
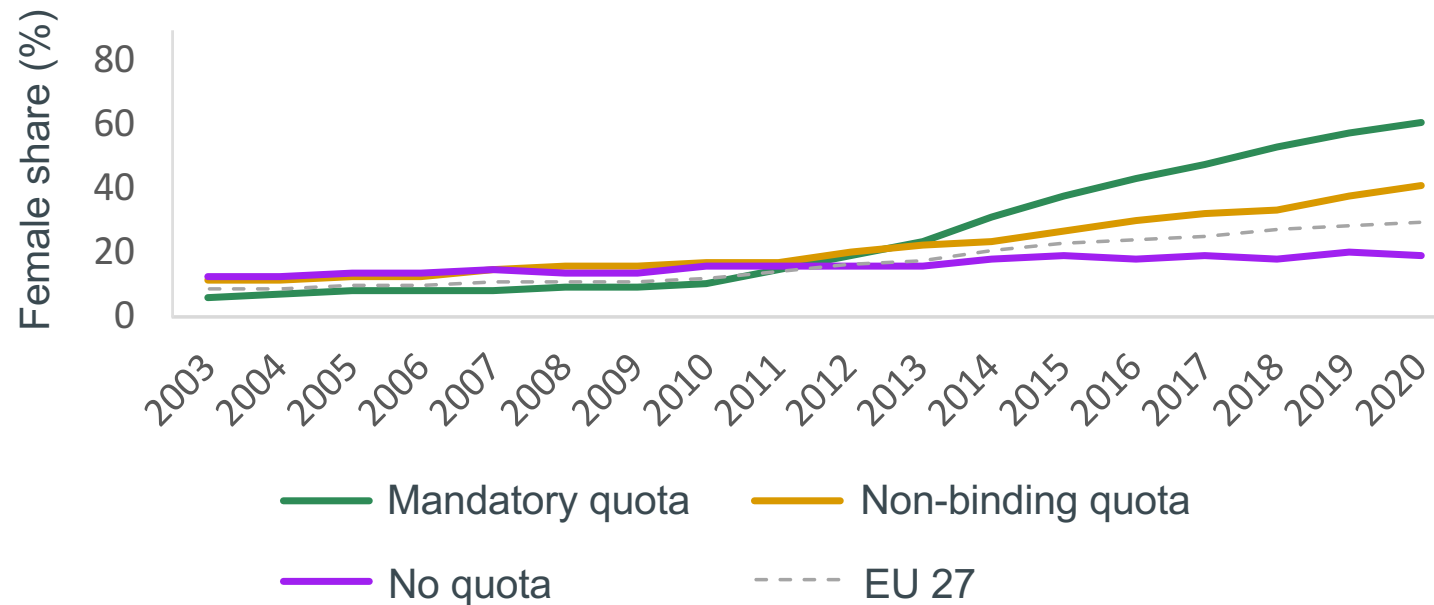


Survey
UG Amendment 2021 - Positions and Impact
Elise Richter Network 2021



Top Careers With and Without Quota (EU-27)

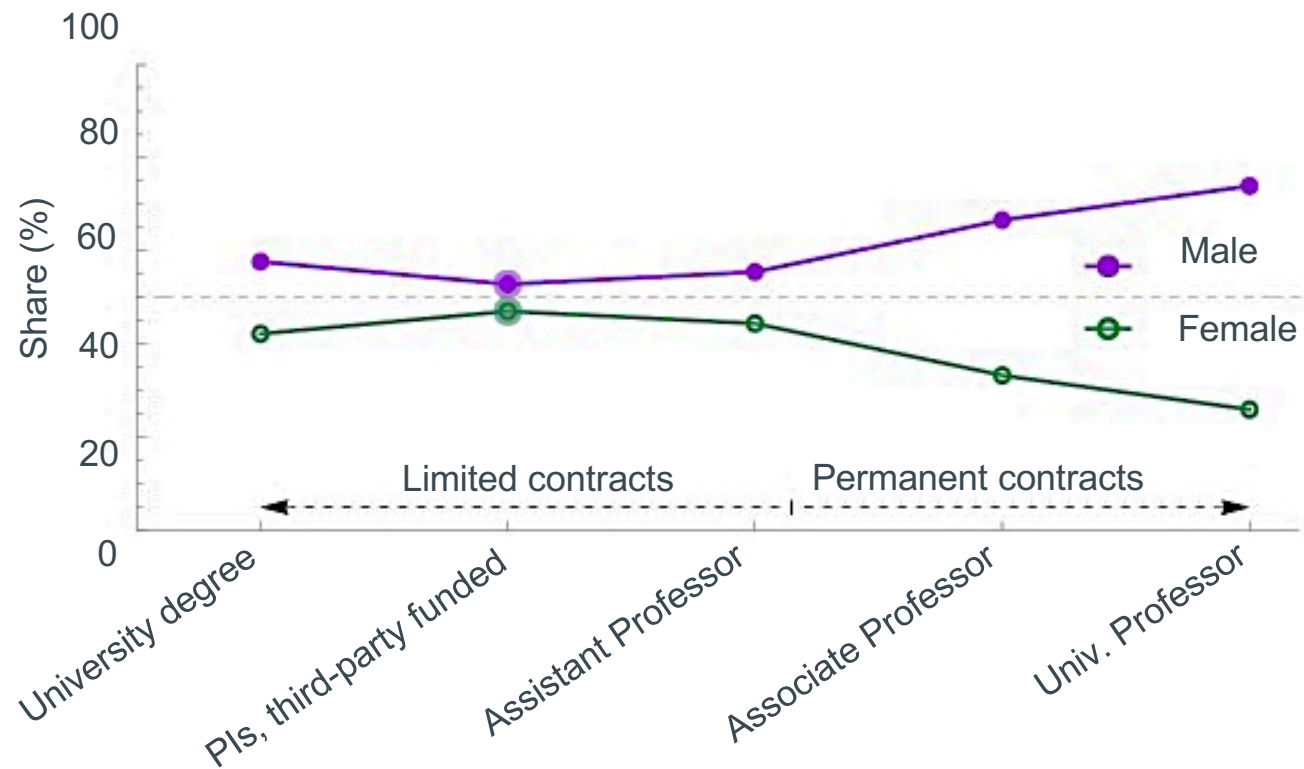
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Source: EIGE (2021b) Gender balance in corporate boards – EU27

