AALBORG UNIVERSITET

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Aalborg University

Fredrik Bajers Vej 7K
P.O. Box 159
9220 Aalborg

Date: 22-05-2026
Reference number: 2026-02102692

Committee meeting

A meeting of the Committee on Equality and Diversity is hereby convened

Friday 29 May 2026, 13.00-15.00

Fredrik Bajers Vej 7k, room 2.01

Agenda:

Points for approval

1. **Approval of agenda (13.00-13.05)**
   Appendix: Agenda for the committee meeting on February 25th 2026

2. **Approval of minutes (13.05-13.10)**
   Appendix 2.1: Minutes of the meeting of the Committee for Equality and Diversity on November 18th 2026

3. **Announcements from the chairperson (13.10-13.20)**

Points to be considered

4. **Proposal for a framework for a new strategic action plan (13.20-13.30)**

5. **Proposal for content of new strategic action plan 2026-2029 (13.30-14.50)**
   Appendix 5.1: Case presentation

   Appendix 5.2: Draft initiatives: Gender balance

   Appendix 5.3: Draft initiatives: Neurodiversity and mental impairments

Appendix 5.4: Draft initiatives: Language and culture

Appendix 5.5: Draft initiatives: Local action plans

Appendix 5.6: Additional input and perspectives from the committee's strategy day

Appendix 5.7 Background: Updated data basis for the development of a strategic action plan for equality and diversity

Points for orientation

6. Committee announcements (14.50 to 14.55)

7. And other Business (14.55-15.00)

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Case presentation

Document date: 26-05-2026:
Case number:2026-021-02692

Meeting forum: Committee on Equality and Diversity
Meeting date:27-06-2025

May be freely distributed
For decision

Appendix 5.1 Case presentation - Draft of a new strategic action plan for equality and diversity 2026-2029

Recommendation

The committee's secretariat recommends that:

- The committee discusses, qualifies and approves the proposed initiatives for the strategic action plan for equality and diversity 2026-2029.
- The committee approves proposals for monitoring of all initiatives and discusses for each initiative what could be relevant indicators.

Appendix

Appendix 5.1: Case presentation

Appendix 5.2 Draft initiatives: Gender balance

Appendix 5.3: Draft initiatives: Neurodiversity and mental impairments

Appendix 5.4: Draft initiatives: Language and culture

Appendix 5.5: Draft initiatives: Local action plans

Appendix 5.6: Additional input and perspectives from the committee's strategy day

Appendix 5.7 Background: Updated data basis for the development of a strategic action plan for equality and diversity
Pages 7-18 contain new material. The remaining pages are the same material the committee received for the strategy day on March 24th.

Case presentation

The Committee for Equality and Diversity (ULD) is in the process of preparing a strategic action plan for equality and diversity at Aalborg University for the period 2026-2029.

Document date: 26-05-2026:
Case number:2026-021-02692

Meeting forum: Committee on Equality and Diversity
Meeting date:27-06-2025

May be freely distributed
For decision

At ordinary meetings on November 18th 2025 and February 25th 2026, as well as on a strategy day on March 24th 2026 addressed and contributed with insights on:

- Status of the initiatives in the current strategic action plan for 2022-2026
- A data basis with the status of equality and diversity at AAU and in society (see appendix 5.7) • Expert presentation from Associate Professor Stine Thidemann Faber
- The members' own insights from the AAU areas they represent.

Based on this, on the strategy day March 24th 2026, the committee developed proposals for themes and initiatives for the upcoming strategic action plan. The committee's work has now been brought together in proposals for four main initiatives (see Appendices 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5) which the committee is asked to discuss and to decide how to continue working with these.

The four initiatives are currently formulated as a working draft. The draft lies – especially for Appendix 5.2 – between the committee's raw input from the strategy day and a more condensed text that could be included in a final strategic action plan. The purpose is to give the committee the opportunity to recognize the key nuances in the discussions before the initiatives are subsequently clarified and compiled into a final format.

Appendix 5.6 contains supplementary input and perspectives from ULD's strategy day, which are not currently proposed to be incorporated as independent initiatives in the action plan. The appendix maintains these points as background material for further work and any subsequent priorities.

Structure of the action plan
Based on the Committee's work, a proposal has been developed for four main initiatives (see Appendices 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and
5.5) based on a project management template with the following three levels:

- Activities: The specific initiatives that are to be implemented during the strategy period.
- Expected results: The specific results to be achieved by the action that contribute to the achievement of the overall objective.
- Overall objective: The desired objective, which is beyond the full control of the specific initiatives, but to which these must contribute.

Cross-disciplinary and local initiatives
It is proposed that the strategic action plan be built up with both cross-cutting and local initiatives. The cross-disciplinary initiatives must set a common direction and ensure a common framework across AAU, while the local initiatives must give faculties, departments and departments the opportunity to work with the issues that are most relevant in their own context.

Monitoring
It is proposed that each activity in the final strategic action plan be linked to one or more indicators. The indicators must make it possible to continuously monitor developments and assess whether the initiatives contribute to the expected results. The indicators may consist of, for example, target figures, data from existing measurements, activity targets or qualitative follow-ups, depending on the nature of the initiative.

Further process
After the committee's discussion, the secretariat proceeds to qualify and specify the proposed initiatives. This is done through dialogue with relevant parties in the organization, who may be responsible for or contribute to the implementation of the initiatives.
Based on the feedback, the secretariat prepares a revised final draft of the strategic action plan, which will be presented to the ULD at a future meeting for final recommendation for approval by executive management.

