles

- ✓ Integrative and participatory approach
- ✓ Wide-ranging coverage: Core Team, Steering Group & connection external initiatives , to be continued
- ✓ Based on audits and EU exchange through Gender-SMART consortium - now EU requirement
- ✓ Connect and collaborate with existing WUR initiatives where possible

Understanding Terminology: Gender+ / inclusion

- ❑ Not women only, also men and diverse genders
  → **gender**
- ❑ Not exclusively about gender,
  also heterogeneity among women and among men
  (age/generation, nationality, religion, socio-economic status, race, sexuality, caste, etc)
  → **gender+**
- ❑ Not exclusively about diversity as difference, or as individual characteristics,
  also as part of dynamic cultural value systems
  → **intersecting social dimensions of (in)equalities**
- ❑ Not as fixed identities but as embedded in hierarchical AND dynamic normative value systems;
  → work-in-progress towards a **culture of inclusion**







Instead of



'TOWARDS A GENDER+ SMART WUR'

RANGE OF PILOTS & ACTIVITIES





Gender+ SMART

As WUR we delivered a joint report on what, as Gender SMART partner, we learned from our pilot practices in gender-sensitive Human resource management. WUR did a pilot practice in coaching BAC's in being less biased in their selection processes. A successful pilot







Board of Education

Wageningen Graduate Schools (WGS)
The umbrella organisation



3 Gender+ in recruitment and careers

4 Work-life balance

Gender+-sensitive governance, leadership and decision-making

2 Safe and respectful working environment

Gender+ in Education

6

Incubator project: Towards diversity and inclusivity in sustainability governance research and teaching

1 Building a gender+ SMART culture

Gender+ SMART WUR

Gender+ in Research

7

New BSc minor!

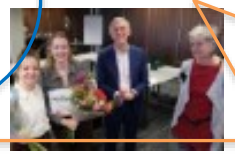
PhD module - OTHER???

Critical Gender Studies in the Life Sciences domains - 4 ECTS



2022: WUR Gender+ Equality Plan and Focal Points











Inspiring people @WUR: Percy Cicilia Jr.













From main lessons learned into New WUR Gender⁺ Equality Plan

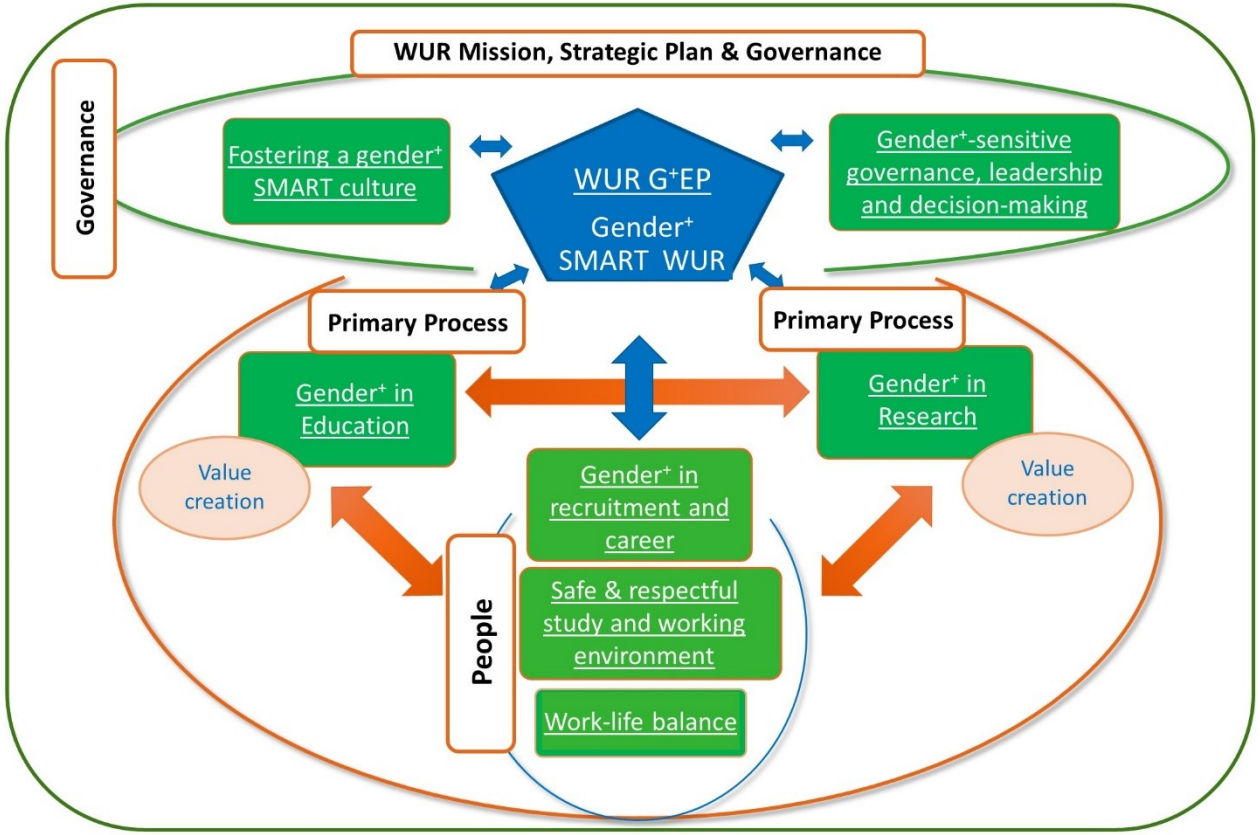
- Lots of support and openness for collaboration - and with new initiatives DARE etc
- From awareness → to increasing ability & comfortability to act as daily routine (Social Safety/ D&I)
- Available data → to be more effectively used as policy instruments
- Differences among SGs and among WU/WR parts → differential approach where adequate
- Importance of
  - Addressing gender⁺ integration as more than women, HRM, or gender identities
  - Building coherence and sustainability by cooperation and exchange
  - Direct access to intersectional gender⁺ expertise (e.g., DARE initiative - decolonizing efforts)
  - Visibility and sustainable internal communication / engagement strategy
  - Embeddedness in WUR organisational structure and strategies (SP, M&E, resources)



New WUR Gender⁺ Equality Plan 2024-2028

Follow-up in WUR Gender⁺ Equality Plan, 2024-2028

- **Required for EU funding**
- Builds on Gender-SMART / cross-cutting
- Positioning in three WUR pillars:
  - Primary process (Education & **Research**)
  - **Governance**
  - People
- Gender⁺ structurally embedded
  - Approved by EB Febr. 2024
  - In Strategic Plan & **responsibility structure**
- Document includes Annexes on WUR building blocks and relevant resources