Leaky Pipeline in Academia in Austria

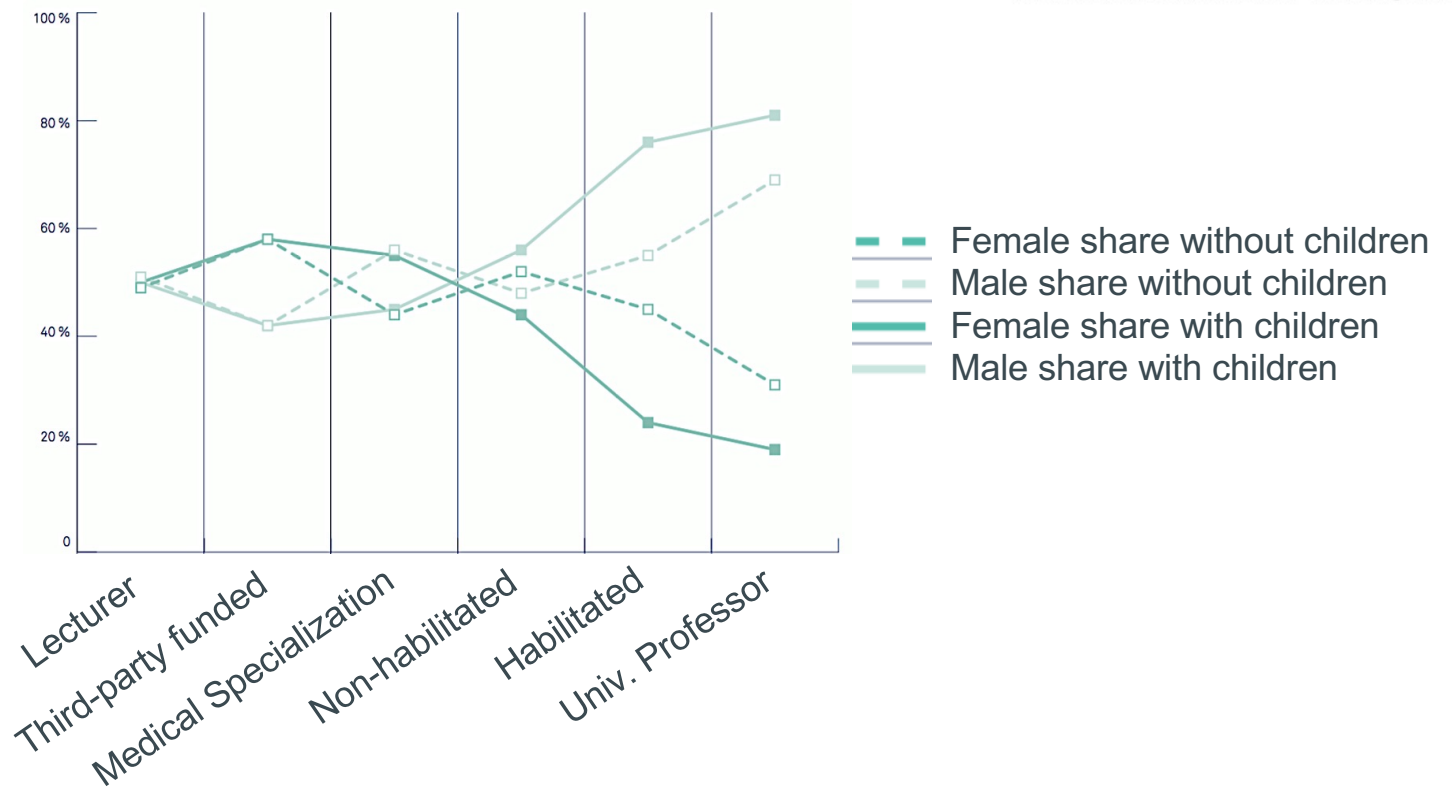
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Source: www.unidata.gv.at and FWF