Financing

☐ The entities/cost centres that are to finance a new activity are informed and agree that they must finance the activity in question.

☐ The financing of the suspended activity is proposed from a common pool, which will have to be increased.

☐ The financing of the suspended activity entails a significant drain on resources on the personnel side.

☐ A decision has not yet been made on the financing.

☒ The recommendation does not entail any new funding needs.

Involvement

Committee on Equality and Diversity

AALBORG UNIVERSITET

Communication

The plan is not ready to be communicated in the organization yet.

Implementation

The committee's secretariat is responsible for the further process after the ULD meeting.

Case officer

Dennis Jim Frederiksen, Development Consultant, dennisjf@adm.aau.dk, 10605, HR Well-being and Development

Kirstine Kjær Frederiksen, Development Consultant, kkmat@adm.aau.dk 10605, HR Well-being and Development

OVERALL OBJECTIVE
APPENDIX 5.2 Improve gender balance at AAU in academic positions
ACTIVITIES

1) Formulation of a merit framework with broader criteria for desired profiles for academic positions

Work has been initiated to develop common AAU criteria for which profiles are desired for academic positions. ULD wants to be represented in the working group to contribute perspectives on how broader criteria can support a better gender balance.

At the strategy day, the Committee discussed the types of qualifications, contributions and career paths that should be better included in the assessment of desired profiles for academic positions with the aim of improving gender balance. Key points from the discussion are set out below.

- Profiles that are not only strong on individual performance, own publications, citations (H-index) and external repatriation. They must also be strong at contributing to and lifting the collective.
- Academic Citizenship is important to the organization.
- Part B of the AAU research indicator: Collaboration, Visibility and Openness
- Focus also on tasks that today are *non-promotional tasks*
- More refined and balanced criteria that take into account the individual applicant's history, so we ensure that we get the best. For example, if they have had 4 years in the business world, or had 3 children over 10 years, then the total amount of publications and funds may be smaller, but if we look at the per year or understand qualifications more broadly, then a different picture emerges.
- The criteria must support an overall assessment of the applicant's overall qualifications, so that different strengths and contributions can be included in the assessment without all criteria having to be met to the same extent. The purpose is that strong profiles can be recognised across different combinations of competences, experiences and contributions. - Values and ways we work – what kind of organisation are we - ULD and the secretariat may consider seeking inspiration in: ○ The criteria from *Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (ARRA)* FromThe *Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (COARA).*
    - ○ The University of Copenhagen's merit framework ○ AAU TECH's merit framework ○ Experiences from Norway

Background

AAU's data point to a continued *leaky pipeline* in the scientific career path. This means that the gender balance gradually becomes more skewed the higher you move up in the job structure, so that women make up a smaller proportion at the upper career levels than at the earlier levels.

One assumption may be that broader criteria can contribute to a better gender balance in academic positions, because the current criteria used may be inappropriately gendered. If assessments place particular emphasis on individual research production, citations (H-index) and external repatriation, necessary collective contributions, academic citizenship and other non-promotional work may become invisible, even though it is important to the organisation.

If women are expected to take on, be asked about and accept this type of task to a greater extent than men, this can reduce their time for the activities that traditionally count most in academic merit. Broader and more transparent criteria can therefore support a broader assessment of different career paths, task portfolios and contributions to academic environments.

Based on the work in activity 1), activities 2), 3) and 4) are carried out

2) Stilling storage

Templates, guidelines and digital support functions are prepared for the formulation of job advertisements that reflect the broader criteria in terms of choice of words and desired profile and that reduce the risk that the advertisements inadvertently signal a narrow or gendered understanding of the desired candidate profile.

Expected result

- The language used in job advertisements appeals to applicants of all genders, and more will apply

3) Assessment work

Criteria are prepared for assessment work that reflect the broader criteria and that support a fair assessment of applicants' merits in light of their actual merit period.

Expected results

- Clear criteria reduce the risk of unconscious bias in hiring
- More profiles with strengths within the new broader criteria are hired
- Assessments take into account the applicant's actual merit period, including maternity, leave of absence or other relevant circumstances, so that the credits are assessed in relation to the time the applicant has actually had available – e.g. as production per active career year rather than total production over a fixed period.

4) Communication and transparency

The broader criteria are clearly communicated so that they are easily accessible to all employees and potential applicants.

Expected results

- Clear and accessible broader criteria appeal to a larger group and more people will apply for positions and next career steps

Clear and accessible criteria strengthen transparency and predictability in assessment processes, so it can be seen which criteria are used as a basis for career development, assessment and talent identification.

5) Managerial support for new criteria

The common AAU criteria are followed up in terms of with a focus on:

ions, academic citizenship and collaboration (as part of the new criteria) are recognised and rewarded in line with

- The new broader criteria are used in recruitment, individual ia and clarifying what AAU as an organisation needs – also in the long assessment, term. merit and salary gender equality through data and managerial awareness. improvement and faculty level that gender equality and diversity in employment is a management task, and not an individual
- performance. responsibility for it
- •
- individual employees.

6) Target figures for gender balance in professorships, senior management and board

- Objectives are set for gender balance in the senior management and board at AAU.
- In collaboration with each faculty, the rector's office sets target figures for increasing the number of female professors within a five-year period.
- The development is monitored annually via publicly available data.

