

WOMEN IN EUROPROOFNET:
DISCUSSION ON GENDER-BALANCE ISSUES

JUNE 24, 2022

DISCLAIMERS

- * A **discussion**, not a lecture: share your ideas **respectfully** (and honestly).
- * There are more than two genders. We will mostly focus on women, but a lot of what is said applies to other underrepresented genders as well.
- * We are not experts, we don't have all the answers,
... but we have some knowledge and some answers.

Quick head count

- * How many participants of the underrepresented genders are here?
- * How many were there during a “typical” TYPES talk?

Clearly, gender balance could be improved in EuroProofNet.

Why improve gender balance?

- * Research shows diversity in teams increases productivity.
- * We are missing out on potential from excluded groups.
- * Other: _____

How to improve gender balance?



A million dollar question!



Find out **reasons** for the imbalance.



Address the reasons with **actions**.

REASONS?



EUGAIN

European Network For Gender Balance in Informatics

Addresses the drop of the percentage of women/underrepresented genders on the following levels:

- * From school to university.
- * From university to PhD.
- * From PhD to Professor.

← kindergarten?

We are seeking new members/
collaborators.

Consider joining!

(all genders welcome)

Booklet of best practices (from PhD to professor)



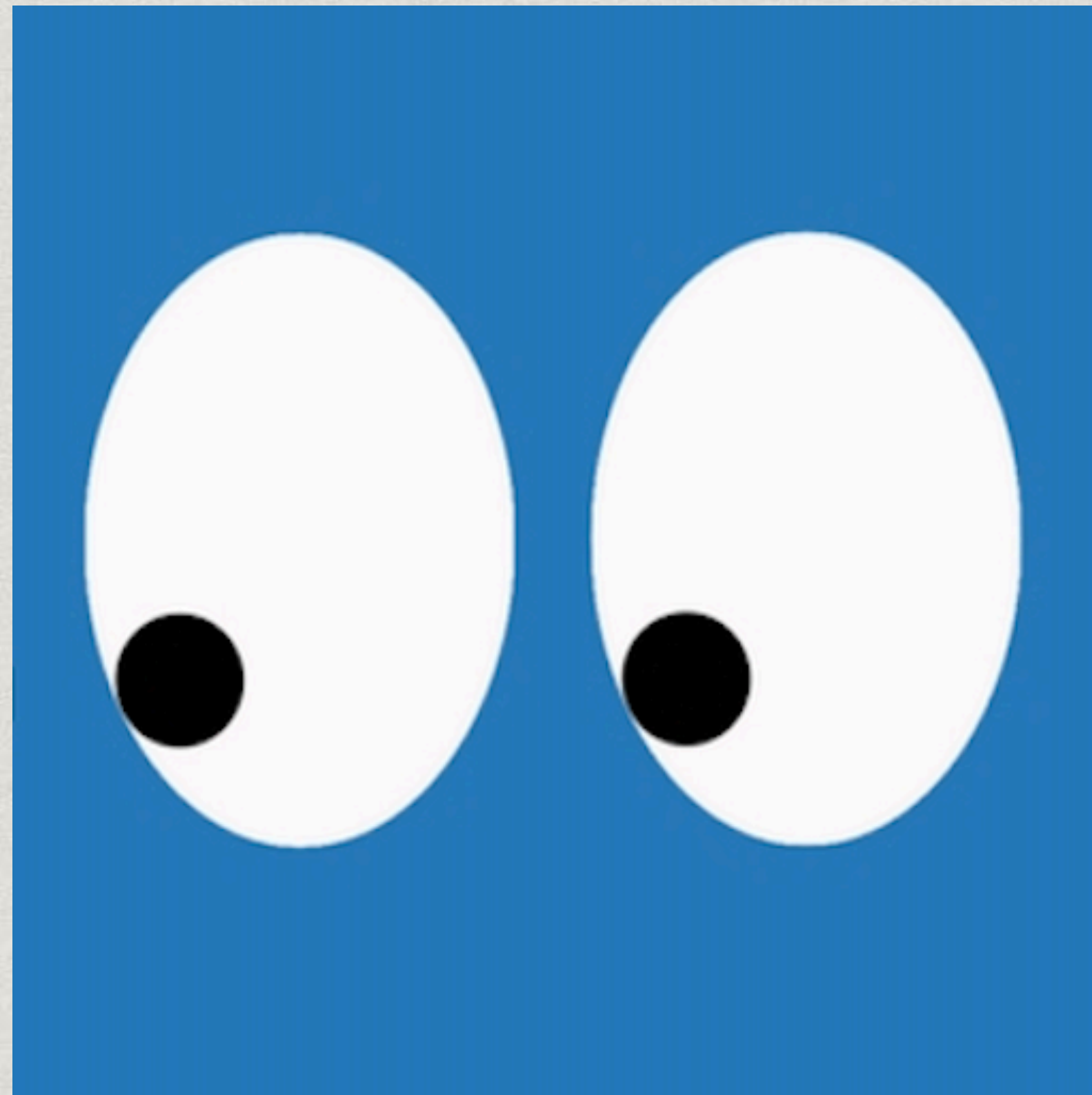
EUGAIN



Light night reading.

Very short! :)

Overlooked



“I pitched an idea at a departmental meeting. It was ignored until my male colleague repeated it. Then it was a brilliant idea and it was attributed to him.”

– Anonymous, woman, researcher in mathematics and computer science

“I was ignored online when using my female Github and StackExchange profiles. I created a fake profile with a male name to be acknowledged and taken seriously.”

– Anonymous, woman, software developer



Dr Valeria dePaiva @valeriadepaiva · 29 Nov 2021



The patriarchy can be subtle: if you cite a woman using a number, but give a full name plus number to the other (male) person who did similar work, everyone will remember the male person. only. it works every time.

Overlooked: actions

- * Monitor numbers: committees, speakers, awards, ...
- * Database of invited speakers and PC members.
- * Pay attention to the unconscious biases.
- * Promote work done by people of underrepresented genders.



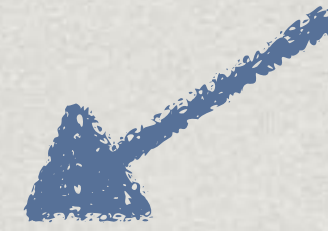