Diversity Problems

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Children or no children?

Gender balance in academia exemplarily assessed for the Medical University of Vienna

Source: Gleichstellungsbericht 2019 Medical University of Vienna

Survey Information

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- Motivation: Mapping positions and impact of UG Amendment 2021
- Instrument: Online Survey
- Survey period: June 21st to August 9th, 2021
- Respondents: 79 (79 ER-fellows, of 222 ER fellows on mailing list, of 251 projects listed on FWF website for 2015-2020; response rate: 35%)
- Analysis: The responses were analyzed quantitatively, as well as descriptively using qualitative content analysis.
- Topics: Career trajectories | Employment history | Career barriers | Impact of Covid-19 on research projects | ...

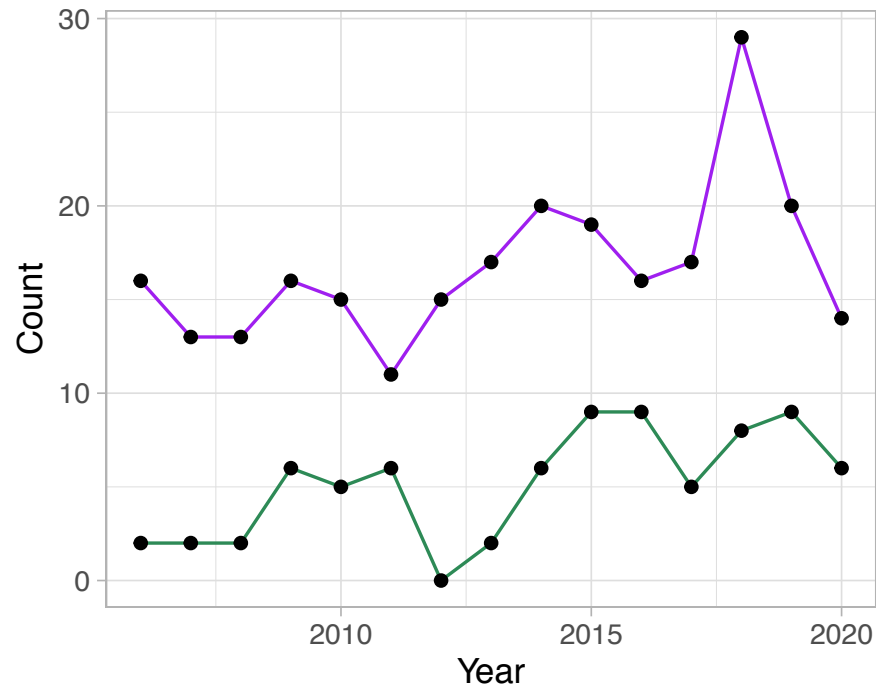
Representativity of the Survey

From 2006-2020, 251 ER projects were funded by the FWF.

Contact details were available of 222, of which 79 responded to our survey. This corresponds to a response rate of 35%.

The award dates of the survey participants represent the entire period during which ER grants were awarded by the FWF.