Expected result

- Focusing on gender balance through goal setting and follow-up counteracts gender imbalance in recruitment and employment.

7) More female researchers quoted in the media

Efforts are being made to get more female AAU researchers quoted in the media, e.g. through active use of expert lists aimed at the media.

Expected results

- More female researchers from AAU are becoming visible as academic experts in the media.
- The initiative contributes to a more balanced gender representation in AAU's external research dissemination.
- The visibility can support more female researchers as role models and help to highlight the breadth of AAU's research environments.

Organizational suspension

This is an existing effort from AAU Communication and Public Affairs, which ULD may wish to continue.

OVERALL OBJECTIVE
APPENDIX 5.3 **AAU has an inclusive working environment where neurodivergent employees and employees with mental disabilities can thrive, contribute and continue to be connected to the workplace**
ACTIVITIES
1) Mapping needs and challenges at AAU **2) Investigate the scope and types of issues related to mental impairments for employees at AAU** An identification of the issues, needs and managerial trade-offs that are typically associated with neurodiversity and psychological • What issues arise and what is the scope of the organisation? • groups experience the greatest challenges, and is there anything that **3) Clarification of the need for more advice and sparring for managers and**

neurodivergence and	Below it is clarified:	• Is there a difference between which employee	calls for a targeted effort?	**employees**

It is clarified whether AAU needs a strengthened counselling and sparring offer on neurodiversity and mental disabilities among employees

Below it is clarified:

- what competencies affected managers and employees need
- whether the advice is best offered internally, externally or as a combination
- how managers can get help to balance individual considerations with

4) Clarification of balance between individual needs, joint task solving and realistic expectations of flexibility.

The clarification can elucidate, among other things:

- how needs for individual adaptations can be best identified and handled without creating unrealistically high expectations or experiences of injustice
- how consideration for the individual can be balanced with consideration for the task, the team and local framework conditions

5) Clarification of the need for common AAU criteria for how requests for individual adaptations of working frameworks and working conditions are assessed and how they can be met

It is clarified whether there is a need for common criteria across AAU. The criteria can support a balanced assessment of:

- the employee's needs
- The nature of the task
- Consideration for the entire employee group
- local framework conditions and resources

6) Early intervention and prevention of poor well-being

It will be clarified whether there is a need for more outreach efforts in the way AAU identifies the needs of employees so that problems can be handled early, before they develop into major well-being challenges or sick leave.

Possible traces can be:

- Better information about support options for recruitment and onboarding

Atte
ntion to the needs of latediagnos is employees

functional impairments among the employees at AAU.

• how AAU actors, e.g.	the consideration of Task solving, team and framework conditions best collaborates with external municipalities, advisers or treatment system – which, among other things, can ha very individual-focused approach.	**7) Gathering of experience and best practice** whether principles from universal design can be used as a starting point for solutions that are ecessary for some ve a and eneficial for others on how to ob advertisements, nboarding or ongoing lignment of expectations can hake the requirements,	opportunities and limitations of specific positions clearer from the start • the need for transparency and fairness in dealing with • At the same time, it can be clarified whether there is a lack of knowledge about how the employee group can be helped, and whether an inspiration catalogue with typical solutions and initiatives can be helpful.	• strengthened knowledge among managers, HR partners and in occupational health and safety organisations • the possibility of more outreach counselling where there are signs of incipient dissatisfaction • inspiration from other universities, e.g. checklists or dialogue tools for recruitment and onboarding

Experience and examples of good practice are collected from other Danish universities that have worked with neurodiversity and mental disabilities among employees. The purpose is to gain knowledge about specific approaches and organisational solutions that can qualify AAU's further work on formulating relevant initiatives.

EXPECTED RESULT

A qualified basis is established for formulating relevant interventions at AAU for neurodivergent employees and employees with mental disabilities

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

APPENDIX 5.4

To strengthen international employees' conditions for participation and contributions, and thereby their affiliation and opportunities for career development at AAU

ACTIVITIES		

1) Onboarding course for international employees

An onboarding course is developed and offered to international employees. The course is intended to make international employees feel comfortable in their new work context and provide insight into a Danish work and collaboration culture, including cooperation, self-management, management, meeting culture and the relationship between teachers and students, as well as unwritten norms and expectations in a Danish workplace.

Expected result

The initiative is to strengthen international employees' understanding of a Danish academic culture of work and cooperation, and to prevent uncertainty, misunderstandings and cultural barriers through clarity about norms, expectations and forms of cooperation (flat hierarchies, high degree of self-management, dialogue-based meeting culture, etc.).

2) Procedures for the use of language at meetings and in councils and committees

- All councils, committees and committees must prepare fixed procedures for language selection, which must be written down in the procedure/terms of reference, and which must be activated every time a new member joins. The procedure can, for example, describe when meetings, agendas, minutes and materials must be in Danish or English, as well as how active participation for all members is supported through flexible language solutions where participants can speak both Danish and English during the meetings.
- The choice of language is assessed and justified prior to meetings, seminars and other events where international employees participate.

Expected results

- Employees with a preference for either Danish or English can participate in AAU councils, boards or committees without language becoming a barrier to access or to being able to contribute.
- AAU councils, boards and committees have taken an active position on how different language preferences and competencies can best be included in their meeting practice, which ensures that language choices are not random, but take place within a clear and structured framework.