“When I organised a conference, I contacted 15 women and invited them to speak. None of them said yes. Despite my best efforts I ended up having an all-male invited speaker list.”

– *Anonymous, man, senior researcher in mathematics*

Don't be discouraged :)

Confidence

Research shows



- * To apply for a position/grant, there are certain requirements. If a woman does not tick off at least 80% of the requirements, she will not apply. Men tend to apply after fulfilling 30%.
- * Comprehensive way of learning: less tinkering and need for smaller tasks to gain confidence.
- * If women fail, they blame themselves, instead of finding other (actual) external reasons.



“I was just starting a new postdoc position and my university offered a course on how to write project proposals. The course administrators explained that the ideal participant has a good research idea for the proposal, is willing to invest a lot of work and absolutely has to attend all the sessions. I just switched to a new field and had to travel to a conference on the last two days of the course, so I didn’t tick off all the boxes and I decided not to apply. Luckily, my colleague convinced me to apply anyway. It was one of the most useful courses I ever attended and I ended up writing one of the few proposals that would obtain funding.”

– Anonymous, junior researcher in mathematics and computer science

Confidence: actions

- * **Encourage** women to apply (at all stages: school, uni, PhD, postdoc, professor).
- * Incorporate comprehensive learning in teaching and software (GenderMag).
- * Take action if too few suitable women apply for a position. (For example, extend the deadline for applications and re-advertise the position (inter)nationally. Actively search for applicants of underrepresented genders.)



Stereotypes



Stereotypes: actions

- * Inclusive language.

*Especially promoting
in schools!*

- * Role models. 

- * A new Netflix series? :)



Child care

- * Caring for children influences parents of all genders, but not equally.
- * Women tend to have children at earlier stages of their career due to biological factors.



Child care: actions

- * Help parents with finding/ensuring childcare at the conferences, workshops, research visits, new job.
- * State that the university/department/institute is committed to facilitating the combination of work and childcare in the recruiting media and in job descriptions.
- * Take into account career breaks (maternity leave, parental leave) with explicit identifications and rules.