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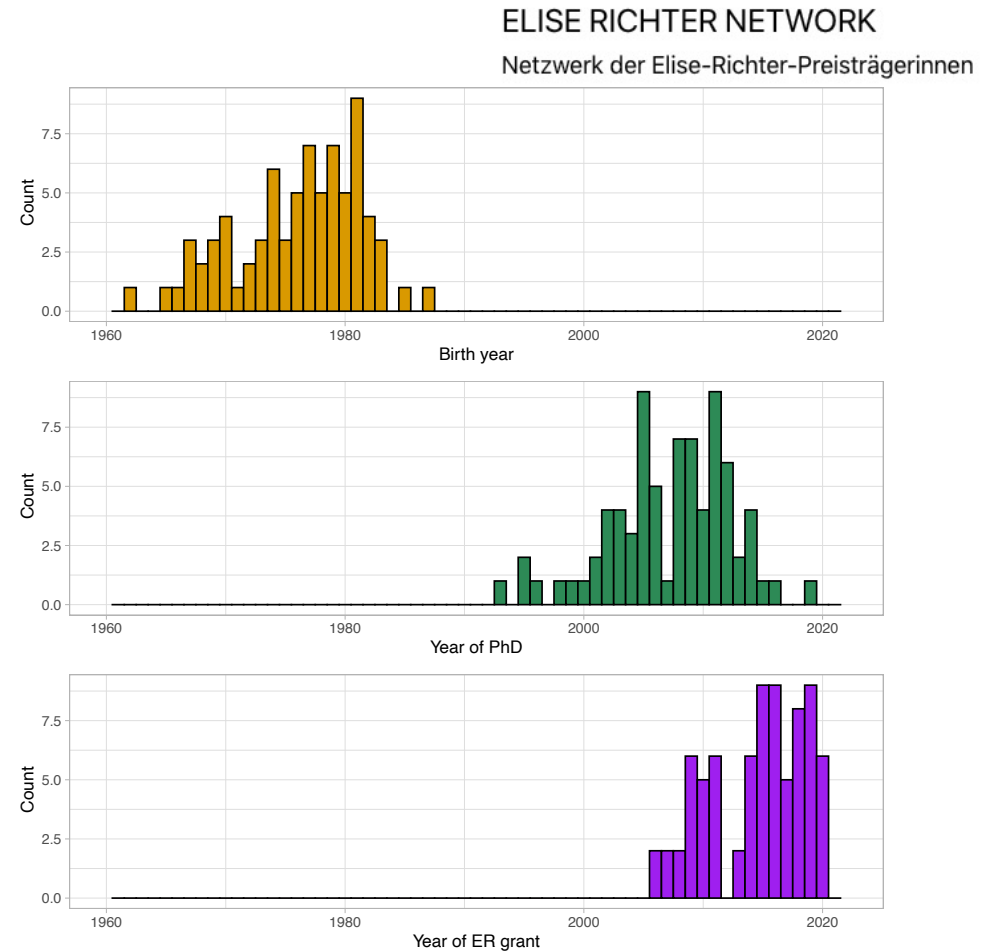
ER-grants awarded by the FWF (green) and ER-grant recipients, who participated in the survey (purple), 2006-2020.

Survey Demographics

The ER awardees were born between 1962 and 1987.

They received their PhDs between 1993 and 2019 and their ER awards between 2006 and 2020.

At the time of survey, 28 had an active ER project or recently completed it.

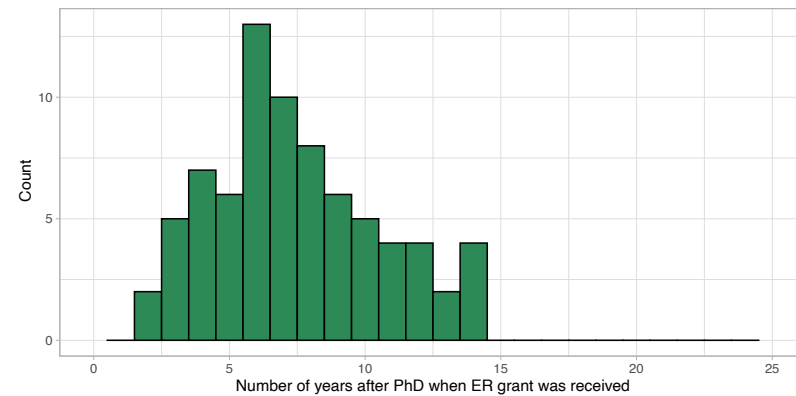
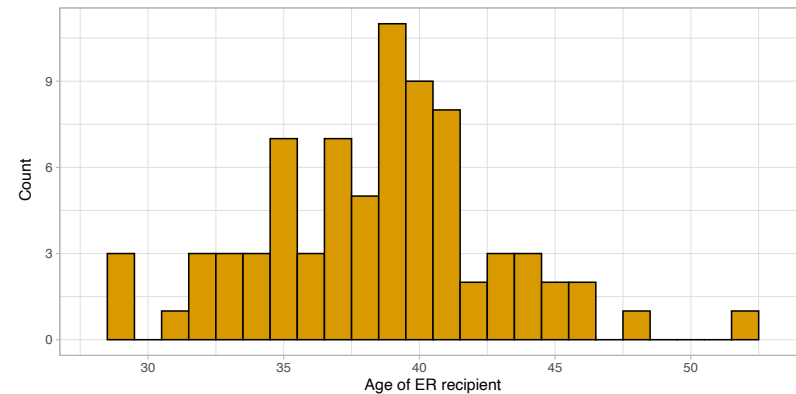


PI Age and Time to ER Project

PhDs were received with 31.1 years on average (SD=3.2).

The scholars were on average 38.5 years old (SD=4.3) when they received their ER award.