3) Pedagogical and linguistic upgrading of international employees

- Pedagogical and linguistic upgrading is being developed and offered to international employees so that they can handle university teaching and supervision in Danish in the long term.
- The initiative is intended to support international employees not only achieving general Danish skills, but also being given the opportunity to develop the special pedagogical and linguistic security as well as cultural understanding required to be able to carry out teaching and supervision in Danish in a university context.
- In terms of management, the focus is on the employee having a realistic framework for developing the language skills required in teaching and supervision tasks.

Expected results

- International employees can to a greater extent meet the requirement of being able to contribute to parts of the teaching in Danish 2-5 years after employment.
- International employees are becoming more of a resource in teaching and guidance in Danish.
- International employees will have better access to positions and career opportunities where teaching in Danish is a prerequisite or essential qualification.

4) Management support for strengthened inclusion of international employees

The efforts for international employees are followed up in terms of management with a focus on onboarding, language use in connection with meetings, as well as pedagogical and linguistic upskilling.

The managerial follow-up must, among other things, support that:

- An active consideration is given to the use of language in written and oral communication as well as academic and social events
- Employees are given a realistic framework and time to participate in language courses and pedagogical and linguistic upskilling.
- International employees do not themselves bear full responsibility for drawing attention to language barriers or lack of opportunities for participation.
- Inclusion of international employees is understood as a management task and not only as an individual responsibility for the individual employee. Progression in language competences and linguistic support needs is followed up in relevant employee dialogues, e.g. SDDs or 1:1 interviews
-

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

APPENDIX 5.5 To promote locally relevant gender equality and inclusion at AAU

ACTIVITIES

1) Preparation of local action plans at faculty, department and joint service unit level

- An inspiration catalogue will be prepared with possible local actions within the main themes that the strategic action plan for gender equality and diversity 20262029 contains: gender equality, the inclusion of international employees, and mapping of needs and challenges in relation to neurodiversity and mental health disabilities. The inspiration catalogue can be based on existing good experiences in the organisation, such as a buddy scheme for new international employees.
- Based on the inspiration catalogue, the faculty/department/department selects 1-2 activities that they want to implement locally. A goal is formulated and a decision is made on how to follow up on this, e.g. in the form of target figures.
- Responsible for the implementation of the initiative is appointed.
- The unit reports the status of the efforts to the ULD once a year.

Expected result

The three main themes in the new strategic action plan are anchored locally through selected actions that match local issues and employee group compositions. The local actions must complement the cross-disciplinary initiatives that are widely implemented at the university and contribute to ensuring local relevance, ownership and usability.

APPENDIX 5.6

Memo to the Committee on Equality and Diversity

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Reference number: 2026-021-02692

Possible initiatives proposed at ULD's strategy day, which are not currently included in the proposal for the Strategic Action Plan for Gender Equality and Diversity 2026-2029

This appendix brings together a number of supplementary inputs and perspectives that were proposed at the ULD's strategy day on 24 March 2026. The inputs are not currently included as independent initiatives in the proposal for the Strategic Action Plan for Gender Equality and Diversity 2026-2029, but can be included in the committee's further work if prioritised.

Gender and career

Management courses as career development
It was proposed that the faculties work with management courses as a career-developing offer for young researchers with potential. The purpose is to provide researchers with experience and competencies that support a possible career path towards professor and management tasks.

This can happen as a result of the plan, as it is a way of implementing the plan.

Communication and visibility

Communication about ULD's work and results

It was suggested that the launch of the new strategy be linked to a more norm-setting and visible communication effort about ULD's work over the past 20 years.

The purpose is both:

- to make results and progress visible;
- to clarify areas where challenges remain.

Possible formats:

- Newsletters
- Seminars
- historical overviews and cases.

Focus on cozy sexism and bias

It was suggested to work more purposefully with everyday culture, bias and so-called "cozy sexism" through ongoing communication and dialogue efforts.

Possible actions:

- Article series
- Cases and reflection material
- opportunity to submit experiences or perspectives to ULD.

Easier access to knowledge and materials

It was proposed to update ULD's website so that materials, knowledge and options for action become more easily accessible and more usable for managers, employees and committees.

International employees

Link to AAU's strategy on international research talents
It was suggested that ULD's work be more clearly linked to AAU's strategic goals of including international research talents, including the goal that more international researchers will recommend AAU as a workplace.

Internationals' well-being in the inclusion survey
It was suggested that the next inclusion survey differentiates more clearly on e.g. job category, age and employment perspective, so that better knowledge is created about the well-being of different international employee groups.

The idea has been taken on to those responsible for the inclusion survey 2026.

Spouse network
It was suggested to work with spouse networks for the families of international employees, as the family's well-being and the possibility of attachment to Denmark can have an impact on the employee's retention at AAU.

These are currently offered under the auspices of AAU's International Staff Unit

Cafés for international employees

It was proposed to establish cafés or similar meeting forums where international employees can meet others in the same situation and get a broader social onboarding. *These are currently offered under the auspices of AAU's International Staff Unit*

Employees from e.g. China and Iran who experience suspicion

A point of attention was raised about foreign employees who experience themselves

suspected, discriminated against or excluded. The issue was described as sensitive, as very difficult to address, and as something that requires a separate assessment of how it can best be handled.