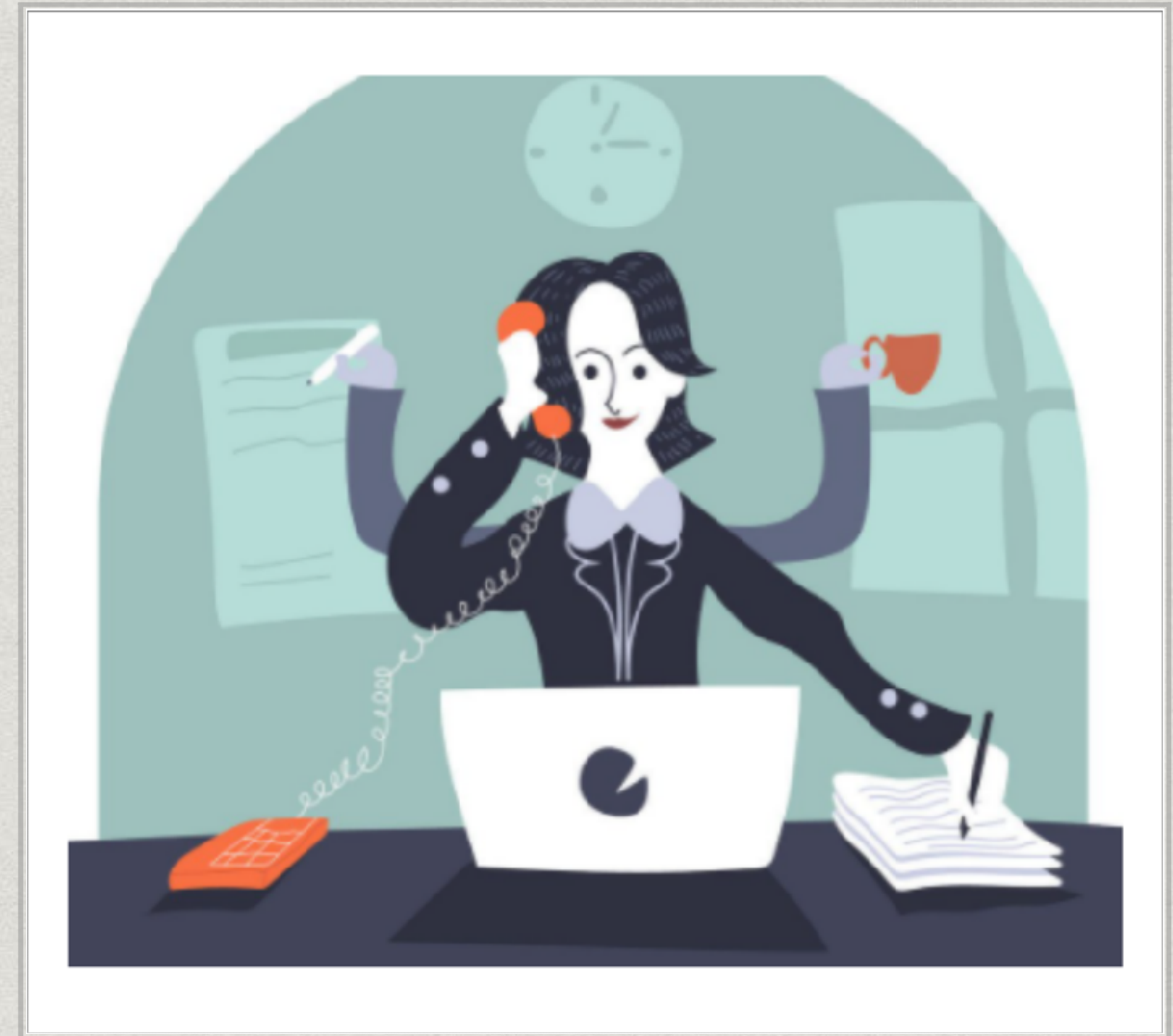
Child care: actions

- * Provide help with solving the “two body problem”, that is helping to find a position for the applicant’s partner.
- * Schedule meetings between 09:30 and 16:30, so carers of young children are able to deal with commuting and childcare.



Secretary

- * Drowning in administrative work: thesis committees, organisation of seminars, conferences, events, catering,...
- * Too many committees.
- * It shaves off time for research.



“I didn’t think there is a gender bias in my community. Until I read about the unconscious biases and realised that I am doing most of the administrative work, I was always the secretary, seminar organiser, expected to clean up the catering after an event, when the other researchers were networking, ...”

– Anonymous, woman, senior researcher

Secretary: actions

- * Monitor distribution of administrative work.
- * Gender-balance efforts should count towards “administrative workload”.



Join us in the efforts!
We need all genders!