New WUR Gender+ Equality Plan 2024-2028 – extra slide



- **In accordance with new EU and NL criteria**

  → WUR G+EP, 2024-2028 as framework; yearly OGSMs and progress reports as M&E

  - Publicly accessible, by EB signed document
  - Dedicated resources and tasked persons

- **Connected to WUR structure and initiatives to**

- Integrate in education and research contents
- Embed in WUR policies, documents and data monitoring
- Expand on D&I and social safety policies & activities
- Inclusion DARE and other social dimensions of (in)equality

- **Implementation by WUR Regiegroup and Working group G+EP**

- Accountability, responsibility and budget through Regiegroup
- Together: representation, external networking, internal capacity building

I. WUR Primary processes:

A. Gender+ integration in education

B. Gender+ integration in research

II. WUR Governance

A. Strategic management: mission, policy documents, routines & procedures

B. WUR governance, leadership and decision-making

III. WUR People

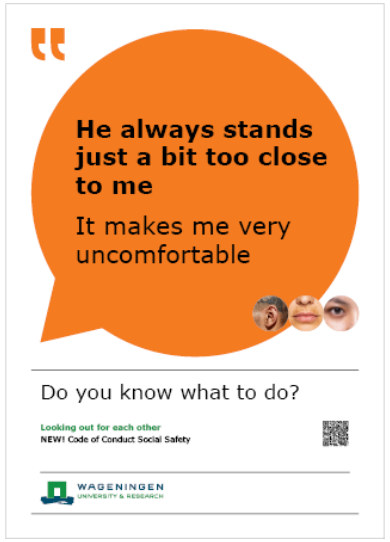
A. HRM recruitment, selection and career progression

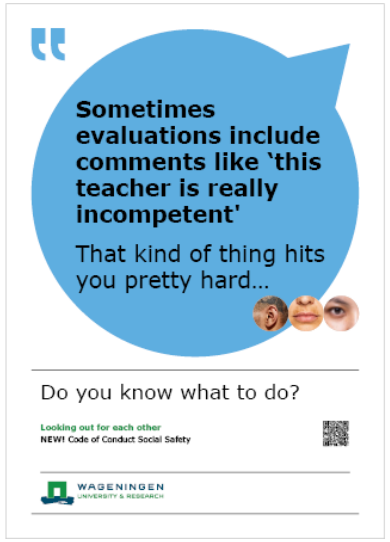
B. Safe and respectful international working & learning environment

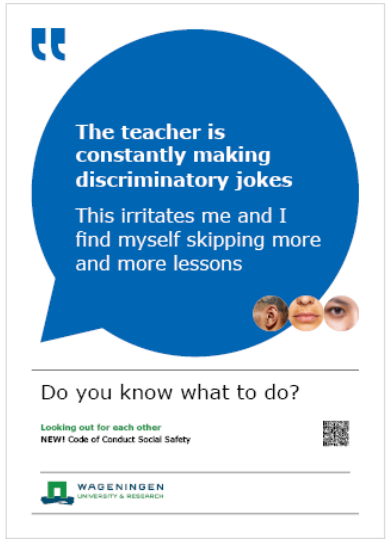
C. Work-life balance (WLB)

