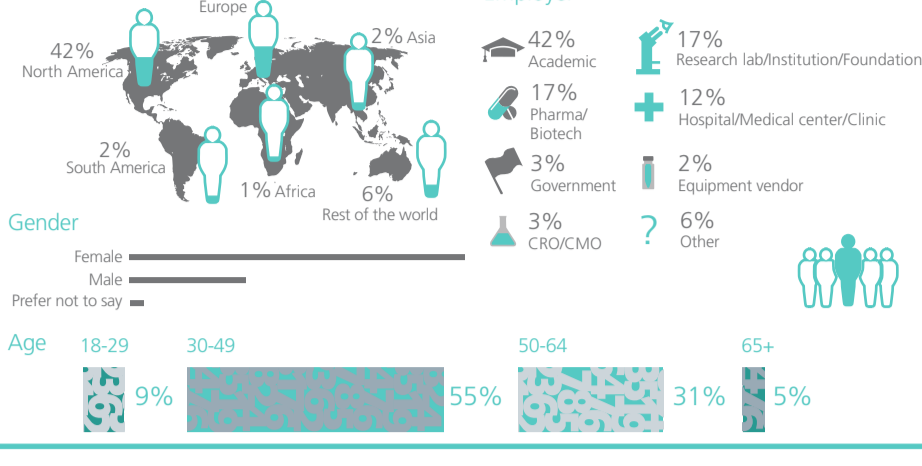


GENDER EQUALITY IN SCIENCE

With only ~11% of women holding senior positions in scientific academia across the EU, the issue of gender inequality in STEM continues to attract much debate globally. A 2015 study conducted by L'Oréal Foundation, which investigated the public's perceptions of scientists, suggested that this disparity may be a result of prejudices systemic in our society. The survey indicated that 67% of Europeans were of the opinion that women do not possess the required capabilities needed to access high-level scientific positions, while in China, 93% were of the belief that women lacked the abilities to pursue senior science jobs. Despite this, over half of the survey's respondents felt that the evolution of women's place in scientific research is shockingly slow and many estimated that women were far more numerous in science than is actually the case – so what is the cause for the apparent lack of gender equality in science?

We launched a survey of the STEM community to learn how you and your peers view this issue. We wanted to find out if you have experienced gender discrimination during your career, what factors you believe are responsible for the underrepresentation of women in science, and whether gender parity in scientific academia and industry is a realistic goal. Finally, we asked: if equality is possible what steps can we take to achieve it?

About the respondents

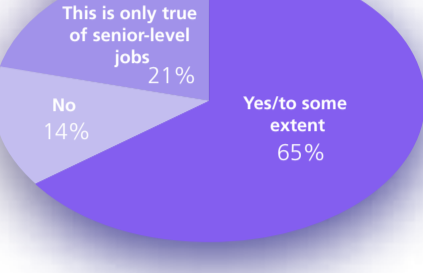


Your perspectives on gender equality in science

Have you ever felt held back in your career as a result of your gender?



In general, do you think that women are underrepresented in science?

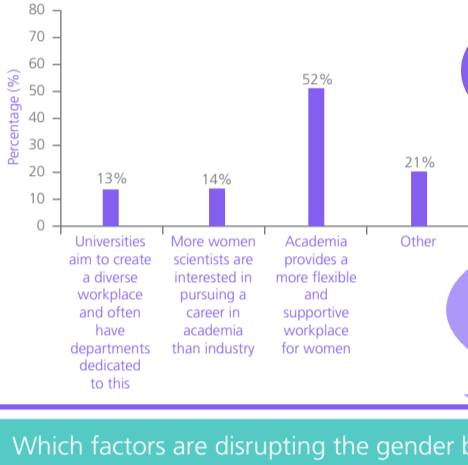


In which sector of STEM do you feel women are more heavily underrepresented?



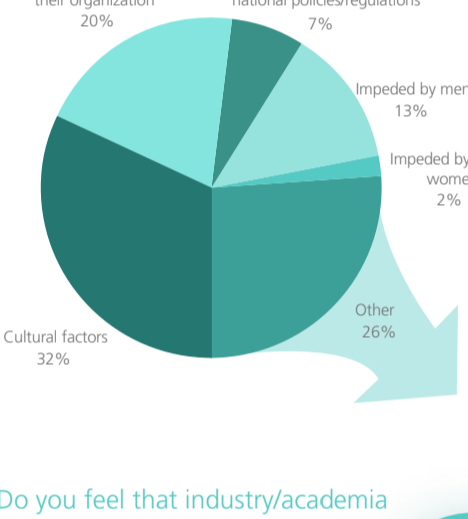
“I don't think that at the top-end of either academia or industry support for women is adequate.”
 “In academia, the lack of publications during maternity leave and working part time hinders women's progression to senior roles.”
 “Women choose careers in industry because this may afford more flexibility to combine career and home life.”
 “Industry when hiring does so on merit, and are generally gender blind.”

Those who believed that academia was a more gender-balanced workplace felt that this was because ...



