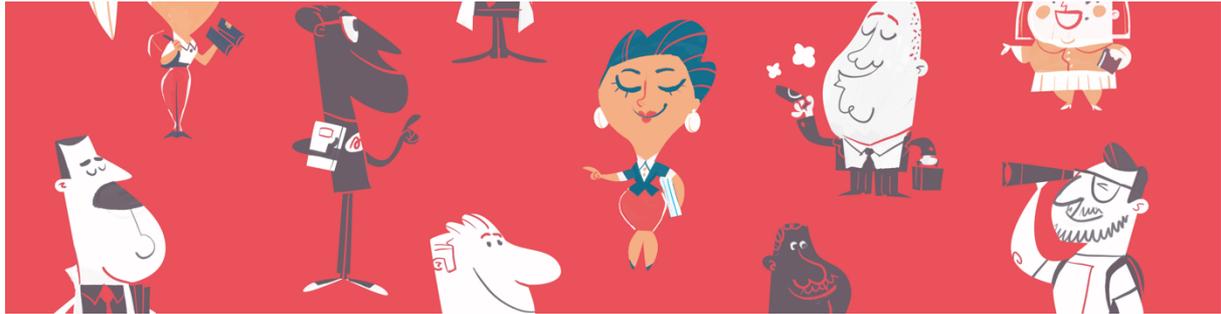


Webinar N°6 - The role of funding policies and the use of quotas

within the SCNAT webinar series Achieving Gender Equality and Diversity in the Natural Sciences, held in 2021



Summary of inputs and conclusions

by Romaine Jean

The Swiss National Science Foundation has recently introduced gender quotas and aims to have at least 40% women in its decision-making bodies. Is this the right way, the right measure, to promote women, to close the gender gap?

In this webinar we explore the pros and cons of using gender quotas in academia. Compared to Europe, Switzerland is lagging behind. We have 23.3% female professors in our universities, compared to an average of 23.7% in Europe, 36.6% in Belgium and even 54.3% in Romania. Be ambitious, introduce quotas, says Dr Simona Isler, gender equality officer at the Swiss National Science Foundation. Top-down support is very helpful. Quotas aim at an equitable distribution of power between women and men, increasing the visibility of female researchers in Switzerland and improving governance through diversity.

Gerlind Wallon is Deputy Director of the European Molecular Biology Organization. She co-authored a report on the use of quotas in academia and is often invited to discuss this issue at round tables. She also believes that the introduction of quotas is a good measure. National action plans and funding measures have had little impact on the position of women. "And quotas do not diminish the merit of selected women". In universities, the problem starts with the transition from masters to doctorate, and from there the trend continues throughout the academic career. Men complete their doctoral thesis more often and are more inclined to devote themselves to research. The proportion of female professors remains low. Quotas could help to change the situation.

Watch the video on youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LM7qdxwbyA>

Website of webinar series

https://biol.scnat.ch/de/activities/uuid/i/d87a53d7-bac7-522f-957c-12f0d9ebc843-Achieving_Gender_Equality_and_Diversity_in_the_Natural_Sciences