



The call for equal opportunities in science and innovation

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Research areas

- **D&I issues in business contexts**
- **Women in (entrepreneurial) finance** in collaboration with **social psychologists** and **scholars in entrepreneurial finance**
- **Women in science** in collaboration with **social psychologists** and **economists of science**
- **Relation between women and space** in collaboration **with architects** and **urban planners**

An interdisciplinary approach is vital in understanding gender issues



Androcentrism is a societal perspective that places men and their experiences at the center of focus and importance, to the detriment of women. It involves viewing the world through a male-oriented lens, where men are considered the default standard, while women are the exception



Stereotypes are “social judgments of individual group members that lead people to judge group members consistently, and in an exaggerated way, with group expectations

- **Descriptive dimension** (how you are): *women are not inclined toward math*
- **Prescriptive dimension** (how you should be): *as you are a woman, it is not wise to pursue a degree in mathematics*



Uneven opportunities for women



- Uneven distribution of **household duties**
- Many **high-innovative industries** are **male-dominated**
- Firms shape **innovation** based on **their perceptions** of the average customers
- **Women's education patterns**

Androcentrism and stereotypes are **pivotal** in any **school grades**

- **Primary school** → Textbooks and feedbacks
- **High school**
 - **School counseling** on which university degree to pursue
 - Families' **expectations**
 - Work-related **misconceptions**
 - Lack of female **role models**
- **University**
 - The **glass door**
 - The **glass ceiling**



Uneven opportunities for women in S&I: Doctoral degrees in STEM

Women are under-represented among STEM doctoral graduates (source: She Figure)

% of women among doctoral graduates in STEM

Country	Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (EF05)							
	Biological and related sciences (EF051)		Environment (EF052)		Physical sciences (EF053)		Mathematics and statistics (EF054)	
	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018
EU-27	57.92	59.7	60.35	56.03	37.94	38.39	32.53	32.49
EU-28	59	59.83	60.35	56.03	37.48	37.96	31.36	32.2

