

GENDER EQUALITY AND FEMALE SCIENTISTS ON LEADING POSITIONS IN SLOVENIA

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<http://www.diversity-fp7.eu/>

Improving the gender diversity management in materials research institutions



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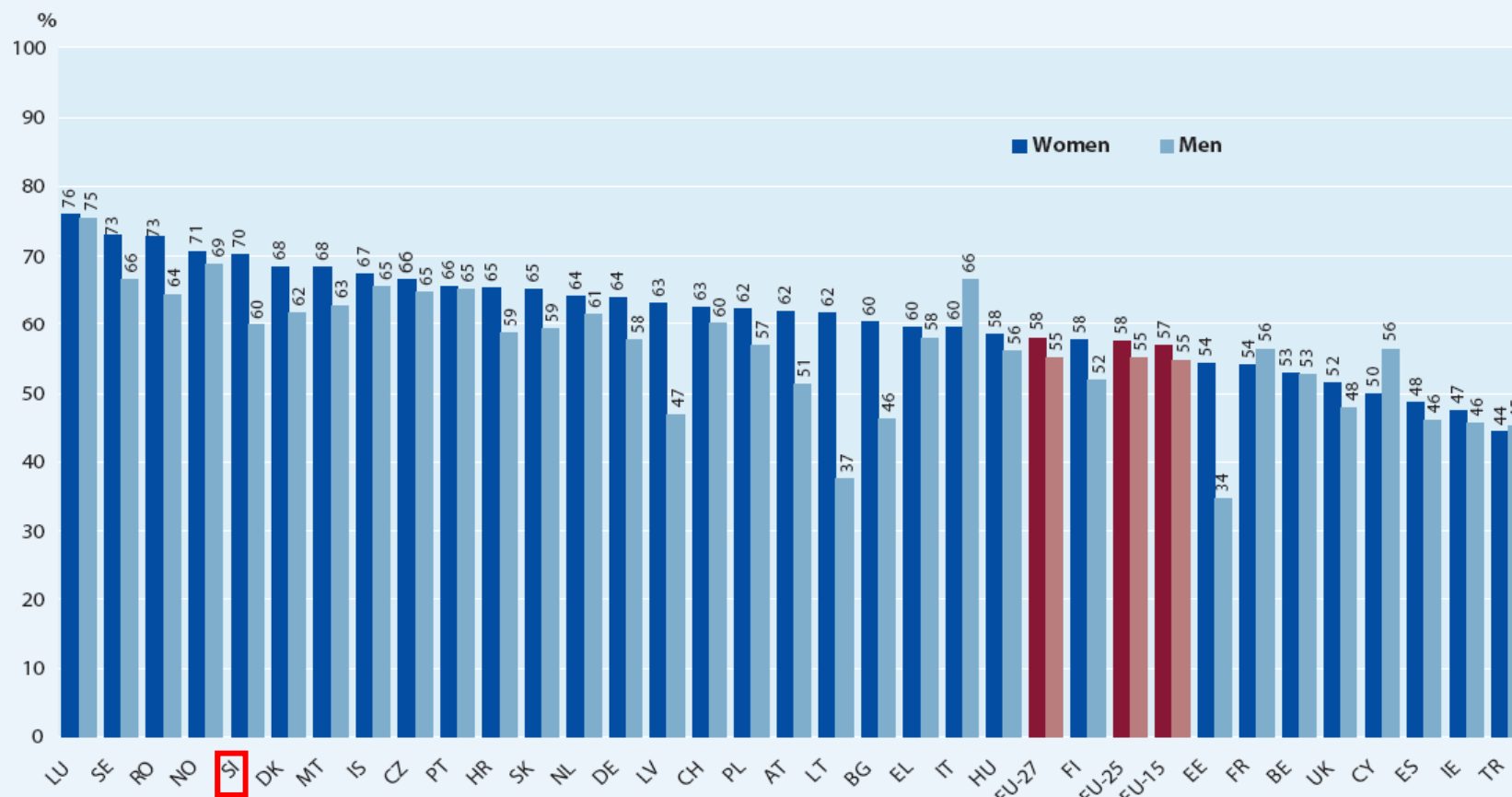
➡ From She Figures...

The fact that the proportion of women is higher among highly educated professionals or technicians (52%) than in total employment (45%) illustrates that tertiary educated women are more successful in finding a job than their counterparts with a lower level of education.

