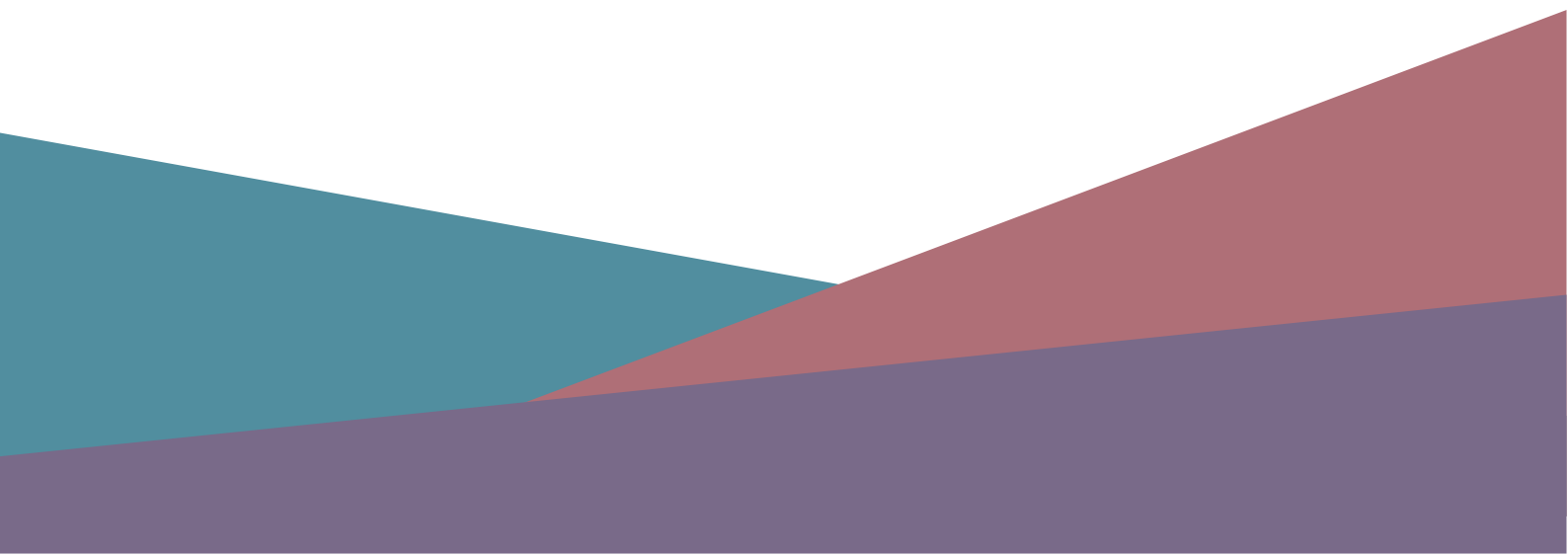


GENDER STRATEGY 2021–2024

Strategy for Gender Balance
and Equal Opportunities
for Women and Men



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The ETH Domain aims to improve the gender balance among its member institutions by increasing the share of women in education and in research, as well as in management positions. Ensuring equal opportunities for women and men within the ETH Domain is a prerequisite for achieving this objective.

This document outlines an overarching strategy to foster gender balance and equal opportunities for women and men within the ETH Domain. While the broader concept of diversity is important to the ETH Domain as well, this strategy focuses specifically on the gender dimension in order to adopt an efficient and targeted approach. It includes general principles and consists of five Focus Areas. Measures required for achieving the objectives laid down here may differ from one institution to another. Therefore, the individual ETH Domain institutions are responsible for implementing the present strategy through adequate actions that match their respective situation.

Improving gender balance and equal opportunities for women and men requires incorporating as much knowledge as possible regarding the effectiveness, the impact and other effects of potential measures. The ETH Domain institutions collaborate in the assessment of measures practised within the ETH Domain, in Switzerland or in other countries, particularly within universities and research institutes but also within partner companies. The institutions also consider relevant insights from scientific literature and recommendations in order to identify measures with high potential to support the ETH Domain in attaining its goals. The purpose of the Domain's Equal Opportunities Working Group is to facilitate the exchange and to foster collaboration between the ETH Domain institutions, while the ETH Board acts as a strategic management and supervisory body by monitoring gender balance and equal opportunities for women and men throughout the ETH Domain.

The present strategy concerns all members of the ETH Domain, women and men, including students and employees in technical, administrative, scientific or management positions.

Focus Area 1:

Strong anchorage of equal opportunities in the institutions

A strong institutional anchorage and commitment of the top management is a central factor for the implementation and effectiveness of gender balance and equal opportunity policies. The responsibility for implementing and communicating such policies lies with the Presidents or Directors and the Executive Boards of the respective institutions and with the heads of their sub-entities (e.g. faculties, departments, administration), depending on the institutions' individual structure. The development and implementation of equal opportunity policies in the ETH Domain institutions is supported by professional structures, as well as by staff with adequate resources linked to a member of the executive boards or boards of directors.

Implementing a strategy on gender balance and equal opportunities for women and men requires goals, implementation measures and monitoring instruments. All ETH Domain institutions formulate their own specific Equal Opportunities/Gender Action Plans (EOAP/GAPs) based on the focus areas outlined in the present document. In general, monitoring methods and assessment instruments used by the institutions should strive to ensure adequate comparability of the results. The monitoring reports mention the goals set by the individual institutions and provide information whether and how these goals were attained. The institutions publish both their monitoring reports and their individual strategies.