Many activities related to D&I - Social Safety, for various WUR groups



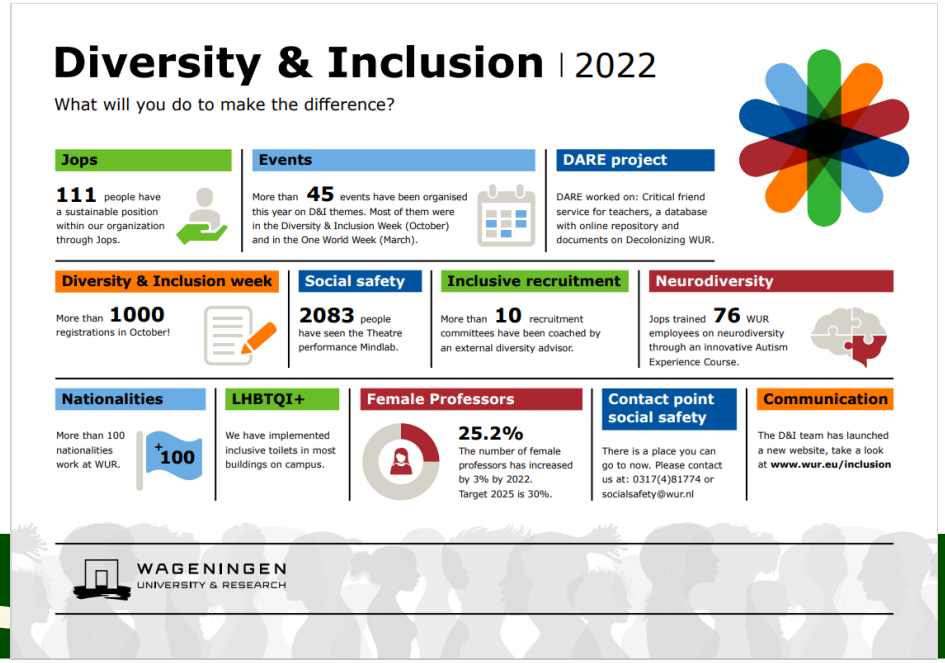


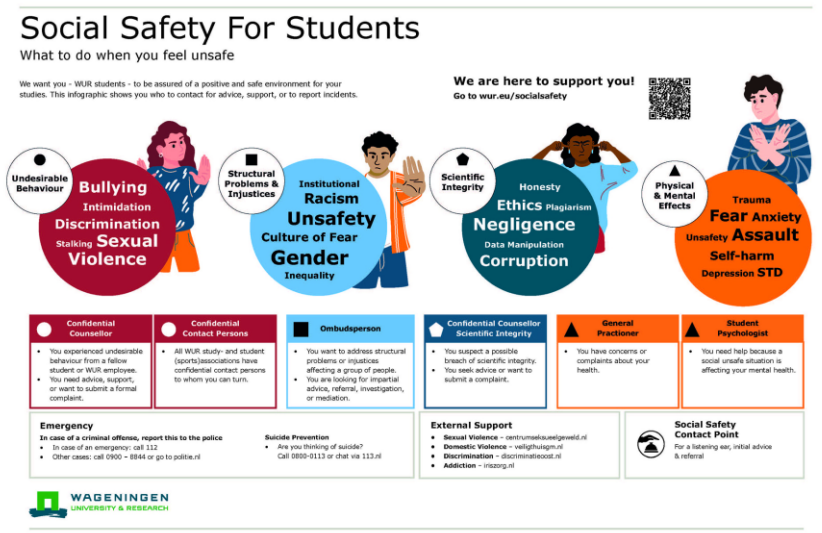














Omnia Portrait Gallery









1 Febr 2022, all portraits were moved after the sale of the former AULA and hung at Omnia

Video portraits as loop in three screens
Selection - consultation EB







Public: Omnia Statue and Exhibition



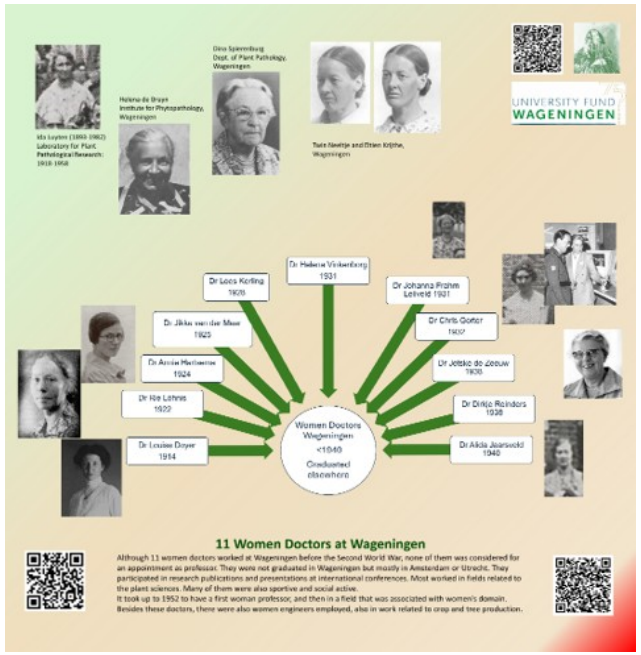


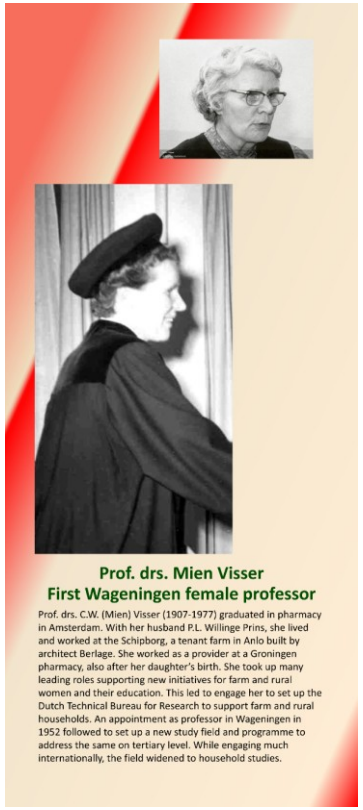


Half year exhibition in locker wall - where now????

https://edepot.wur.nl/380667



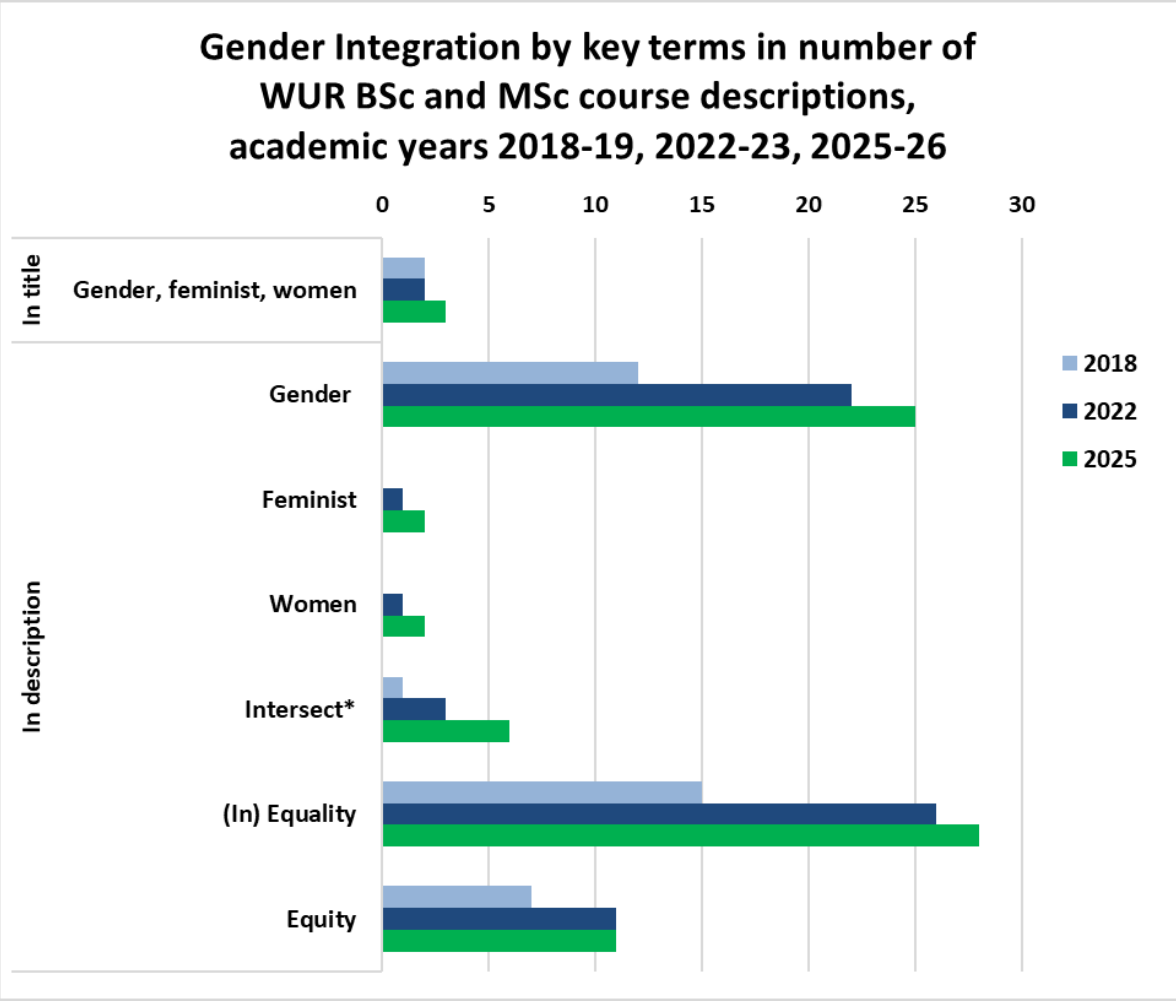








Gender integration in BSc and MSc course descriptions, WU, 2018, 2022, 2025



The analysis on key words in the short course descriptions was done for the academic years 2018/2019 and 2022/2023, and repeated again for 2025-2026. Each course was only counted once.

The table shows no real increase in dedicated courses (in title). Though, more course descriptions did mention gender and related terms in the course descriptions. The increase though slowed down during the last 3 years.