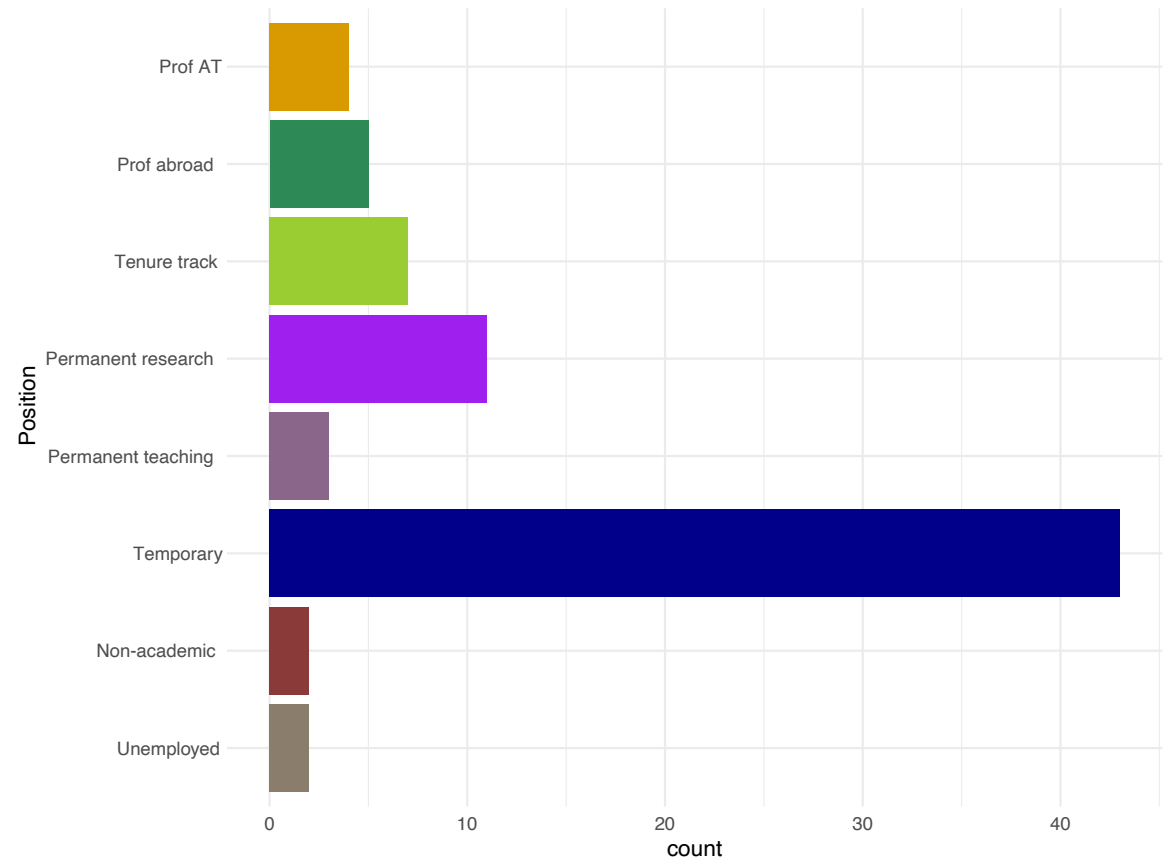
The ER award was on average received 7.4 years (SD=3.2) after their PhD.



Current Positions of ER PIs

The majority of scholars who participated in the survey had a temporary research position at the time of survey (44 out of 77).