An appropriate financial commitment is essential for strengthening existing efforts or launching new instruments on the level of the individual institutions. Therefore, the ETH Domain institutions will spend at least 0.5% of the overall annual Federal financial contribution for implementing measures supporting the promotion of equal opportunities. The financial resources should be used to foster gender balance and equal opportunities for women and men in a broad sense. The respective measures should be diverse and well balanced. At least two thirds of the 0.5% target proportion should be used for measures other than supporting regular childcare facilities.¹ These provisions apply for all ETH Domain institutions together. Specific target proportions per institution will be defined in the individual target agreements between the ETH Board and the ETH Domain institutions.

¹ "Regular childcare facilities" are those, which cover daily needs at the institutions. The limitation does not apply to additional offerings such as day nurseries and childcare facilities for specific occasions.

Focus Area 2:

Awareness of gender stereotypes and biases, respectful conduct and communication

Gender stereotypes and biases are an impediment to gender balance and equal opportunities. All ETH Domain institutions take action to enhance awareness among their members regarding stereotypes and their impacts. They implement measures to systematically identify these stereotypes; these measures include, for example, workshops, lectures and online tools. The ETH Domain institutions are also committed to detecting internal structural gender biases. They ensure equal treatment regarding salary conditions and access to resources, and abide by the rules of the Swiss Charter for equal pay in the public sector, which all ETH Domain institutions have signed.

All the institutions strive to create an inclusive culture at every level, which values all gender identities. They implement a code of conduct, emphasising the key elements of mutual respect and the prevention of discrimination, bullying, mobbing, threats, violence and sexual harassment. The institutions fully dedicate themselves to train their members to comply with these principles. They position themselves firmly and categorically against inappropriate behaviours, such as those listed above, and take clear, effective and strong measures to counter them. They will continue to raise awareness of and sensitivity to unconscious biases among all their members and to train their leaders in exercising their duty of care.

Finally, the institutions of the ETH Domain integrate gender balance and equal opportunities for women and men into their various communication activities. They specifically endeavour to ensure an appropriate representation of women and men at public events and in representative situations. The institutions of the ETH Domain communicate in gender-impartial language.

Information on the institutions' equal opportunities strategy, action plans and measures is easily accessible and is part of the information packages for employees and students.

Focus Area 3: Career development for women at all stages

Based on monitoring and benchmarking, each institution will define quantitative targets and specific measures – tailored to its particular situation – for increasing the proportion of women in academic, administrative and technical positions.

ETH Zurich and EPFL take appropriate measures to ensure that more women enrol in their Bachelor's and Master's programmes in fields where they are currently under-represented. To this end, they also cooperate with secondary and teacher training institutions and other stakeholders active in the promotion of science outreach and education. They actively support female and male students throughout their studies in order to ensure equal chances of success.

The ETH Domain institutions take measures to attract the most talented female and male students and researchers, and to enable them to thrive and excel on an equal footing. They develop strategies to increase the share of women at the doctoral and postdoc levels in fields where they are currently under-represented and take specific action to foster female leadership. The institutions support measures such as mentoring, training and coaching intended to guide students towards academic, industrial and entrepreneurial careers, where appropriate with a specific focus on promoting career opportunities for women.

Achieving a significant increase in the number of female professors and senior scientists and improving career perspectives for women requires targets and actions by all institutions, faculties or departments. As a basic standard, these actions should include the proactive search for female candidates, training for the hiring committee members to eliminate unconscious biases and stereotypes at all levels within the institutions, and proactive efforts to retain female professors and senior scientists.

The ETH Domain institutions and the ETH Board strive for an appropriate gender balance for management positions (lower, middle and upper management), decision-making bodies at all levels (such as committees for research, strategy, hiring or tenure track evaluation), as well as in highly segregated sectors of the technical and administrative staff, including apprentices. The institutions regularly assess the gender balance in recruitment and promotion procedures, as well as in access to and take-up of staff development measures.

The institutions of the ETH Domain also address dual career issues and ensure that corresponding expertise is shared among them and that cross-institutional coordination is established. Also, they implement adequate measures to reconcile a career and family-related tasks, which are relevant to the career promotion of women and men. Similarly, instruments for compensation for parental leave – i.e. maternity leave, paternity leave and leave for non-birth parents,² or family-related absences – are in place (such as a “stop the clock scheme” for tenure track positions or contract extension opportunities for doctoral and postdoc researchers).

² “Non-birth parents” refers to the non-biological parents of a child.

Focus Area 4:

Conditions for a good life domain balance

The institutions of the ETH Domain and the ETH Board ensure that working conditions are conducive to a good “life domain balance” (a broader concept than the notion of work-life balance) that promotes equal opportunities for women and men.

Day nurseries and childcare facilities for specific occasions (such as emergency childcare, holiday activities or childcare solutions for conferences) are developed further, based on an assessment of employees’ and students’ needs. Similarly, a framework conducive to caring for the elderly and meeting the enhanced care requirements of family members is provided.

Solutions are promoted for both women and men to work flexibly. Professors and leaders are alerted to the relevance of work flexibility and family-friendliness in achieving excellence in their respective institutions. Support and incentives to ensure the compatibility of work flexibility and family-friendliness with the institutions’ excellence goals are provided. Furthermore, the gender aspects of virtual working models (such as working from home) are taken into account. The institutions of the ETH Domain provide employees and students with information and counselling so that they are aware of the wide availability of family-friendly working models and study conditions.

Focus Area 5:

Gender issues in teaching and research

The ETH Domain institutions take measures to ensure that gender-related aspects are taken into account in research projects, large research programmes and (institutional) evaluations. They engage to train those persons involved in teaching, assessment and curriculum development to be aware of potential gender differences in learning strategies and perceived self-efficacy, as well as of their impact on examination methods. The measures adopted ideally build on research, innovative approaches and best-practice examples.

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