We can assume that the use of these terms has been more normalized and more consciously addressed, though we need further analysis of the courses do tell more.

Worth mentioning is that the minor 'Gender and diversity for sustainable worlds' is approved in 2022 and in 2025 a minor on Decoloniality

There are no dedicated Gender(+) related study programmes.

This does not imply that other courses do not address gender or (in)equalities. From discussions and interviews it became clear that also students bring in gender questions into courses or are enabled to address gender aspects in their assignments.

Summary

- Women students there from the beginning; ca 2000 > 50%, variety over study programmes
  - WVSV
  - Getting the right access certificate and career opportunities (1956 banned firing when married!)
- Capable women scientist there from the beginning
  - PhD graduation elsewhere
  - Not considered capable leaders until women's programme in 1952
  - ✓ E.g. Lizzy van Dorp, Ida Luyten, Frida Eversmann, Julia Gouwentak
- 1970s radical change
  - Women's equality and women's studies measures
  - Networking and collaboration, Boerinnengroep, VWI, LWBS
- 1996 neo-liberalism discontinuation
- **2004 New elan from 2004 onwards as accidental, not embedded →**
  - 2014 Gender Action Plans 2014, 2016 → 2019 Gender-SMART 2019-2023
  - Intresectionality: 2024 WUR Gender^{+} Equality Plan, 2024-2028
  - Networking: Thalia, VWI, ELLS, LNVH, LanDo

Future -1 Lessons learned → suggestions to further pursue

Harness against back-lash as happened late 1990s/2000s by:

- **Pursue cooperation and exchange to keep on learning** (expertise + competences) to take advantage of synergies as fruitful for both intersectional gender organizational and scientific integration for responsible social impact
- **Make time available** to keep up with new scientific and managerial insights in the field - by scientific staff - by organizational staff and - organizational leadership (example Gender-SMART, ELLS proposal)
- Develop mandated positions or time allocations for building and professionalising expertise in scientific staff with well-functioning governance, e.g. including rotating visiting or appointed professor
- Make time (and money available) for bringing in inspiring persons on a regular basis by Erasmus+ grants, master classes /visiting scholarships, webinars/seminars etc
- Develop inclusion in study programmes and research programming (e.g. beyond minors / pilot in Grant Office, incidental courses through WGS)
- Pursue working together to co-learn to ensure durable integration and relevance

Future – 2 Lessons learned → suggestions to further pursue

Therefore:

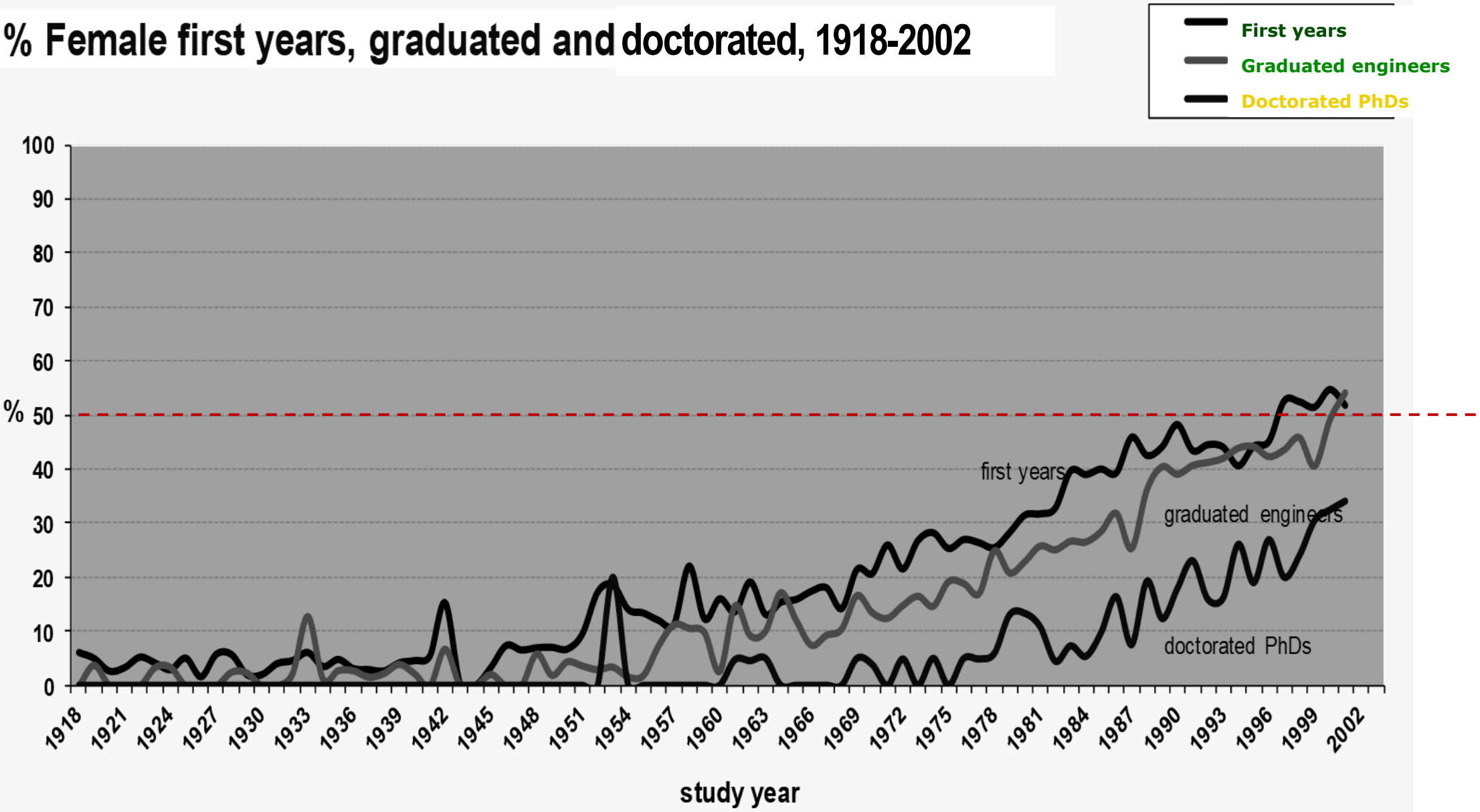
- pursue inclusive intersectional approaches beyond targeting historically marginalized groups while ensuring safe spaces and differentiations
- develop qualitative criteria and indicators beyond solely quantitative indicators, e.g., related to training and performance on intersectional inclusive leadership qualities, active allyship to all, checklist for Strategic Personnel Plans (chair groups), yearly talk with personnel etc.
- implement pilot approaches; e.g. inclusivity procedures for all selection & promotion committees
- engage supportive staff at all levels where relevant (e.g. HR, TLC/ESA and CSA staff)
- pursue onboarding strategies for new staff and students
- improve feed-back loops in governance as a learning organisation – react on proposals / open door options more widely known and encouraged

