The UNICAFE project

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About the project

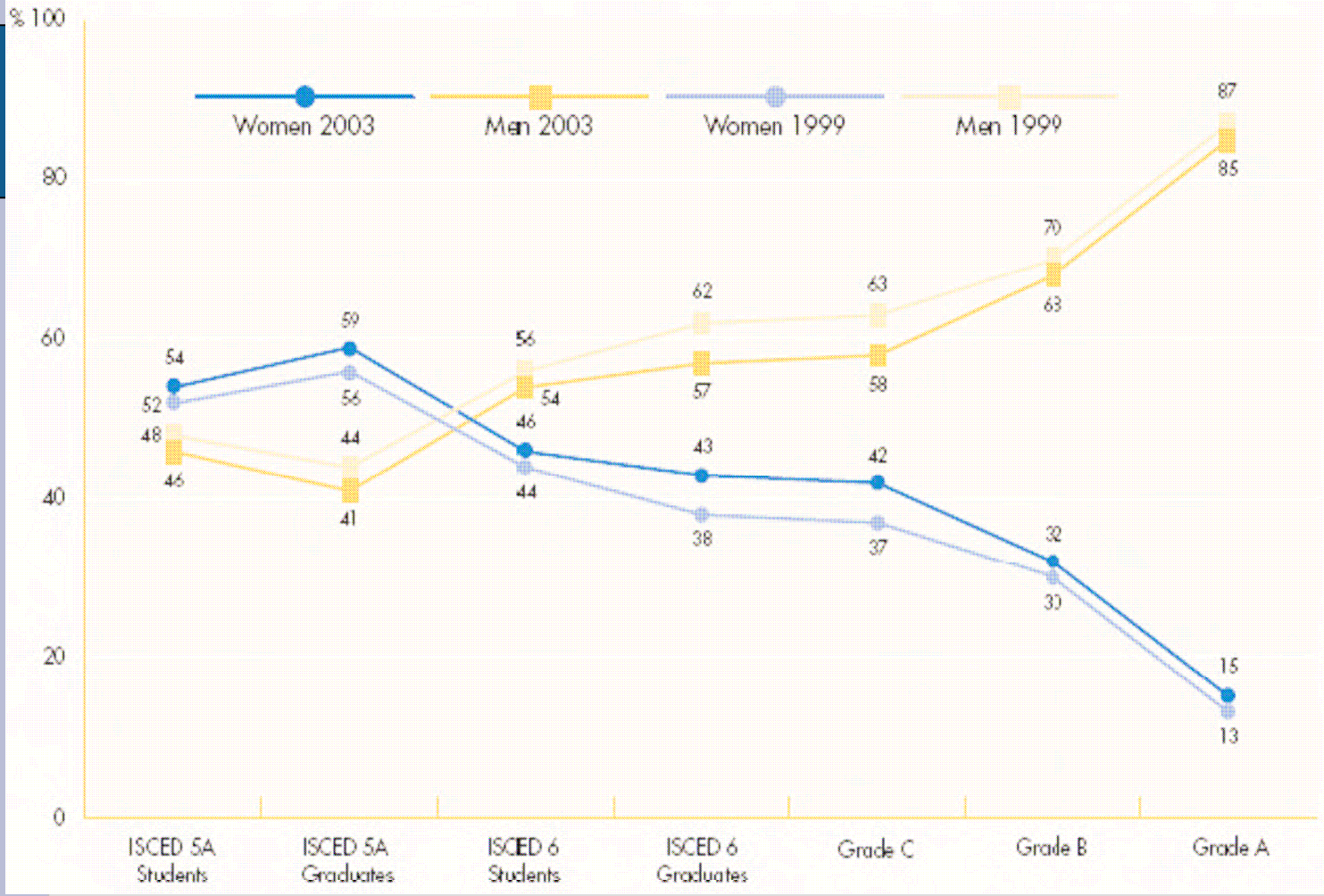
- Survey of the **Uni**versity **Ca**reer of **Fe**male Scientists at Life Sciences versus Technical Universities
- UNICAFE Project (2006-2008)
  - Specific Support Action (call identifier: FP6-2005-Science-and-society-17) with the specific objective of deepening and broadening the quantitative knowledge base on women and science in Europe
- Website: www.unicafe.ee
- Synthesis report
  - Beyond the Glass Ceiling
    University Career of Female Academics in Engineering,Technology and Life Sciences

Background of the project
State of the art

- Women give the majority of higher education graduates, but their number decreases significantly when they begin to build up their scientific career at the university
- Women usually face great difficulties in developing professional careers in academic research
- Compared to their share among PhD degree holders (EU-25: 44%) they are underrepresented at general level of participation in research, and their proportion is decreasing when rising on the hierarchical scale of university management