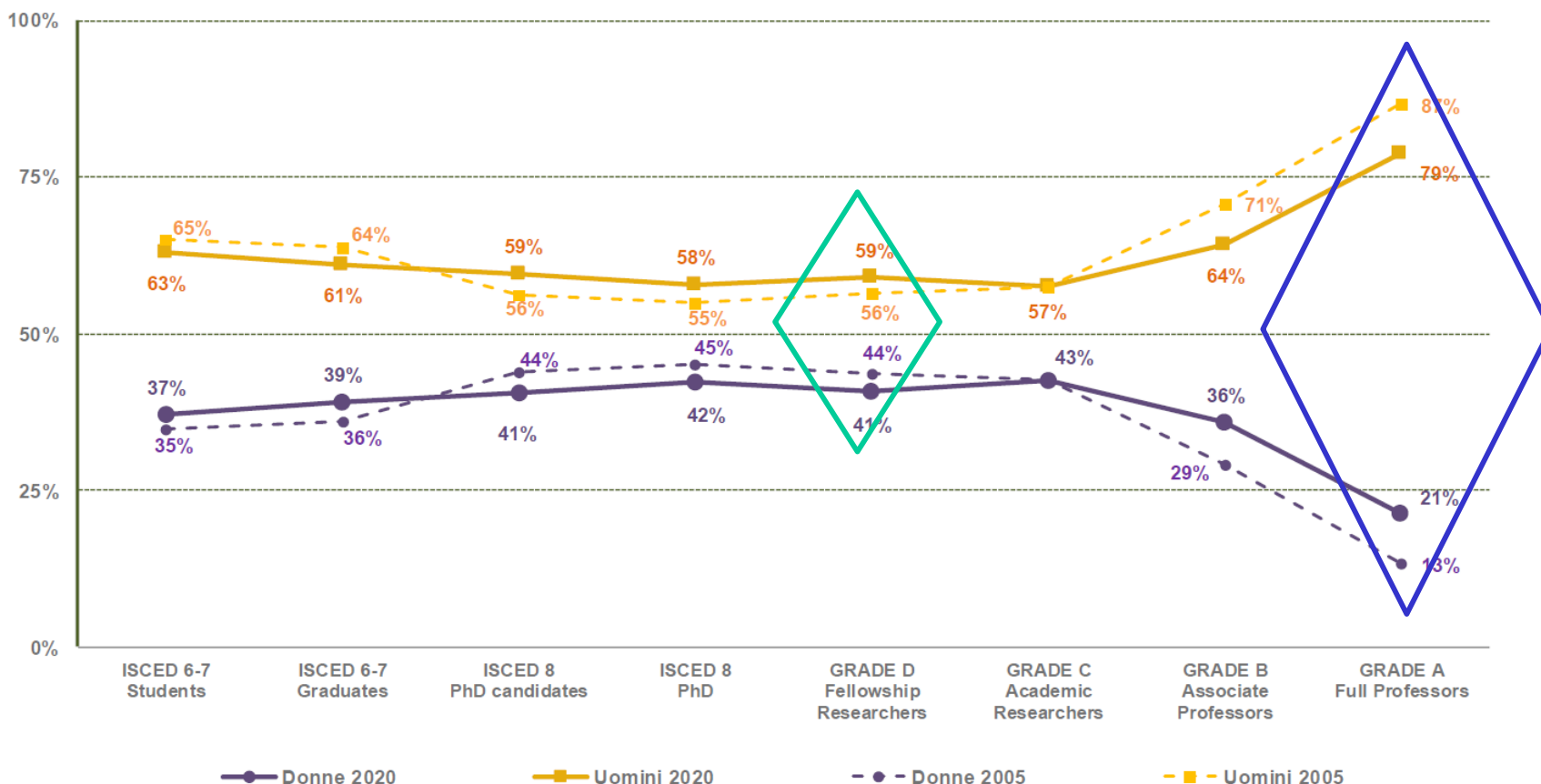
Country	Information and Communication Technologies (EF06)		Engineering, manufacturing and construction (EF07)					
	Information and Communication Technologies (EF061)		Engineering and engineering trades (EF071)		Manufacturing and processing (EF072)		Architecture and construction (EF073)	
	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018
EU-27	21.26	20.8	27.93	27.01	40.55	40.92	38.75	37.24
EU-28	22.57	21.88	26.63	25.28	37.17	35.31	37.72	37.2



Uneven opportunities for women in S&I: The glass door and glass ceiling in STEM

In Italy, women struggle to progress in their academic careers in STEM (source: MUR)

Grafico 2: Proporzioe di donne e uomini in una tipica carriera accademica nelle aree STEM*: studenti e personale docente e ricercatore - Anni 2005 e 2020