Future – 3 Lessons learned → suggestions to further pursue

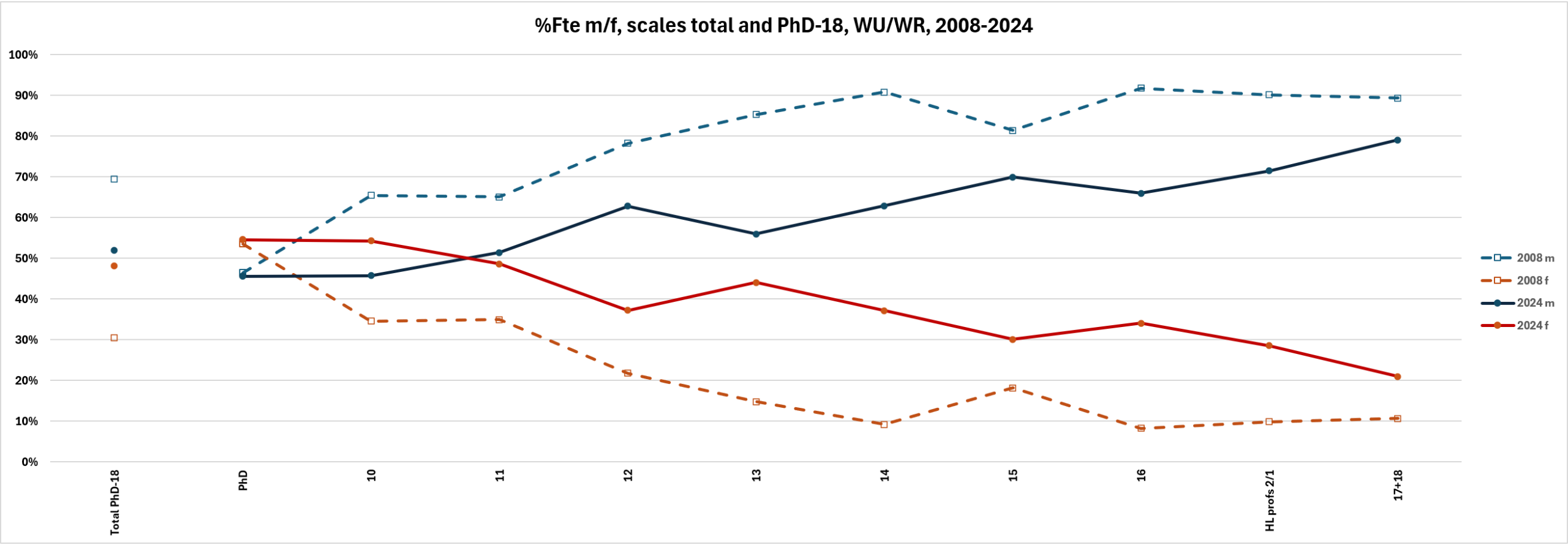
Therefore:

- To profile the field: keep on explaining, developing, professionalizing
  - visibility is crucial: communicate and document what you are doing, make pictures, build archives
  - develop a focal point, e.g. Centre of Excellence, to enhance visibility and develop sustainably a community of expertise, support and life-long learning together as diverse all are
- Explore budgeting of 5 % on research granted projects/programmes to include integrative or specific (PhD) research
- Celebrate achievements and reflect on those as good practices always to be improved!

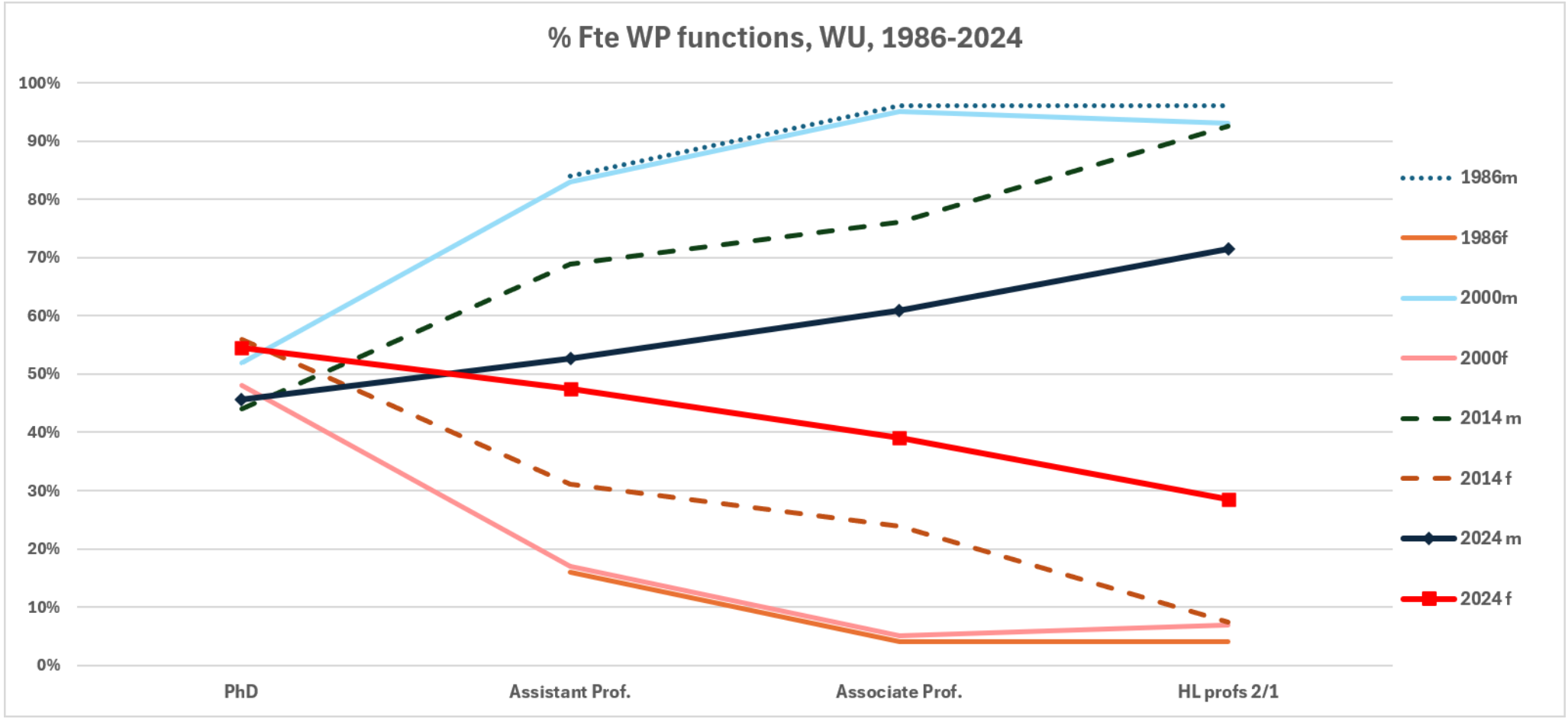
% Female first years, graduated and doctorated, 1918-2002



