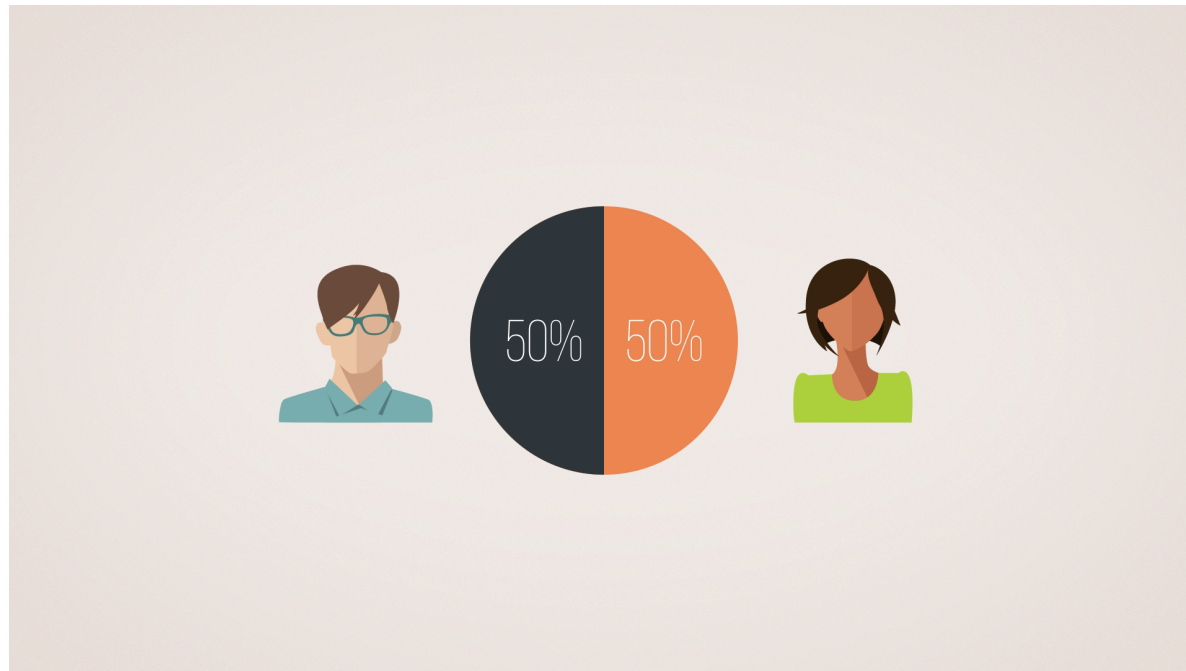


AFFIRMATIVE ACTIONS AND QUOTAS IN ACADEMIC RECRUITMENT



OVERVIEW

1. « Quotas », « affirmative actions », « positive discrimination » : definition and examples
2. Affirmative action in recruitment : faculty of geoscience and environment @UNIL
3. Rising awareness on Gender bias : training tool for professoral recruitment @UNIL

1. QUOTAS

« **limited or fixed number or amount of people or things** »

Fixing quotas is one of various measures for balancing :

- **political or commercial interests** (ex. EU, states)
- **under- or overrepresentation of groups** (regional, ethnical or linguistic minorities, gender, race, class, etc...)
- **Binding, « strong » or fixed quotas (sanctions)** : legal decisions, results count
- **Voluntary, « soft » or flexibel quotas (no sanctions)** : intentional targets, quantitative goals, process oriented

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QUOTAS EXIST IN VARIOUS CONTEXTS

- Quotas in Politics and economy
 - EU : migration policy, fishing policy, language or minority policies
 - CH : composition of federal council, regional or linguistic quotas in parliaments, reserved seats
 - **Widely accepted, common practice**
- Gender quotas in politics and economy
 - France, Belgium, Norway. CH : project of law for company boards (30%)
 - **Very discussed, strong oppositions but successful examples**
- Gender quotas in academic recruitment
 - Germany, Sweden : flexible quotas, « cascade model »
 - CH : Federal programme to support young academics 1992 – 2004 (goal: 40% women)