Appendix 5.7

Selected figures of relevance to the Committee for Gender Equality and Diversity (ULD) in connection with the preparation of a new strategic action plan for gender equality and diversity

CONTENTS

1. Employee composition, management and career progression at AAU.....2

AAU Key figures on gender balance in management, employee composition and gender distribution and career trajectory in research positions (PhD to professor). New figures pages 7-9

2. Career pathway from PhD to associate professor across all Danish universities.....10
Results from DEA report on gender imbalances in career pathways and retention across all Danish universities. New section (pages 10-18)

3. Experiences of inclusion and barriers in the work environment..... 17

Results from the inclusion survey on employees' experiences of inclusion and barriers in the work environment.

4. Well-being, working environment and offensive actions..... 23

Results from the Well-being Barometer on the working environment, well-being and experiences with offensive actions.

5. Sexism and career pathways in research environments.....29

Selected results from the national study Sexism and Career Pathways at Danish Universities (VIVE).

6. Neurodiversity – use of ADHD medication..... 33

Data from Statistics Denmark on the development in the use of ADHD medication as a perspective on neurodiversity.

1. EMPLOYEE COMPOSITION, MANAGEMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION AT AAU

Key figures on the staff composition at AAU:

- status of AAU's target figures for gender balance in senior management
- the evolution of gender balance at key management levels since 2022
- Diversity among employees by gender, citizenship and age
- the gender distribution at key levels in the research career (PhD, postdoc, assistant professor, associate professor and professor).

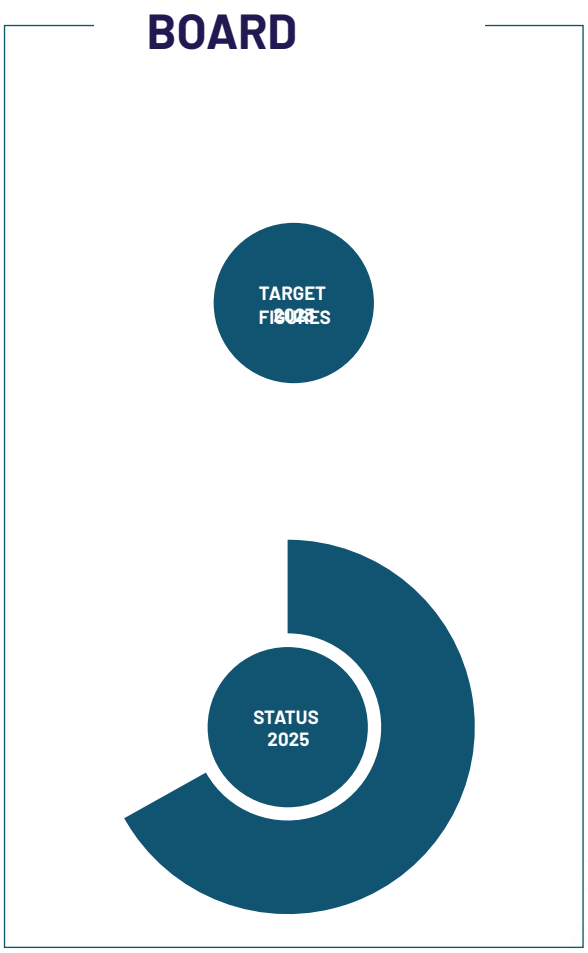
Data source: HR personnel data (register data)
Population: employees at Aalborg University (VIP and TAP)

02

Target figures and status of gender balance in management

In 2023, AAU updated its target figures for gender composition in senior management, which means that the board's external members must have a 50/50 distribution of men and women by the end of 2026. This target figure has not been met in 2025.

At the management level, corresponding to the Executive Board, vice-deans, heads of department and administrative managers, there must be a distribution of 31/69 per cent by the end of 2026. At the start of the target agreement, there was a 25/75 split. In 2025, the target figure has been met with a 66/34 per cent distribution of men and women.





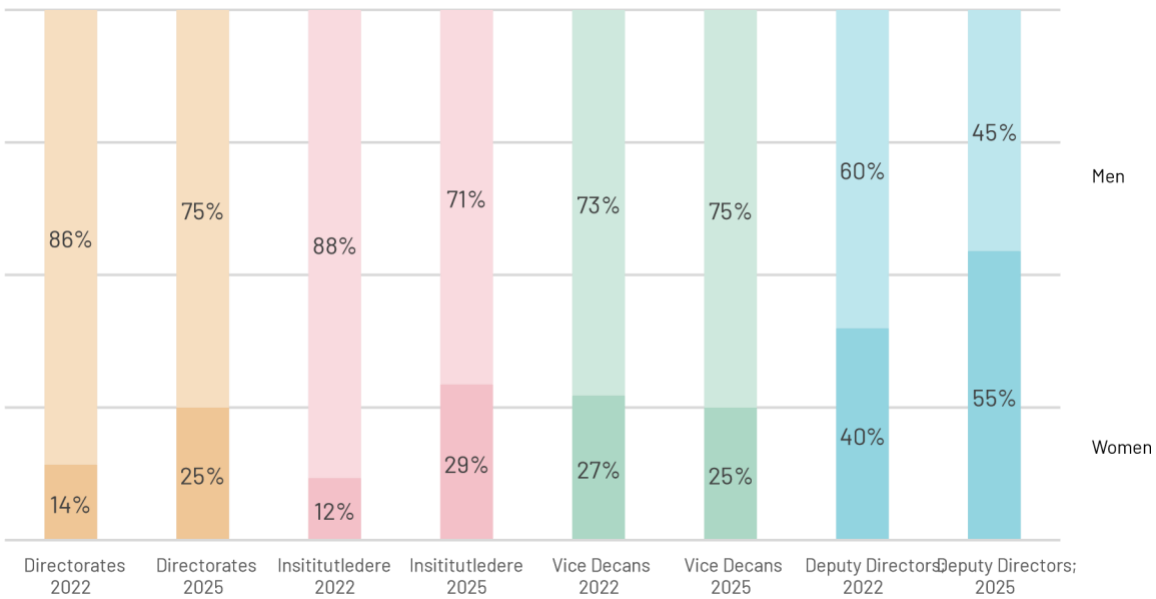
The charts here show only
External members of the board