“I think scientific industry has historically been male centered, so changing that is challenging because most of the management/decisions are made by males.”
 “The business world is still a boys club. As a woman, it is difficult to be taken seriously or treated with respect when dealing with international clients/collaborators.”
 “Private industry often has more men in senior-level positions. I think they make more biased decisions in promoting, either consciously or unconsciously.”

Which factors are disrupting the gender balance in science?



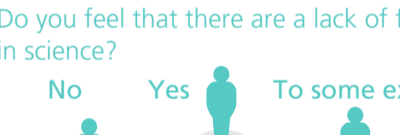
What do you think is the main obstacle preventing women from pursuing senior-level scientific careers?

“Gender stereotypes, unconscious bias and self-sabotage because of these stereotypes.”
 “Many women see obstacles that don't exist or have the “I can't attitude” rather than “I can” or “I will”.”
 “Choice of family vs work life – men don't seem to have to make that choice, but women often do.”

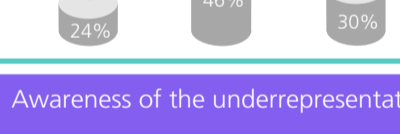
Do you feel that industry/academia tend to consider the impact of family and parental leave to a greater extent when hiring women?



Do you believe that men and women are guilty of unconscious bias against women?



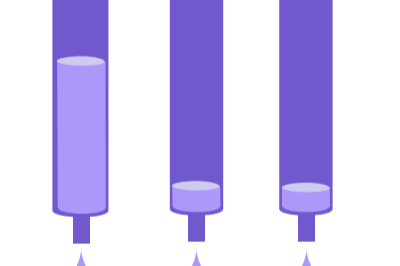
Do you feel that there are a lack of female role models in science?



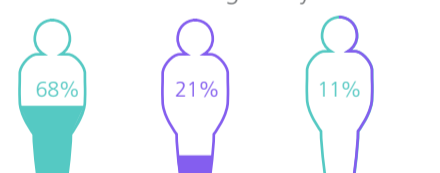
88% felt that, to some extent, the lack of female role models dissuades young women from advancing in STEM

Awareness of the underrepresentation of women in science

Studies indicate that ~11% of women hold senior-level academic positions in science across the European Union, while worldwide women researchers comprise only 28% of the R&D community. Do you find these figures surprising?

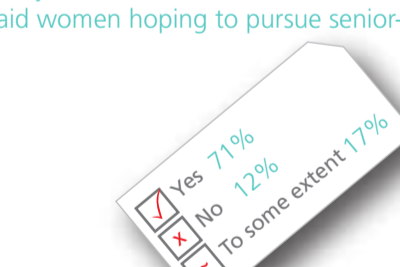


Do you believe that awareness of gender inequality within science has increased throughout your career?

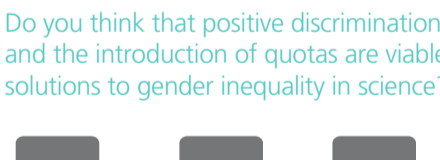


Measures to address gender inequality

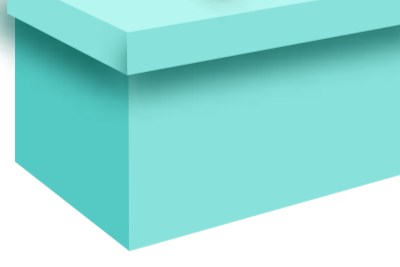
Do you feel that more could be done at a political/organizational level to aid women hoping to pursue senior-level scientific positions?



Do you think that positive discrimination and the introduction of quotas are viable solutions to gender inequality in science?



Do you feel that public outreach programs aimed at promoting women in science have had a tangible impact on addressing gender inequality in your workplace?



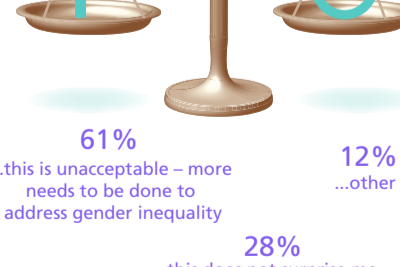
Gender parity in science

The World Economic Forum predicted in 2014 that it would take until 2095 to achieve global gender parity. In your opinion, do you believe that...



“The goal must be equal opportunity – not necessarily equal representation.”
 “This does not surprise me because of continued discrimination against women due to family/child-raising issues.”
 “Given that today's undergraduate population is quite gender balanced, we should expect that professors from this generation will also be balanced.”

In your opinion, how do you think global gender parity in science can be achieved faster?



“Training both men and women on how to be more inclusive in the workplace. Establishing mentorship for women scientists as they progress in their career.”
 “More support systems for women raising a family such as on-site child care, flexible work options (without repercussions).”
 “By requiring that each laboratory has a 50:50 male and female workforce.”
 “Make it more culturally acceptable (including financial incentives like paid paternity leave) for men to take on their share of housework and childcare. Until culture adopts greater parity at home, there will always be a drop-off in females climbing the ladder.”

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