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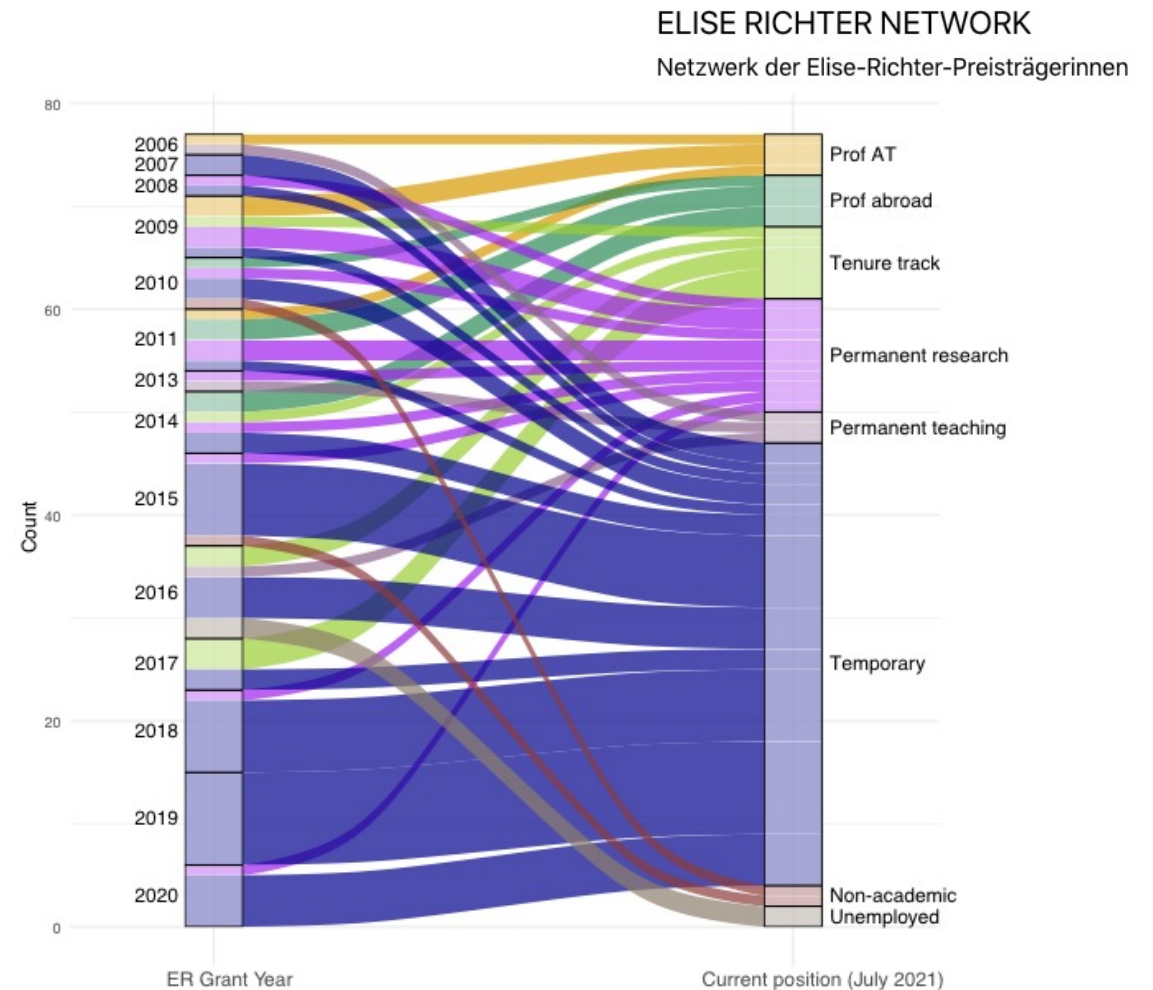
Career Trajectories

All ER awardees, who became professors in Austria or abroad, received their ER grants in 2014 or earlier.

Later recipients (2009-17) predominantly received tenure track positions.

The majority of ER awardees were hired on temporary contracts at the time of the survey.

Brain drain categories are supposedly underrepresented.