Gender balance development in senior management

This graph shows the distribution of men and women in the management categories in the senior management at AAU. To follow the development in connection with the strategy period, the gender balance in 2022 is compared with the gender balance in 2025

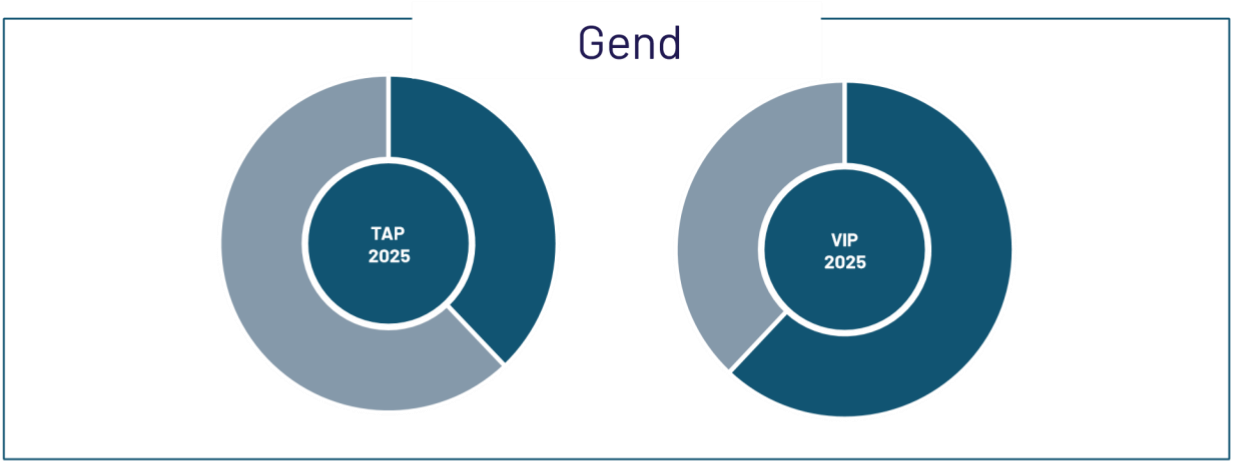
For the Executive Board, heads of department and deputy directors,

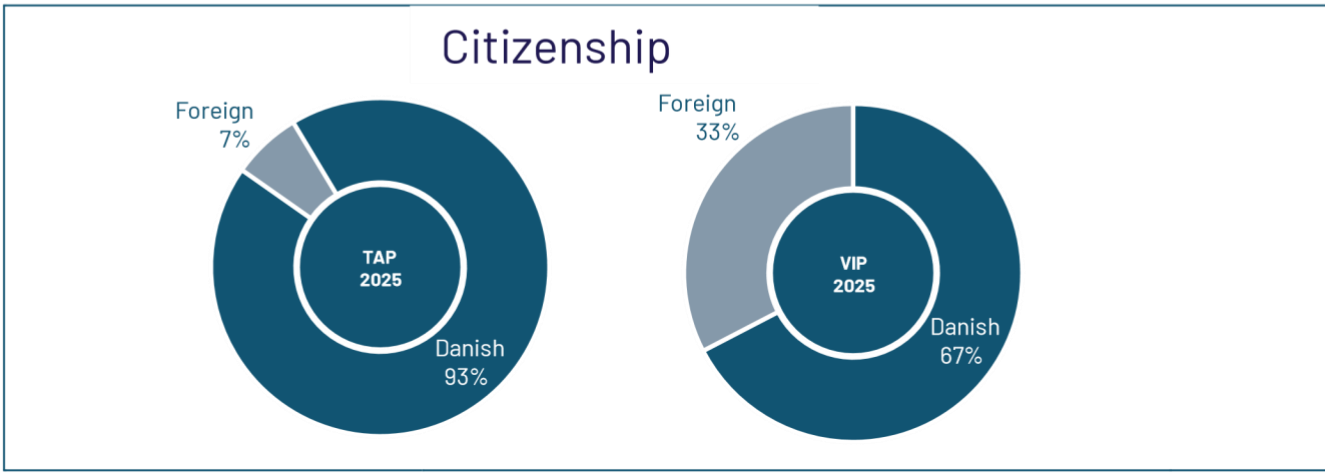
there is an increase in the number of women in management, and for vice-deans, there is a decrease of 2 percentage points in the proportion of women.