Typical academic carrier, EU-25

Figure 3.1: Proportions of men and women in a typical academic career, students and academic staff, EU-25, 1999-2003



Definition of grades:

A: The single highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted

B: Researchers working in positions not as senior as top position (A) but more senior than newly qualified PhD holders

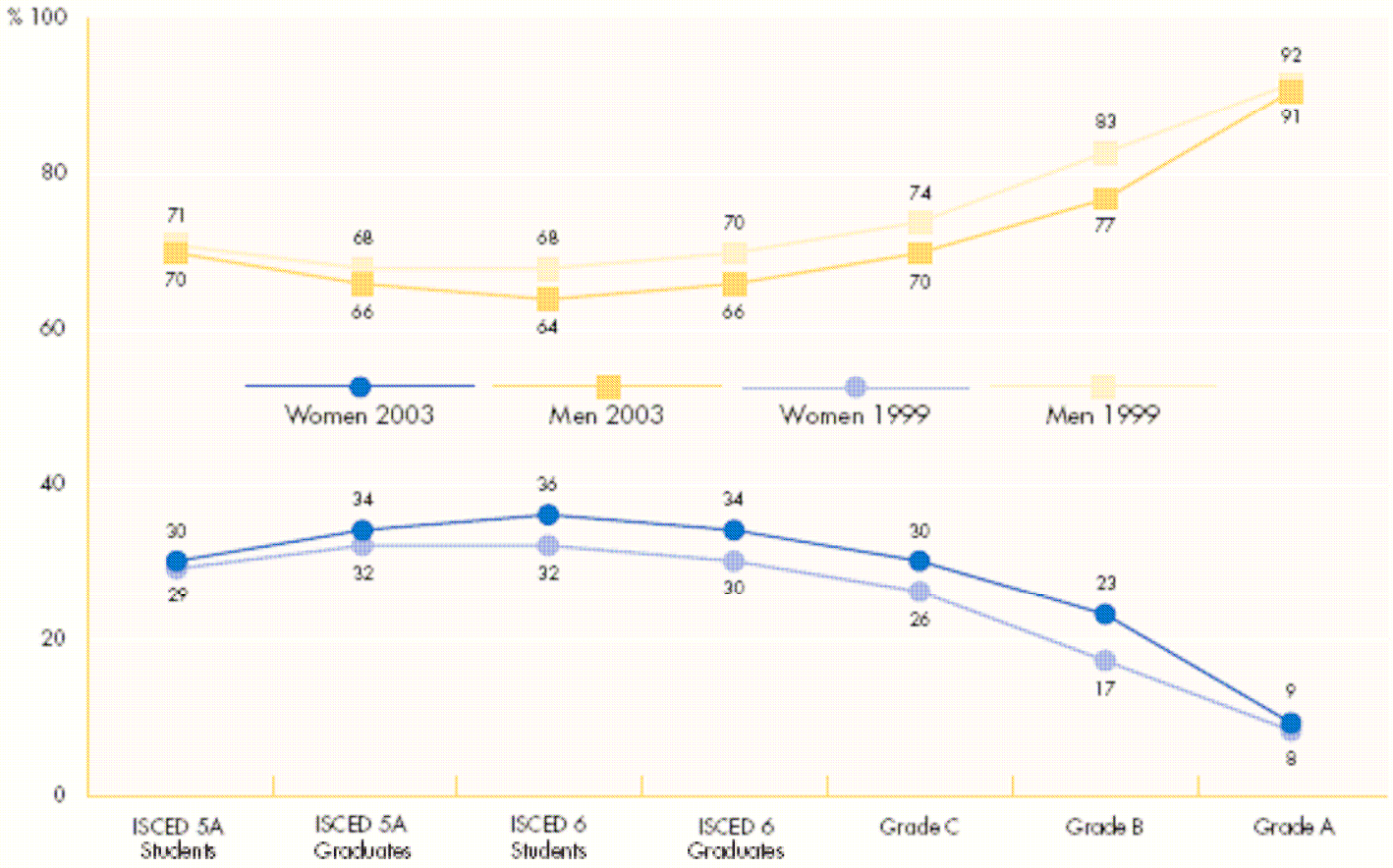
C: The first grade/post into which a newly qualified PhD graduate would normally be recruited

ISCED 5A: Tertiary programmes to provide sufficient qualifications to enter into advanced research programmes & professions with high skills requirements

ISCED 6: Tertiary programmes which lead to an advanced research qualification (PhD)

A typical academic career in SET

Figure 3.2: Proportions of men and women in a typical academic career in science and engineering, students and academic staff, EU-25, 1999-2003



Definition of grades:

A: The single highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted

B: Researchers working in positions not as senior as top position (A) but more senior than newly qualified PhD holders