However, their proportion drops to 32% among employed scientists and engineers.



Figure 1.2: Employed professionals and technicians (HRSTC) as a percentage of tertiary educated (HRSTE) by sex, 2007



A Resume from...

¹A Slovenian report “Family in Science-Slovenian Way”, 2008.

National Committee on Enhancement of the Role of Women in Science (NCERWS) Ministry of Higher Education, Science and technology, Ljubljana, Slovenia, <http://www.mvzt.si>

¹Prof. Tamara Lah et. al.



- ➡ Equal rights for women have been recognized in 1945, when the gender equality was constitutionally confirmed.
- ➡ Due to high economic need after the WWII and in spite of increased birth rate of “baby boomers”, the model of “dual breadwinner employment” and the “gender equality” as an ideological objective represented the basis for practical regulation on all important level and spheres of social life.
- ➡ A burning social problem was the emerging issue of balancing of family and work duties, as by tradition, family and household was considered as woman's “natural” duty, whereas the economic need caused massive employment of women outside the home.



- The concept of “socially responsible parenthood” was early recognized in Slovenia and stimulated the creation of legal acts and also the building of the adequate family supporting care facilities.
- For the harmonization between work and family, the following legal acts in the 1970s and in the 1980s were of particular importance:
 - 1974: *the provision in Constitution - women are free to decide on giving birth*
 - 1974: *the prolongation of the maternity leave from 135 days to 6 months*
 - 1976: *the legal possibility of sharing of maternity leave (mother and father)*
 - 1986: *the maternity leave - prolonged to 1 year..*



- During these two decades a lot of kindergartens, elderly homes, health care institutions and other facilities have been built, representing elements of the work-life balanced »infrastructure«.
- Undoubtedly, this fact has **contributed to the uninterrupted women academic career, still prevailing in Slovenia.**
- In Slovenia, as in many other former communist and socialist countries, the policies of early integration of women in the work force market and higher education, lead initially to **relatively better situation of women in science** compared to other, more industrialized countries, where women as yet have not achieved full integration in scientific and higher educational institutions.



- The transformation of the political system in Slovenia is divided into two parts:
 - the period from 1945 to 1990 (**communist–self management and socialist period**)
 - and second, the era after 1991 till present (**liberal democratic period**).
- After the World War (WW)II, the social development of Slovenian society - as a part of the federal state Yugoslavia – was far from the »real communist« model, particularly after mid sixties.



- Contrary to strengthening of the (hard) communist regimes – dictatorships in the Eastern block countries, Yugoslav search of an **autonomous socialist model** — the self management socialist system, being developed from 1950 to mid eighties was not only gradually accepting some elements of market economy, but also adopted **gender equality measures** in various fields of social life.
- Particularly in Slovenia – the most developed republic of socialist Yugoslavia - the leading role of the Communist party was at least partially amended by some gender sensitive activities on behalf of the mass organization Socialist Alliance of Working People and trade unions.



- The development of social oppositional movements during the 1980s did not only include peace, ecological, gay and lesbian, writers' association, etc., but also a new generation of a **feminist movement gaining more and more public space** – also due to a liberal policy of the reforming Slovenian League of Communists.
- **Paradoxically, since 1991 it was often hard even to maintain some of the gender equality policies from the socialist system.**



Young researchers – MSc and PhD students.

- ➡ **In Slovenia, there was a unique institution, introduced in 1985 by the Research Community of Slovenia and followed by the Ministry of Science in the 1990-ties, called**
- ➡ **“2000 Researchers”, which still continued till present. Funds are directly allocated from ARRS to the research institutions, where the post-graduate students are regularly employed, including the economic sector (industry). It is therefore more than a fellowship, as the students are included into the research group within the institutions.**



- ➡ The recent study (Anuška Ferligoj et al., unpublished) revealed, that students are more successful when they work in a larger and as diverse as possible research group.
- ➡ **The social / health security, associated with this status, not only increased the number of PhDs in Slovenia over past years, but also significantly encouraged women to enroll.**
- ➡ The data show that the number of successful PhD female students grew from 36.2% in 1996 to **49% in 2007.** They also finished on time and with better grades.