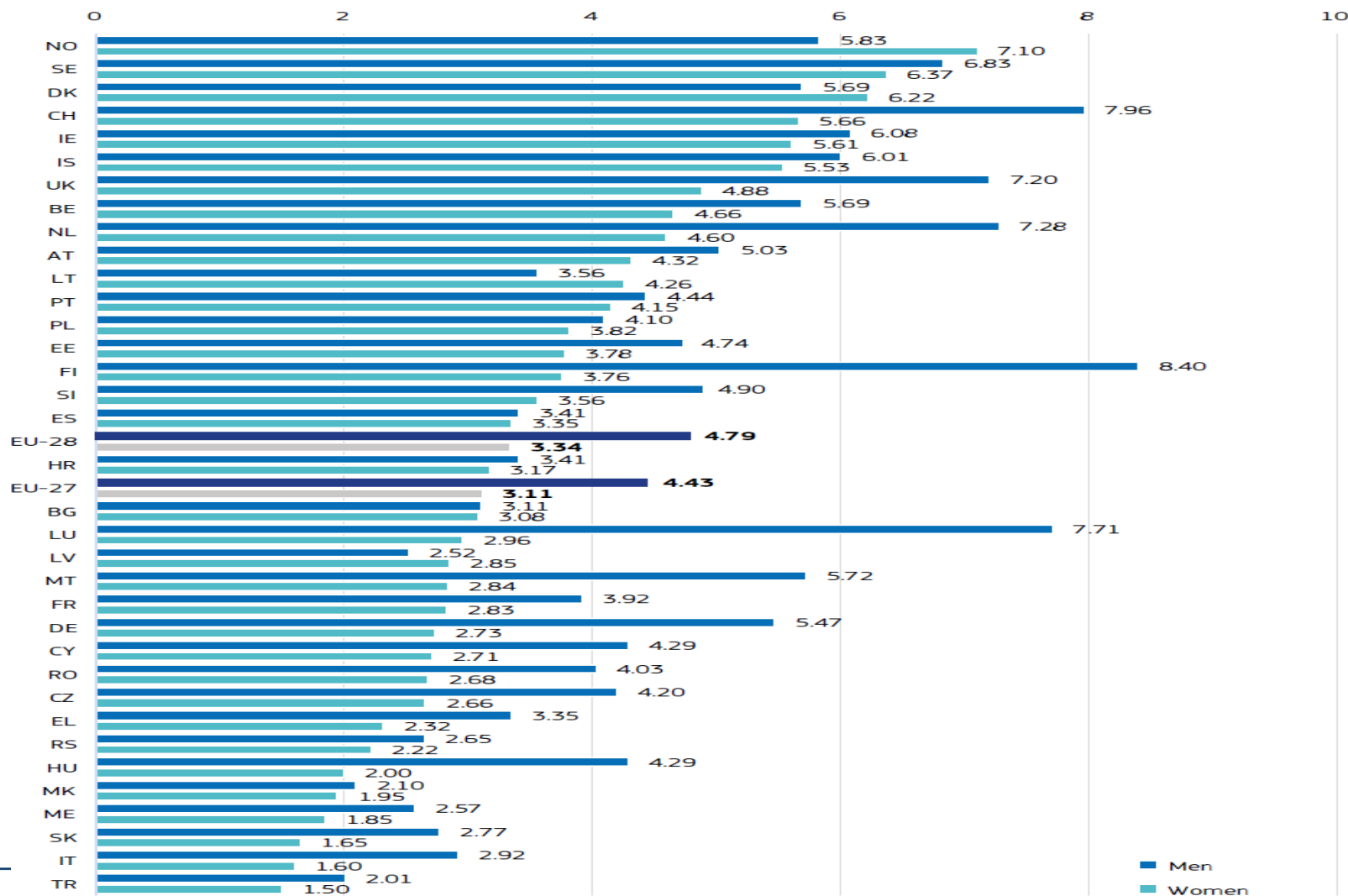




Uneven opportunities for women in S&I: The labor market for scientists and engineers

More **men** are employed as **scientists and engineers** than **women** (source Eurostat)

% of **scientists and engineers** in the total labor force by sex, 2019



Will time defeat the glass door and the glass ceiling in STEM and contribute to solving frictions in the labor market?

The answer to **this question** is **probably no** because **androcentrism** and **stereotypes** exist even in academia. Women

- **Publish less** than men
- **Are cited less** than men
- **Secure less** research funding
- Are presented in **recommendation letters** by **stressing their communal traits**
- **Devote** more time to **teaching**
- **Devote** more time to **mentoring students and Ph.D. candidate**
- Are tasked with low-research-intensive tasks
- Tend to **opt out**, for instance, because of poor self-confidence, household duties, the feeling of *I do not belong here*

What can we do?



Uneven opportunities for women in S&I: The POLIMI case

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POLIMI equal opportunities (POP)



Some actions

- **Standing for equal opportunities**
- Including **equal opportunities** in the **POLIMI strategic plan**
- Creating an **Equal Opportunity Unit** and appointing a **rectoral delegate for D&I**
- Drafting a **gender budgeting** and **GEP**
- Offering **free kindergartens**
- Organizing **summer camps**
- Providing **scholarships** targeting **female students**
- Organizing **courses** to empower **young researchers**
- Providing **funds** to **restart** women's **research** after their **maternity leave**
- Organizing **events** stimulating **women** and **girls** to **engage** in **STEM** → **The Engineering Festival**
- **Showcasing** female role models