C: The first grade/post into which a newly qualified PhD (ISCED6) graduate would normally be recruited

ISCED 5A: Tertiary programmes to provide sufficient qualifications to enter into advanced research programmes & professions with high skills requirements

ISCED 6: Tertiary programmes which lead to an advanced research qualification (PhD)

SET fields of education = 400 Science, maths and computing + 500 Engineering, manufacturing and construction
SET fields of science = Engineering and Technology + Natural Sciences

The aim of the project

- To carry out an **innovative pilot survey** to enhance existing knowledge on career patterns of female scientists at universities
- To **map the situation of female researchers** in engineering and life sciences at seven universities in six countries in Europe
- To examine and compare the situation of female researchers, decision makers and PhD students
- To create a **suitable tool for mapping** the situation of women in the critical fields and positions
- To **draw the attention of the university managements** to the importance of ensuring equal opportunities to women and men and the practice of gender mainstreaming as a policy of the European Union

The participating countries

- The participating countries were chosen with the intention of giving the best possible coverage of the different circumstances existing Europe-wide
- Three old member states
  - Austria
  - Finland
  - Italy
- Two new member states
  - Hungary
  - Estonia
- A candidate country
  - Turkey

The partners

- Hungarian Science and Technology Foundation – co-ordinator
- Budapest University of Technology and Economics – BME Hungary
- Medical University of Graz – MUG Austria
- Istanbul Technical University – ITU Turkey
- Semmelweis University – SE Hungary
- Tallinn University of Technology – TUT Estonia
- University of Oulu – OUL Finland
- University of Tor Vergata – URTV Italy - Rome

The tasks of the project

- The same dataset was collected by each partner university
- An online questionnaire was prepared to be filled in by the scientists (both female and male) of the partner universities, and the answers were put into SPSS.
- The target group consisted of
  - researchers and teachers
  - PhD students
  - decision-makers
- Each partner university carried out 16 interviews, 8 with men and 8 with women, at different career levels
- The most interesting interviews were expanded into case studies, 2 female and 2 male cases from each partner university
- Some female researchers were identified as role models
- Partners prepared a report about the results of the survey at their university in English and in their national language
- A comparative report was written about the results of the survey

Best practices – bad practices

- Best practices
  - Equal opportunities committees
  - Gender equality plans
  - Awareness-raising events
  - Childcare facilities
- Bad practices
  - Low representation of women in decision-making boards
  - Lack of sex-disaggregated data about staff, wages, promotions and recruitment
  - Lack of transparency in the decision-making procedures concerning human resources management
  - Lack of gender awareness

Contradiction

- The policies at the universities are promising, but - even at those organisations where gender equality is part of the main university policy - the hierarchical situation of women is not better or is only slightly better than in other institutions
- One of the reasons might be that the realisation of real, substantial changes in equal opportunities require long years of consistent policy and implementation work