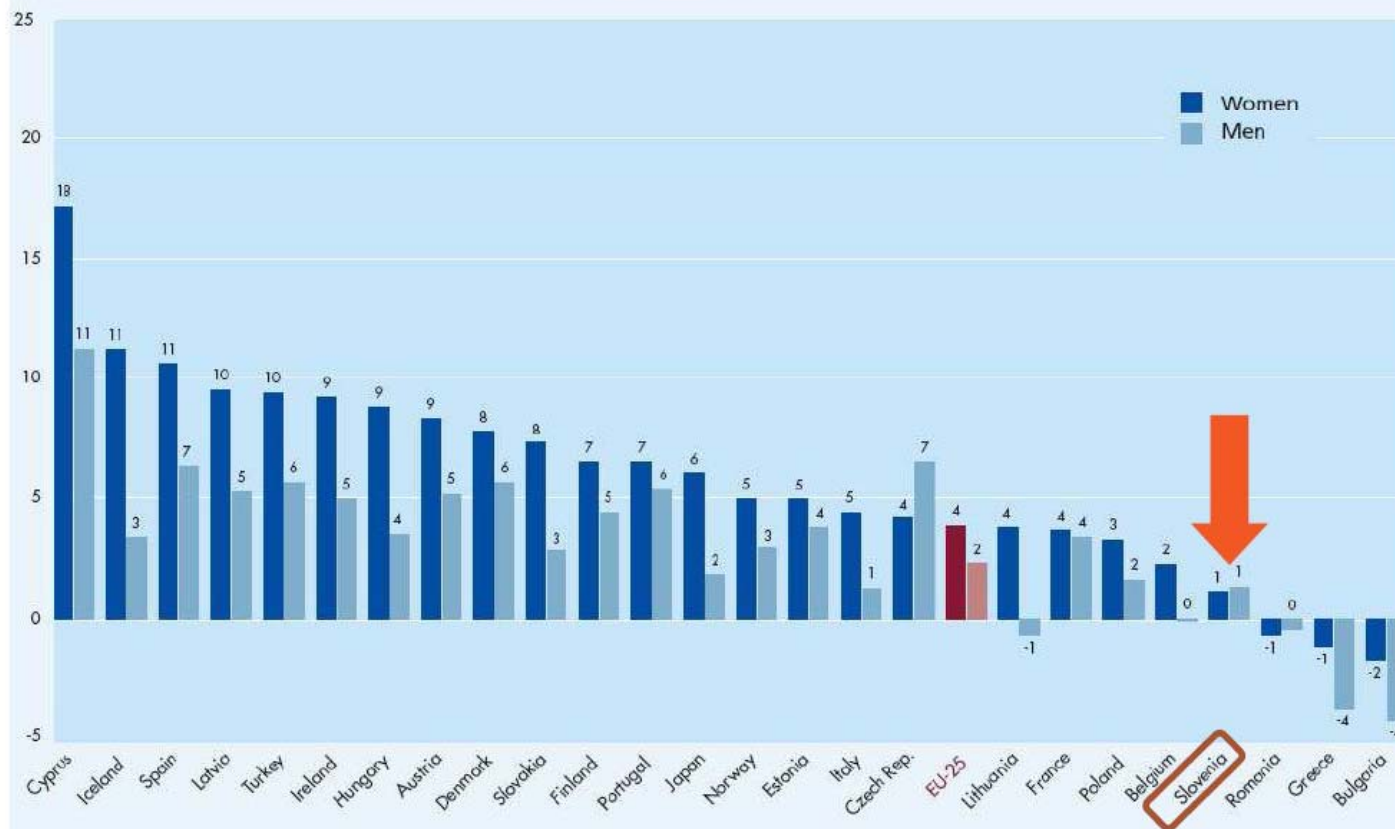
➡ This is particularly the case, **after the introduction of the paid (and excluded) one year leave of absence for a child, including parental (male) leave of absence:**

The model, that Slovenia can offer to the EU and worldwide to improve the family – friendly research area.