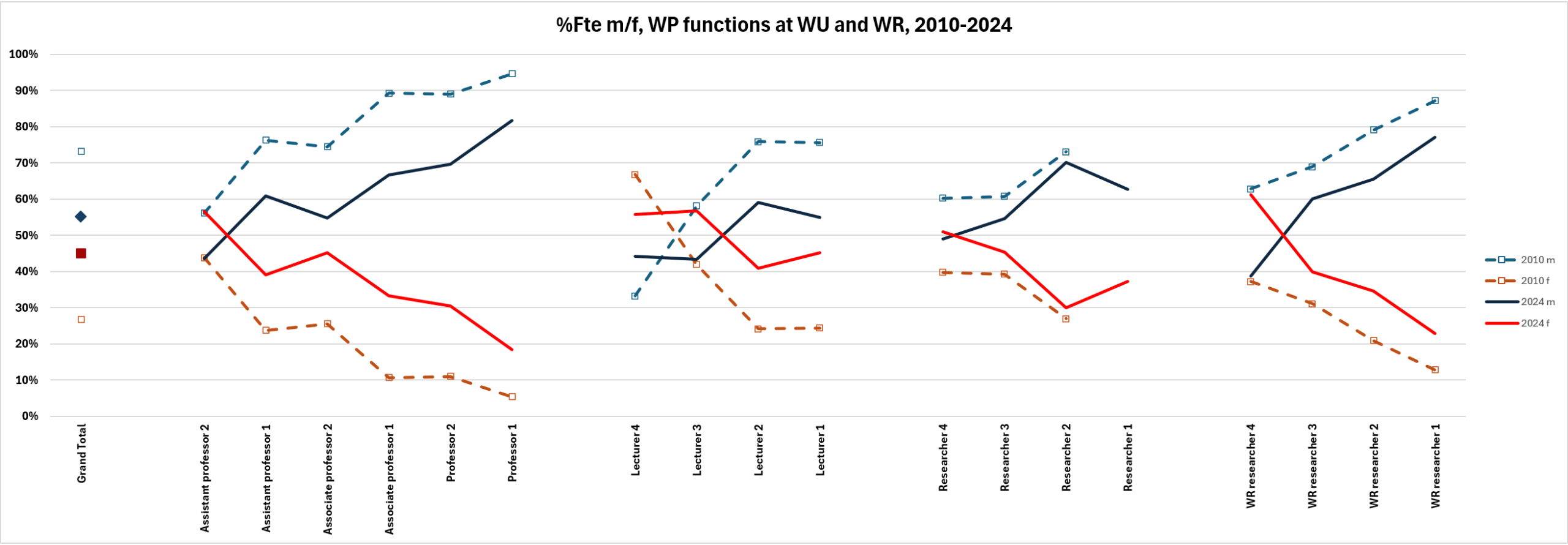
Open scissors still there, though not for all and smaller, scales PhD-18, 2008-2024



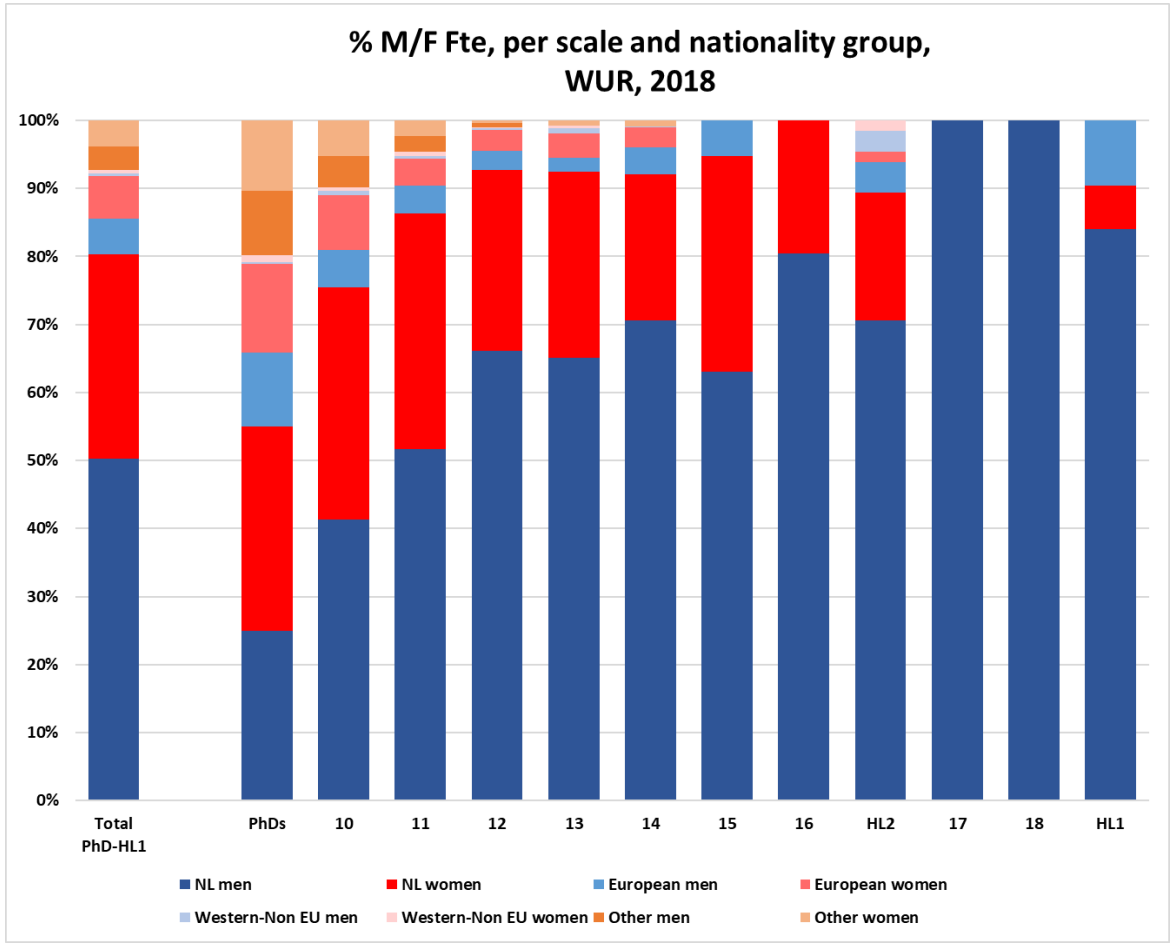
Open scissors still there, though smaller, WP functions 1986-2024