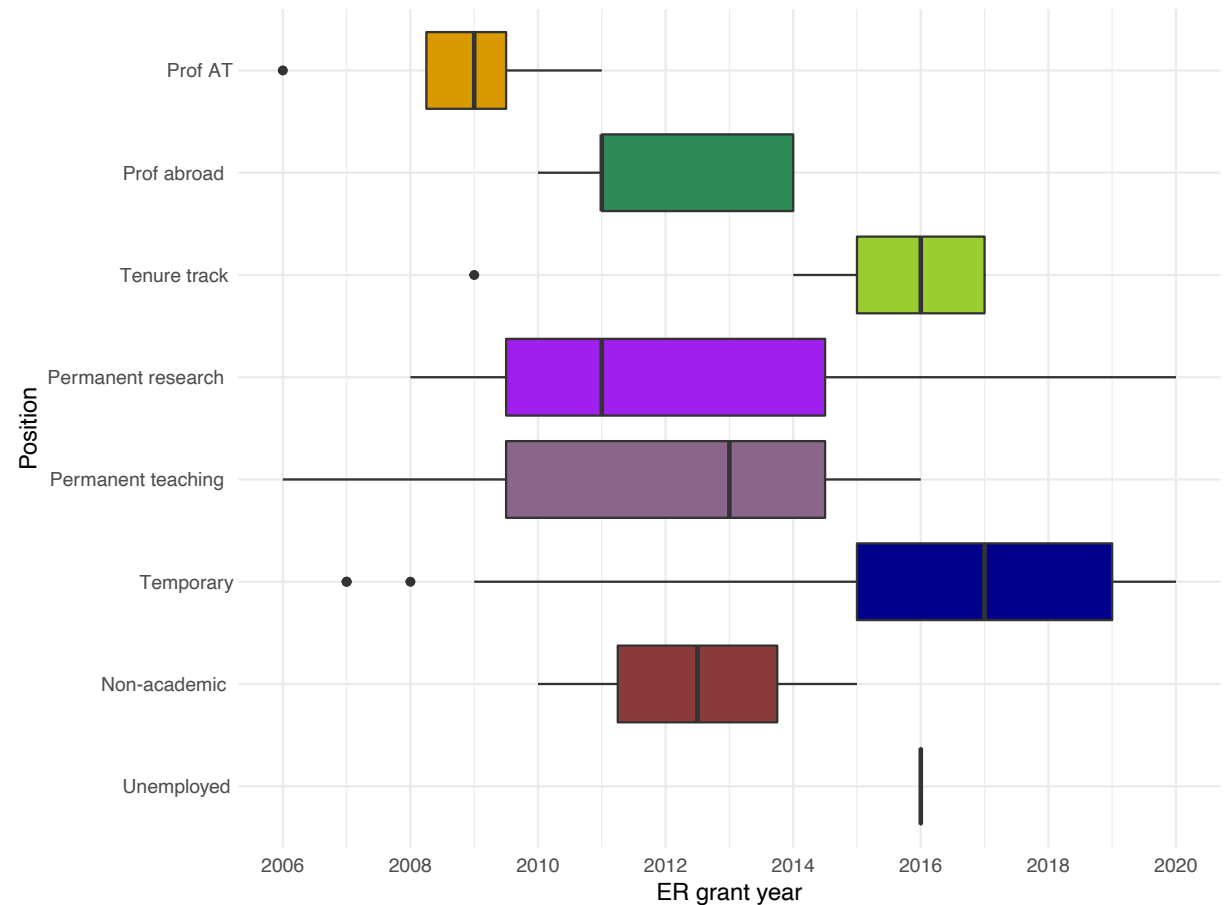


Duration to Professorship

After receiving the ER award, it took 3.6 years (n=5, SD=3.0), on average, to become professor abroad, but 8.3 years (n=4, SD=2.1), on average, to become professor in Austria.

Scholars who were on tenure track at the time of the survey (2021), received their ER grant in 2016, on average.

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Employment History and Perspectives

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Chances to achieve a permanent research position are low

Although most of the ER PIs state that they aim to achieve a permanent position in Austria, **half think their chances** of getting such a position in Austria are very low or **non existing** (38 out of 77). 28 out of 77 have some form of permanent or tenure track research employment in Austria or abroad.

'Never had any type of permanent contract.' ID 60

'Never had a real chance to get a position at an Austrian university.' ID17

'Meanwhile have given up on it.' ID18

'Thankfully I now have a permanent contract at xxx, but it was very hard to get it.' ID 49

Temporary contracts are the rule

Almost all ER awardees were employed on a sequence of temporary contracts. More than 10 is not unusual.

Working at different institutions

The vast majority of ER-fellows have been working for more than one institution.

Deficient Career Development

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Lack of support by employer

'Not providing signature for project proposal at the end of the chain.' ID2

'My Austrian employers would have rather liked me to drop science than to have a permanent job.' ID74

Institutions bypassing the chain-contract rule

'Changed me in "Verwendungskategorie" (Postdoc and Substitute/Guest Professor).' ID 62

'Become 'self-employed researchers' to avoid the chain contract rule.' ID 70

Bad practice at Austrian institutions

'Colleagues were asked to sign a 'Blanko - Einvernehmliche Kündigung" - without date, so they could be removed for sure. I refused to do that, as I found that unethical and also illegal.' ID7

'University X made me leave in 2016 in the middle of my maternity leave - I changed the research institution.' ID56

ER-fellows with other prestigious grants face the same problems

'After Elise Richter I had to leave University because I would have been over 6 years at the end of START.' ID9

'I was forced to leave for 1 year although I had enough funds (ERC-Starting grant).' ID60

§109 Chain Contract Rule - The Effect of the 8 Years

Brain drain from Austria

'UG Amendment will lead to a massive brain drain [from Austria], especially by young scientists.' ID 50

'If I stayed in Austria I would have needed to drop science.' ID 74

Poor career perspectives

'The solution to keeping excellent scientists lies in developing a national strategy for career perspectives for mid-level career scientists.' ID 57

Undermining the quality of research

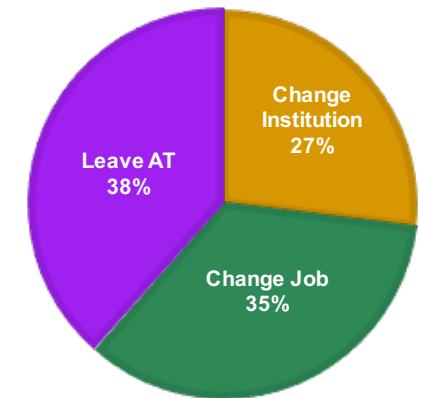
'The law seems to prevent scientists who are talented and capable enough of winning their own independent, and internationally competitive, research funding from carrying out the research in the university of their choice.' ID 70

'Will be hard to find good pre-docs and post-docs, as they will become more selective.' ID 22

Lacking gender equality

'The new measure, currently purely restrictive, severely limits options for highly qualified independent researchers and disproportionately hits female principal investigators, who are more likely to be independently funded on fixed-term contracts.' ID 14

'It lacks any kind of vision or perspective and is especially hostile towards women in academia, because it targets exactly the kinds of piecemeal careers by which women hang on any way they can.' ID 42



Out of 77 respondents, 29 see only these options

Lack of Funded Mid-Career Positions

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Scientific excellence requires transparent, long-term career models and more funded positions

Employment types and career models are highly different among academic institutions. This leads to **individualization and incomparability of careers** and therefore to a lack of significant problem **visibility**.