University leaders, 1999/2000–2004/2005 academic years

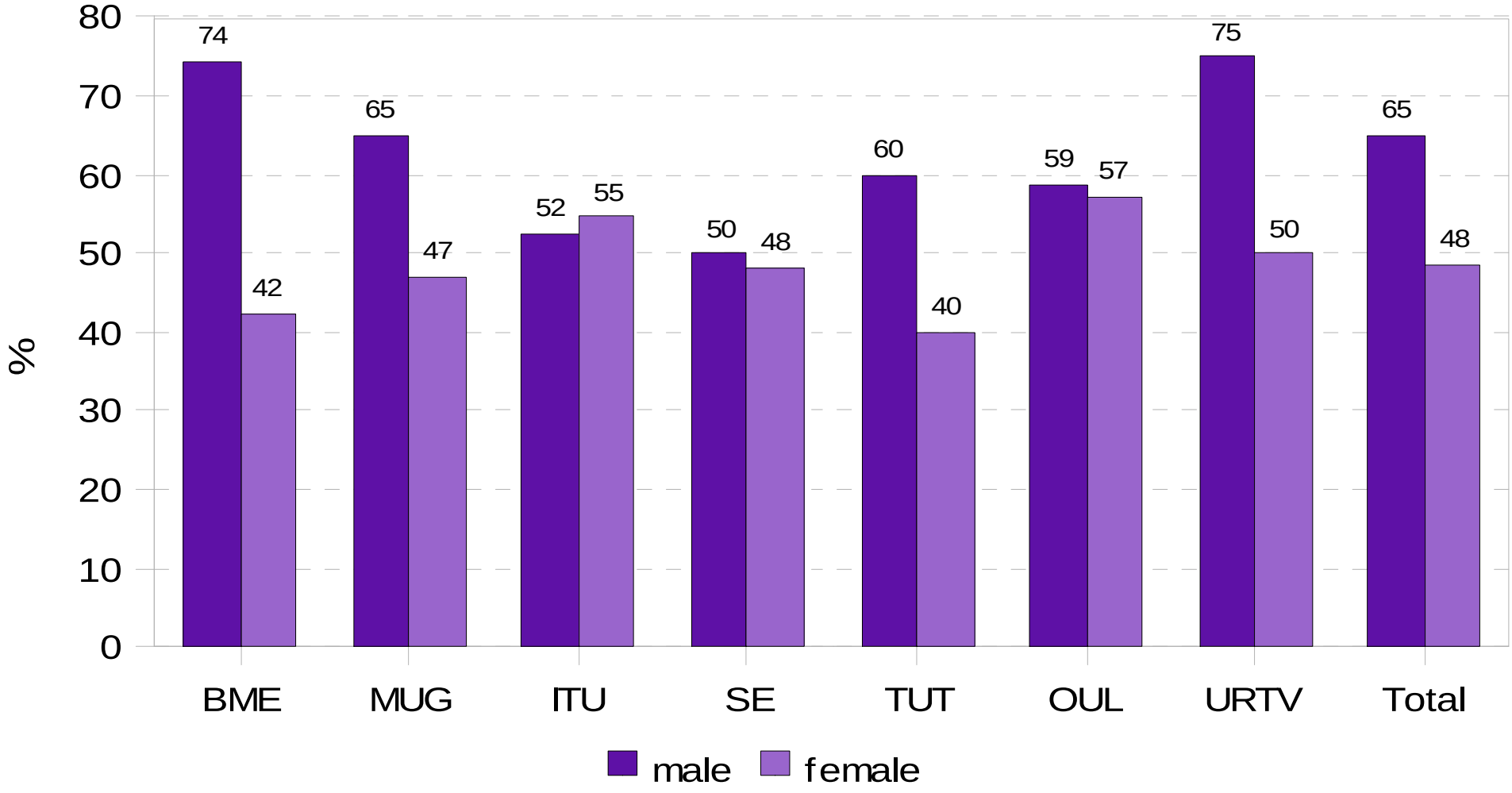
- ITU – seven female deans, one female rector for two cycles, four vice-rectors; 2004/05: dean of faculty – 11/2; no female rector, no female vice-rector
- OUL – two female vice-rectors for two periods, no female dean at the Faculty of Technology and Faculty of Medicine
- SE – no female rector, no deans, one vice-rector
- BME – no female rector, no vice-rector; only one female dean has been appointed in the history of the university
- MUG – no female rector, two female vice-rectors from 4, no deans
- TUT – no female rector, no vice-rector, no deans
- UTRV – decision-making positions have always been taken by men: rector and deans are men

Measures promoting gender equality

- **Gender awareness programs** are considered an effective measure for promoting gender equality by the half of the respondents
- **Gender exclusive networks** don't seem to be popular for either sex, but **gender exclusive grants** are effective according to the 60% of female respondents
- The two measures that got more than 80% by both women and men are the **improved flexibility of work practices** and the **improved childcare facilities**
- 70% of male respondents say that **gender quotas** are not effective, on the other hand 53% of the female respondents find them effective
- **Workload transparency** is effective according to 78% of women and 70% of men
- **Transparent resources** is believed efficient by 67% of the male and 79% of the female respondents

Family status

Diagram 7. Percentage of respondents having children (N male = 382, N female = 365)?



Family and success

- A higher percentage of both men and women with children have had a successful international project application compared to those not having family
- 22 from 24 male team leaders of an international project have children
- 9 from 14 female team leaders of an international project have children
- Male respondents having children definitely publish more than those not having any
- There are no female respondents without children who did not publish in the past 5 years
- There is a higher proportion of women without children among those who published 1 to 10 articles in the past 5 years, but a lower proportion of them than that of women with children published more than 10
- All this means that having children and family might increase productivity in publishing

Main suggestions for university managements

- Equality and diversity targets in the mission statement of the university
- Measures to raise the gender awareness in the management and staff of the university
- Gender equality plan both on faculty and on university level
- Responsible organisational units and persons for implementing the gender equality plans
- Implementation covering
  - working conditions, salaries, career advancement, training, maternity/paternity and childcare allowances
  - sex disaggregated data collection and monitoring of university structures and processes: staff (considering e.g. different career levels and working fields), pay gaps, age gaps, promotions, drop-outs
- Employing external and internal experts to control the gender policy at the university year by year
- Providing financial incentives

UNICAFE Synthesis report

Beyond the Glass Ceiling University Career of Female Academics in Engineering, Technology and Life Sciences

http://www.unicafe.ee/Failid/unicafe_publication.pdf