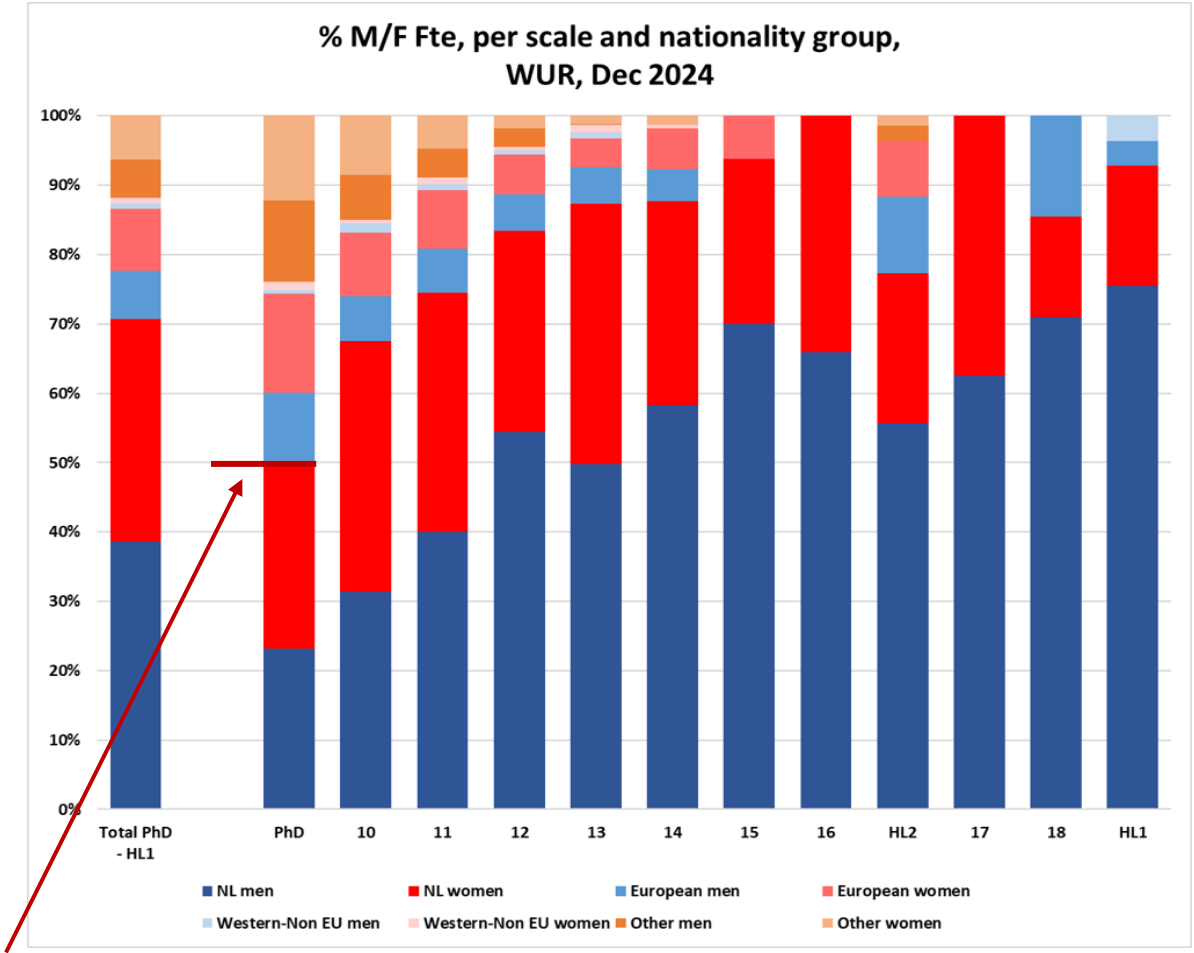


Open scissors still there, though not for all and smaller, WP functions Academic Career Framework, 2010-2024



Stats WUR – Dec 2018 - 2024: % m/f per nationality group





* Please note that HRM data can only be differentiated by background through the nationality for staff. Nationalities were divided over 4 groups:
1. Netherlands (NL), 2. European countries except NL, 3. Western countries like Northern Americas, Australia, New-Zealand, and 4. African, Asian and Mid- and South American countries.

Gender balance in study programmes, WU, 2025, 2022, 2018

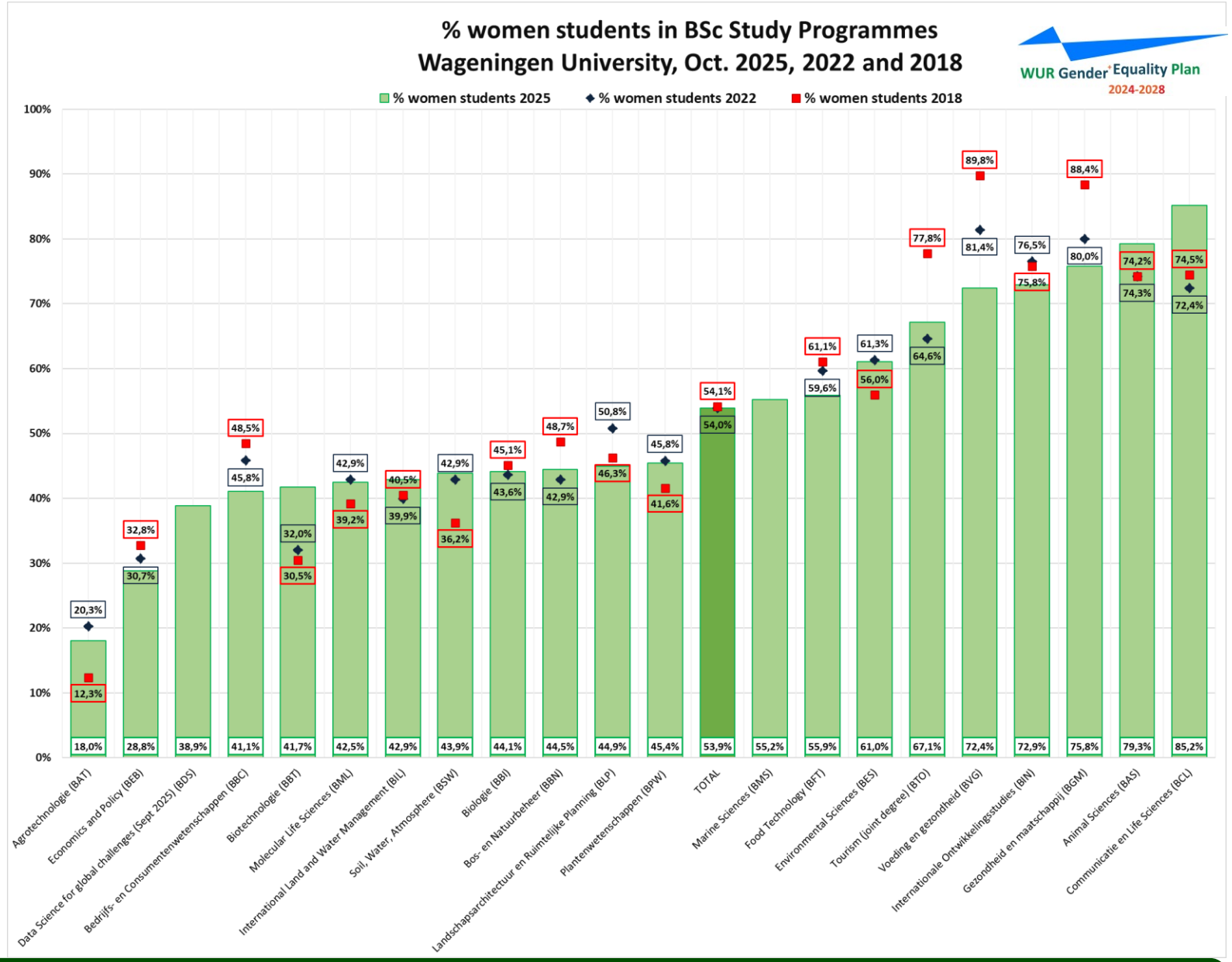
The two graphs show quite some variety across programmes, esp BSc, and changes in % women students across the years.