'I think that universities should show higher appreciation of Elise Richter projects, e.g. offers regarding Qualifizierungsvereinbarungen.' ID 27

'A directive has to be implemented into the UG that women holding ER and/or HFSP programs (or ESPRIT) are to be offered at least §99 positions as Associate Professors if not §98. The university rectorates do not appreciate people who have been evaluated externally as this is against their totally corrupt hiring boards.' ID 18

Losing the best minds for science

'Science is a growing job market or at least it could be. Politics has to make provisions to support this market rather than to make sure people are cut out of their career when they could be most creative.' ID 49

'We spend far too much energy on surviving, which we miss for research.' ID 7

'I don't want to be kicked out.' ID 33



Impact of COVID-19 on Female Research

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Delays, interruptions, lost opportunities and collaborations

Changes of research partners occurred, intellectual exchange could not happen as planned, and many essential research stays abroad were cancelled.

'I consider to ask for an unpaid extension - how I will pay my rent? I don't yet know.' ID 16

'It delayed lab-work considerably, due to disruptions and social distancing rules. I am more than 6 months behind schedule.' ID 34

'[The pandemic] slowed everything down. These things impact on my career considerably.' ID 8

Additional workload

Increased demands for preparing online teaching, engaging in digital meetings, additional administration and family responsibilities.

'I had to spend much time helping [my children] with home schooling. I had less time for my own work.' ID 11

COVID-compensation for increased and prolonged costs

Cost-neutral project extensions do not solve the problem, but a crisis-fund is required to compensate losses and enable achieve project goals.

'I paid a lot of salaries for research, but it was impossible to conduct research. If the FWF would [could] ramp up the funds to get things going well again, this would be ok.' ID 78

Targeted Actions Points

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Long term: Towards diversity

1. Austria needs a national strategy for transparent, long-term career models
2. Competitive career model (§99.5 Tenure Track) for successful fund-raising from excellence programs
3. Targeted budget for the generation of permanent academic positions committed to gender balancing
4. Coupling of project overheads to the generation of new positions and gender balancing measures
5. Transparency measures including right to information for job candidates, new parameters that reflect implementation of gender-balancing measures, the use of project overheads by the universities

Intermediate term: Absorbing the direct effects of §109

6. Acute funds for successful academics immediately concerned by §109 UG 2002 Amendment
7. Eliminating the retrospective application of the maximal employment duration per employer

Short term: Compensating COVID-19 related delays

8. Extra funding for COVID-19-related setbacks in projects and careers (ER framework and comparable)

Appendix: Survey Questions - Overview

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1. Your date of birth (year) - 79 responses
2. Date of your doctorate / PhD (year) - 79
3. Are you (still) a researcher? - 79
4. Have you been awarded an ER Fellowship? - 79
5. Date of your ER Fellowship grant (year) - 77
6. Are you an Austrian Citizen? - 79
7. Your nationality /citizenship - 25
8. Did you come (back) to Austria for research with the ER Fellowship (or another research grant)? - 79
9. Are you / have you been teaching at Austrian universities during your ER Fellowship / while running a publicly funded research project? - 78
10. Could you please describe briefly your employment history at Austrian universities? How many fixed term contracts have you already gone through (teaching and research)? At which institutions? - 77
11. How did your employers handle existing chain contract regulations so far? - 70
12. Are you aiming for a permanent position at an Austrian university? What are your options to get such a position? - 78
13. Have you been offered a permanent position? If yes, what kind of position and was the ER Fellowship a decisive factor? - 76
14. In the time of your ER project: have there been openings for Tenure Track positions at your institution/department, and if yes, have you applied, maybe even got the position? - 77
15. UG Amendment: How will a maximum permanent term of your employment of 8 years affect your career? 71
16. UG Amendment: would you like to share your personal thoughts on the new Austrian university law? - 47
17. How did the Covid-19 pandemic affect your research plans / your ER project? - 77
18. Anything else related to your academic career you would like to share with us? - 39
19. #ichbinhanna - Campaign in Germany: any comments to the currently ongoing debate? - 34
20. Ideas, wishes, comments for upcoming ERnet activities, such as capacity building, mentoring, - 31