Reference : Research report 2015 : G. Wallon et al., Exploring quotas in academia, EMBO

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GENDER QUOTAS FOR REVIEW COMMITTEES AND ACADEMIC BODIES

- Finland, Gender Equality Act: 40%
- Norway, Gender Equality Act: 40%
- Spain, Law on Science, Technology and Innovation: 50%
- European Commission, Horizon 2020: 40% on advisory structures
- EMBO: 30%
- The Swedish Research Council: 30%

Reference : G. Wallon et al., Exploring quotas in academia, EMBO

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THE PROBLEM OF QUOTAS

- Always focused on women's representation
 - Myth of meritocracy : « Lack of qualification », stigma of the « quota women »
 - Overselection of men compared to existing talent pools not on screen
 - Men = norm, women=others
 - Pressure for justification stays on women, burden of proof of talent,
- **Men are not perceived as actual beneficiaries of gender biased recruitments**
- **Improving gender equality needs normative shift: from the problem of underrepresentation to that of overrepresentation:**
- **« Quotas for men » ?**

Reference : Rainbow Murray, Reframing Gender Quotas as Means of Improving Representation for All, American political Science Review, 2014

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CONCLUSION (EMBO STUDY 2015)

Benefits :

- Quotas can make change happen (fast)

Potential harms and drawbacks :

- Stigma for individuals hired or selected through a quota process
- Concern expressed by the academic community
- Quotas will not be sufficient to address all issues effecting gender balance

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ISSUES NOT ADRESSED BY QUOTA

- Drop of women after post doc:
 - Less women candidates apply for professorial positions
- Women do not choose the more technical subjects
- Unconscious gender biases
- Worklife balance issues, gender welfare regimes (persistence of traditional role models)

2. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT – SWISS LAW

UNIGE and UNIBE: laws with rule of **preference of underrepresented sex**, at equal qualification, in hiring procedures



Federal equality programmes 2000 - 2020 :
Financial incentives for appointments of female professors

Federal equality act 1996 :

« Appropriate measures aimed at achieving true equality are not regarded as discriminatory »



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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN RECRUITEMENT : EXAMPLE FGSE @UNIL

« Boarderline » Initiative of the Dean: desperately seeking women professors.....

- Two professoral positions were defined in order to have as much women candidates as possible: open rank, with preference for a young PAST PTC, broadend profile
 - Selected women as extern experts in commission and invited Bureau de l'égalité to participate as equality expert
 - Searched for women candidates: e-mailed to Institutes and women professors worldwide, announced to members of commission that deadline will be postponed if not enough candidates.
 - Commission members were informed that they must establish two separate lists for first evaluation meeting: a first list with best female candidates among all candidates, a second list with best male candidates, but only among young postdocs.
 - Senior men were postponed for evtl. second round.
- **Explicit goal: Give a maximum of chances to women candidates, but without excluding men.**
- **Avoid focusing on bibliometry of senior candidates, focusing rather on coherence of research**



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DEAN'S MESSAGE TO COMMITTEE

" Knowing that a maximum of 7 candidates can be interviewed within two days and that we want to meet a majority of female candidates, I suggest the following procedure :

- In a first step, consider all women applications, both junior and senior. Establish a list of your 1 to 5 best candidates in order of decreasing ranking (1st is best) and send it to me WITHOUT copy to other members of the committee (to avoid any bias at this stage of the procedure) by December 9 midnight.*
- Establish a second list in the same way among the junior male applications (i.e. 0-8 years of postdoctoral status, including the SNF professors) and send it to me along with your women list.*
- During our meeting, we will focus on these two categories of candidates (women et academically young men). If we manage to select 5 to 7 candidates, we will stop the discussion at this point. If we don't, we will consider to invite senior male candidates, but as president, I would prefer not to mix all categories at this stage. I would recommend to keep the senior male applications aside for a subsequent round of interviews in late February or March, if necessary.*

...limit gender bias, e.g. in focusing on coherence of research rather than on bibliometric data only. Also, teaching criteria might not be fully pertinent for young postdocs...."



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