Figure 1.7: Growth rates for researchers by sex, 1999-2003



Source: Eurostat S&T statistics, EU-25 calculated by DG Research
 Exceptions to the reference year: AT: 1998-2003; FI, TR: 1999-2002; NO: 1999-2003; LT, PL: 2000-2003; SK, JP: 2001-2003; BE, FR, IE: 2002-2003
 Data provisional: IE (2003); Data estimated: SI (2003), SE
 Data unavailable: DE, LU, MT, NL, SE, UK



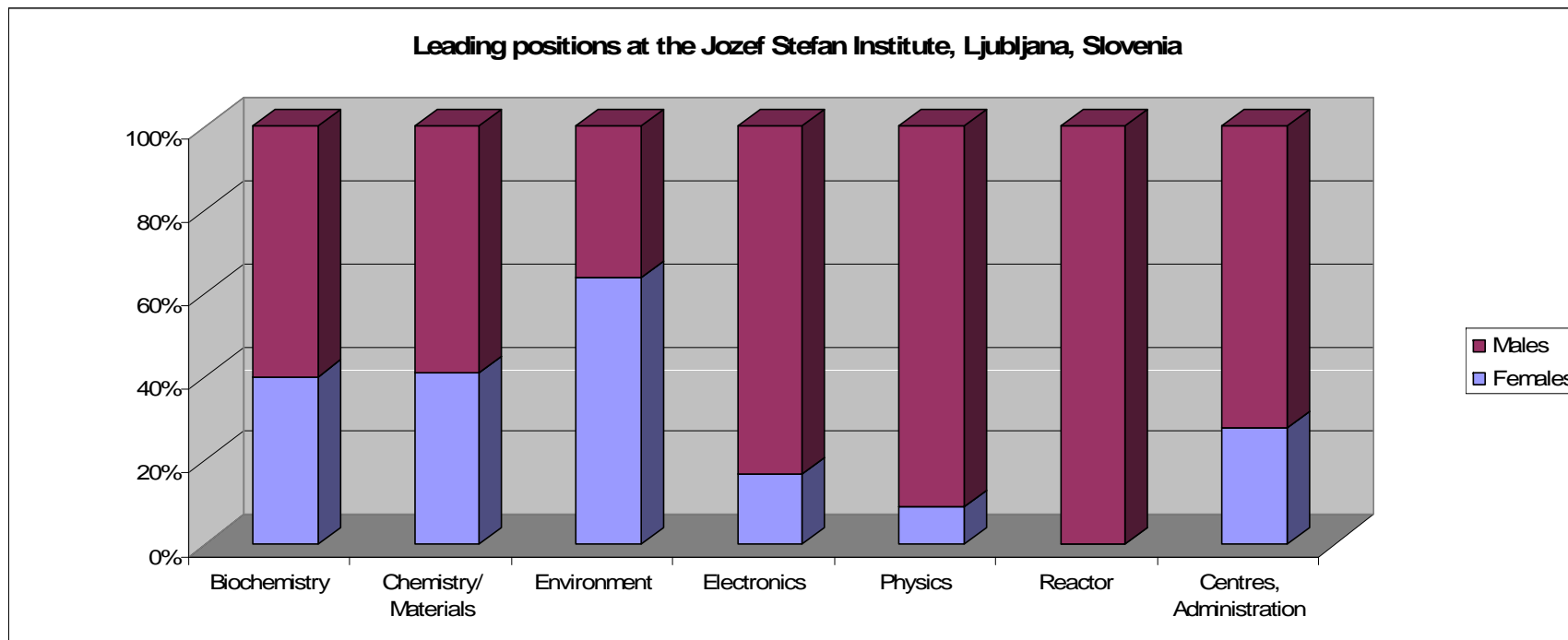
Development of science policy in Slovenia

