



## **Gender and diversity inequality in geosciences: a personal view of an end-career researcher**

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Although major efforts were undertaken over the last decades, both gender and diversity inequality are still important facts in particular in geosciences. E.g. in Austria, there is no female full professor in any field of geosciences, and there are only a few female associate professors. Why? Here, I report, close to the end of my professional career, on my personal experience on potential reasons and solutions. I have seen many cases where promising female PhD students with an incredibly high performance in research, expressed by high-ranked journal publications, stopped their academic career. The reasons are wide but have one not explicitly expressed core reason: missing stability. Successful female early career researchers (ECR) also want a family with children, and they then often decide for a stable position in industry, and/or follow the partner in contrast for deciding for an unstable, temporally limited academic career, always depending on reviews and scarce availability of postdoc positions. Further reasons are also manifold: harsh reviewers not taken into account at all the family status and children, A-type male group leaders, limited opportunities in small universities, which basically not allow easily establish temporarily part-time position for academic growing of female ECRs.

How to solve the gender inequality? Beside solving it by any further legal rules, several points could help for highly performing PhD students at the transition to postdoc stage, where the wish is high for stability: (1) Establish academic grow postdoc positions for females, e.g. over ca. six years with the option for a stable long-term academic position, where female postdocs can choose by themselves how fast they grow and how they could interfere with their family affairs; (2) exclude unfair reviews and include female peer reviewers (with children); and (3) include (female) mentors for continuous support.

In geosciences, the other major inequality is in the field of diversity, particularly for ECRs from developing countries. Inclusion of that group is a need for creating stability in their home countries. It remains difficult for many talented researchers to get PhD and/or post-doc positions in industrial countries. After master, the well-established typical career path of an EU early career researcher is to do a PhD in another university or country, to go for postdoc to a highly recognized university in an Anglosaxonian country, and return back to the home country. This scheme leaves very limited room for talented ECRs from developing countries. Compared to Seventies, much less ECRs are working and gaining experience at least in universities of Central Europe. What I observed from many cases of colleagues and from my own experience, from collaborative research with successful PhDs and postdocs, often life-long research cooperation developed, which could even result in economic success, when these former ECRs are making their career in the home country. How to overcome this decreasing diversity? Create a platform where ECRs from developing country can develop their abilities, select promising ECRs and support them with fellowships (e.g. through an EU programme), and financially support their return to the home country.