In BSc programmes, the total % of women students is more or less stable around 54%; % MSc women went down from 58 to 53%.

Programmes right from TOTAL show an increase in unbalance when 2025 coloured column reaches over the other signs; opposite for left.

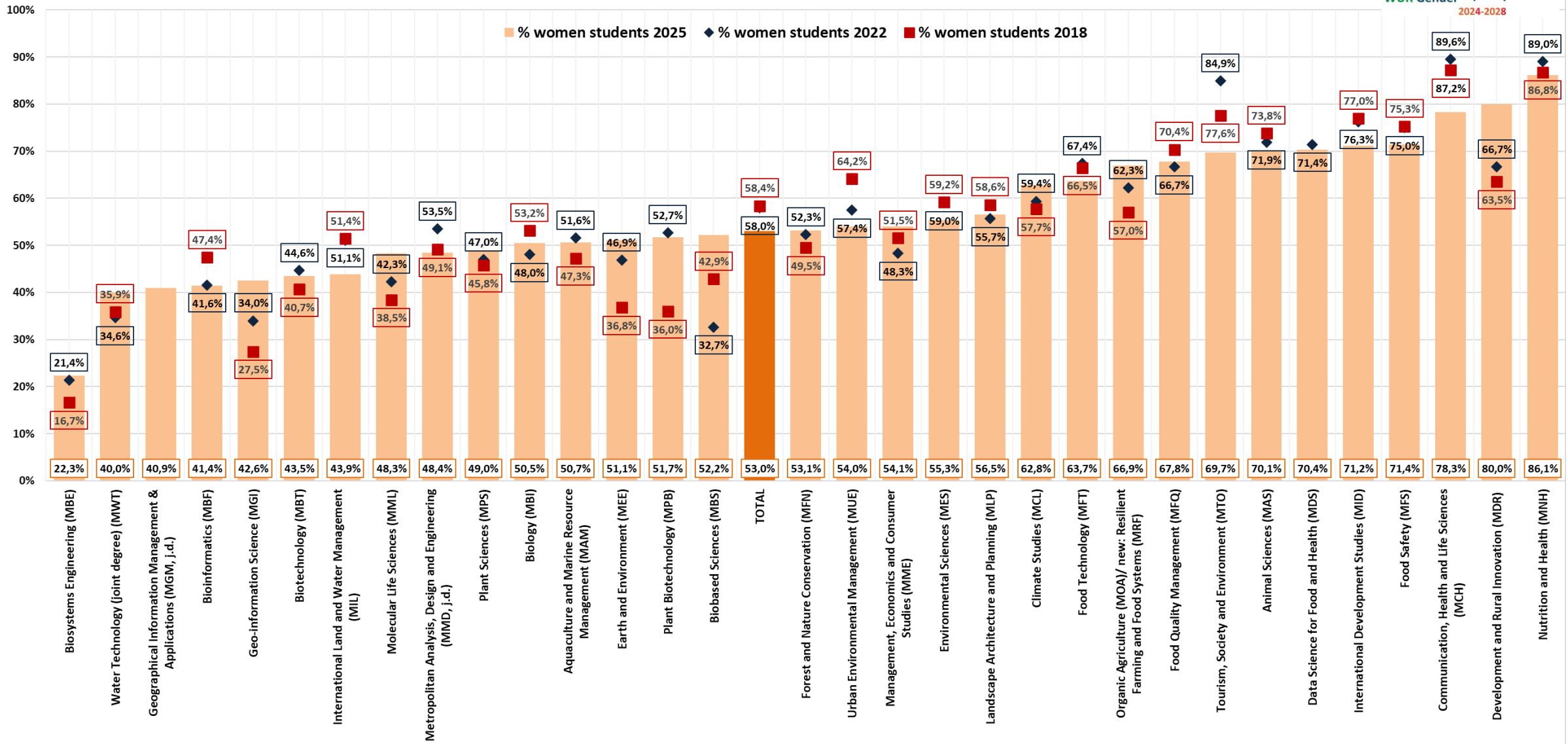
To better balance:
BSc <40% women: 3 studies, esp. BAT and BEB; <40% men: esp. BAS and BCL, then BMG, BIN, BVG, BTO (more societal)

MSc <40% women: MBE only; <40% men: 12 studies, < 30% for MNH, MDR, MCH (more societal).



% women students in MSc Study Programmes
Wageningen University, Oct. 2025, 2022 and 2018

WUR Gender Equality Plan 2024-2028



Today

- **Book highlights till 2003**
  - 1970s – 1990s and need to retake
- **Post-2003: (Intersectional) Gender Studies policies – highlights**
  - From awareness to action; from policies to practices and daily routines
  - Changes in (Intersectional) Gender Balance: where do we stand?
  - Recommendations to proceed with sustainable implementation

Exchange/Discussion: Space to share and reflect on your study and career experiences.

- Which elements - during your time at WUR - could or do you profit from in your education and career; what did you miss at the time or do you by now.
- What would you wish WUR to offer you as part of your study now or as part of life-long learning?
- How do you see networking among professionals have supported or can support you better?