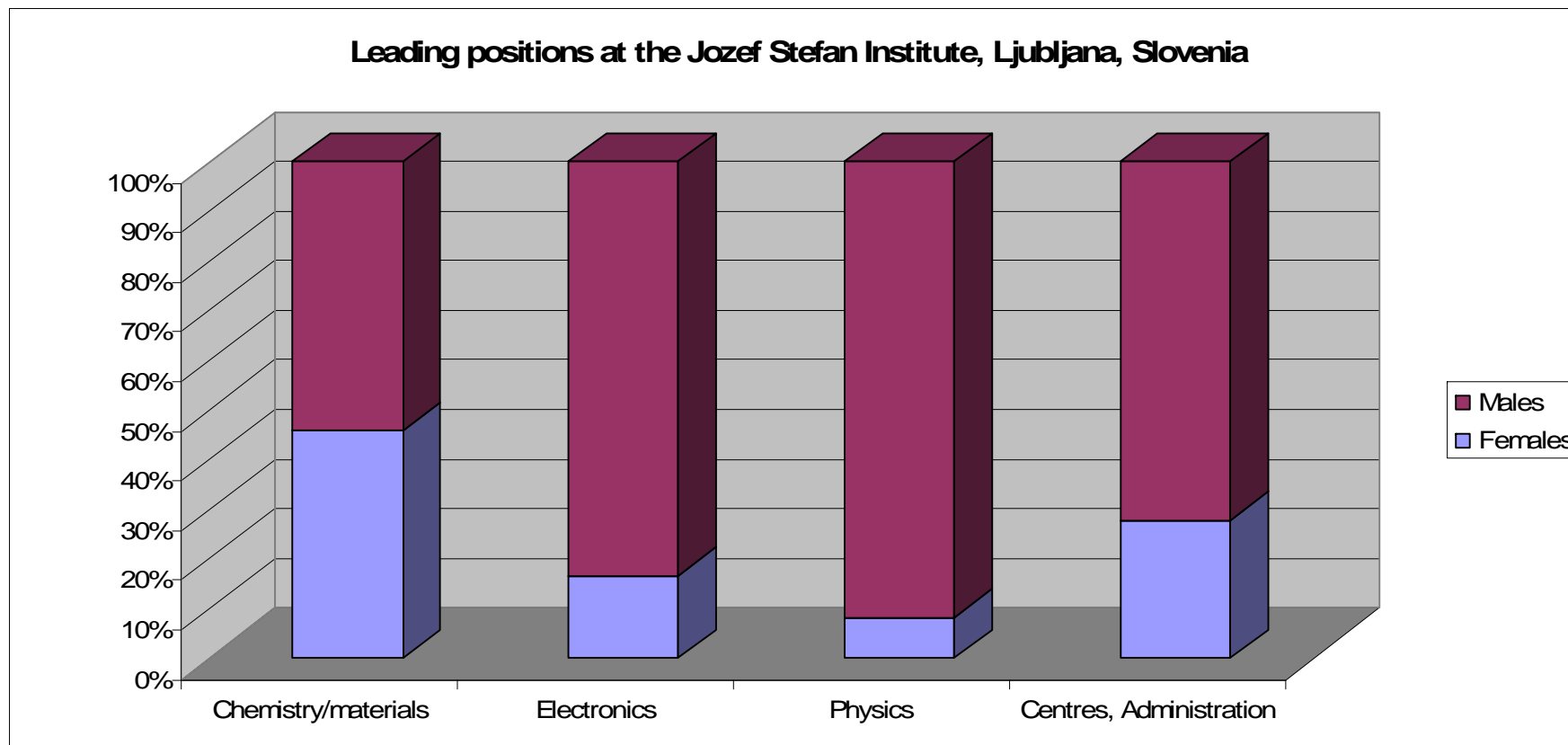
- ➡ **The growth of education and later, particularly in eighties, also science and technology, was political priority and highly emphasized during the first period.**
- ➡ **Many public research institution (15 at present and 16 private) were established, as well as new faculties at the University of Ljubljana as well as at the University of Maribor, stimulating massive enrolling of women to the high education and science.**



- One of the most important measure for encouraging women / mothers to pursue an academic/science career, recognized already from midst seventies, was the exclusion of maternity and later on also parental (!) leave from the time set for elections to higher academic / scientific titles for women.
- The position of women in science is **better at the institutes** than at the Universities, more women (increasing from 33 % in 2002 to **42 % in 2005**) reaching top academic career (equivalent of professorship) although there are also significant differences among the 15 institutes.
- In 2008 there were **6 out of 15** female directors of the public research institutes, and **one rector out of four** universities.







- In science, a **National Committee for Women and Science** (<http://www.mvzt.si/>) was constituted in 2001 at the Ministry for Higher Education, Science and Technology as an advisory / expert body to the Ministry.
- At present, the name is changed to **NCERWS** (*National Committee on Enhancement of the Role of Women in Science*) with **15 members from different institutions and scientific disciplines**, being professionally supported by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (<http://www.stat.si/eng/index.asp>).



- ➡ The ideas for the future are that the NCERWS should not be based on volunteer activities, but paid administration and advisors as well as receiving state budget for necessary activities and promotion. Cooperation between the governmental bodies (policy mix)
- ➡ **should provide facilities and tools to improve and create family friendly environment (young family apartments, household help, low cost or free kindergarten, increased salaries in research is urgently needed in Slovenia.**