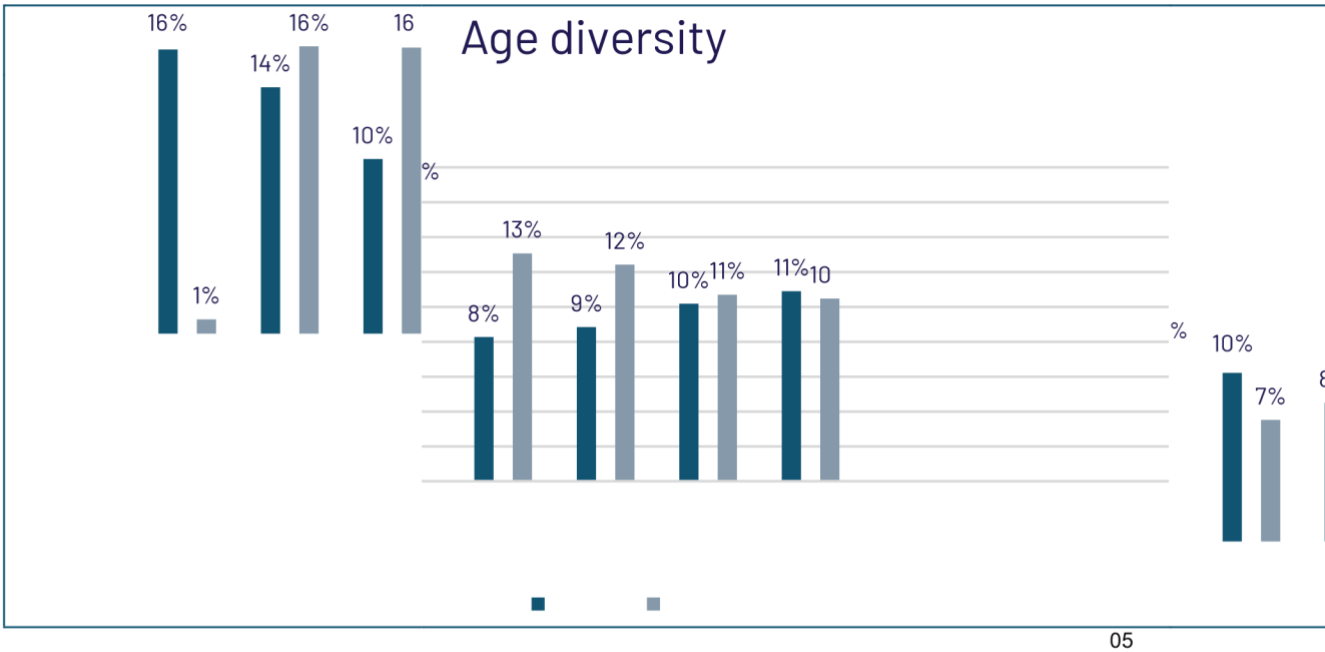


Status of diversity

There is still a strong focus on a diverse staff composition at AAU. In academic positions, special efforts are being made to recruit more female researchers. As this page illustrates, other factors such as age and citizenship are also measured.







The leaky pipeline at AAU

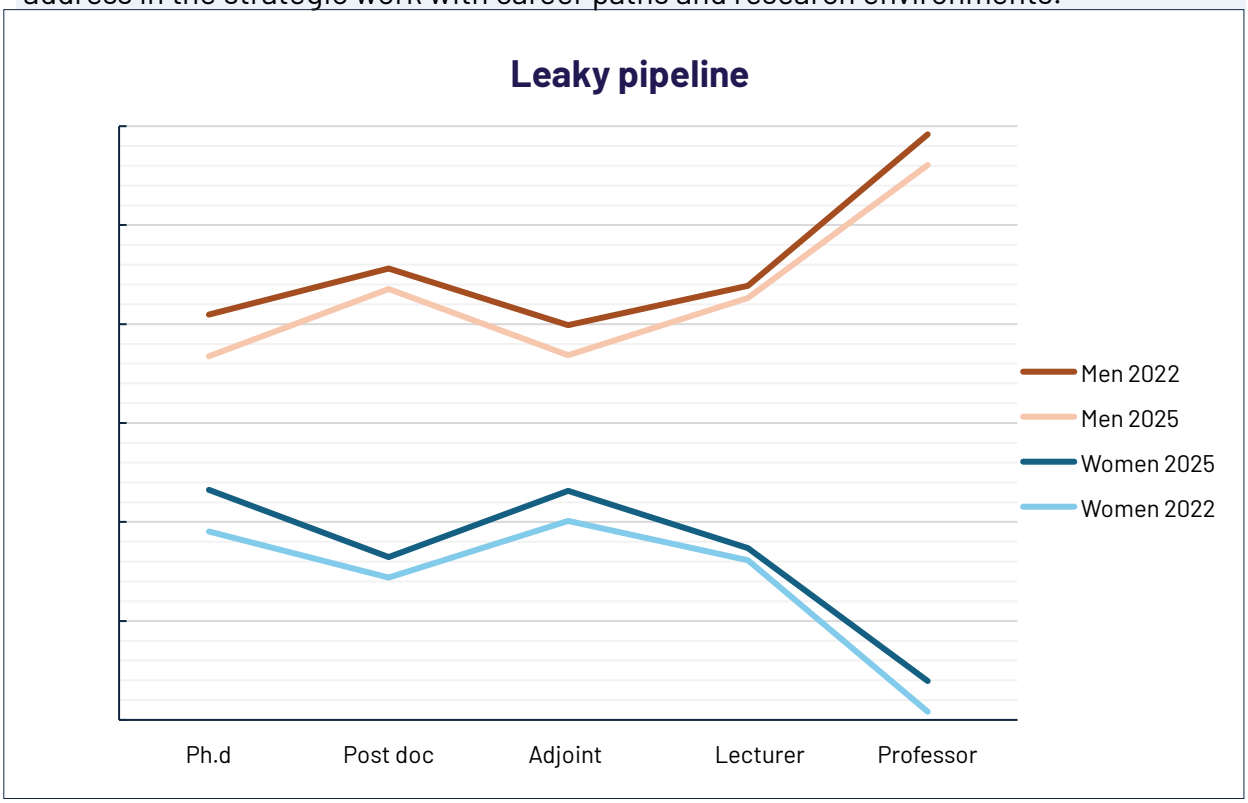
05

Development at AAU from 2022 to 2025

The graph below shows the distribution of women and men in the job categories PhD, postdoc, assistant professor/researcher, associate professor and professor in 2022 and 2025. There is a general increase in the proportion of women across the academic levels from 2022 to 2025.

However, it appears that the overall pattern in the gender distribution can still be described as a . The proportion of women decreases at most stages of the career path, with the exception of the transition from postdoc to assistant professor.

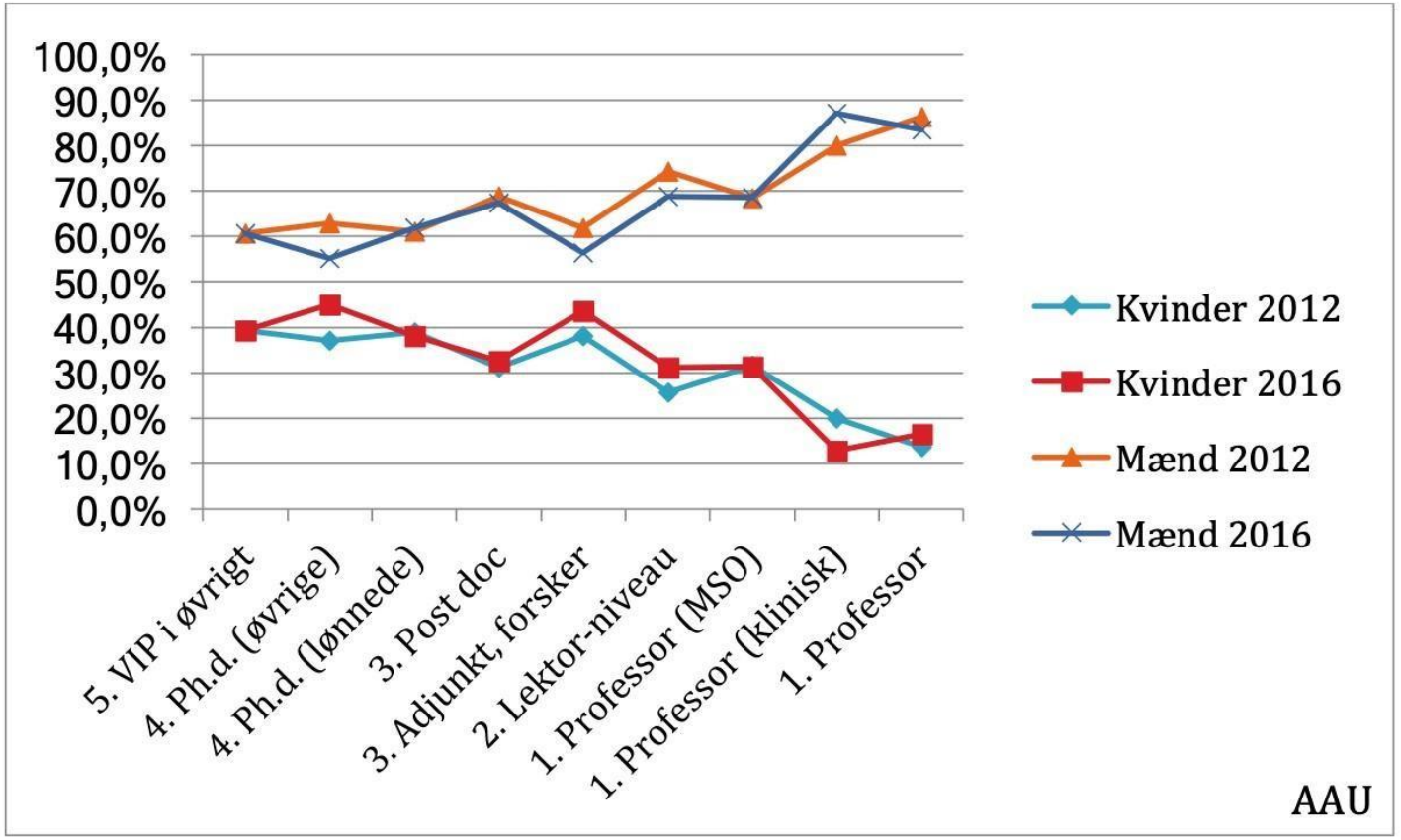
The results thus point to a difference in the gender distribution between the early and the later stages of the research career. This is an area that ULD must continue to address in the strategic work with career paths and research environments.



Data source:

Population:

07



Development in gender distribution in professorships (AAU)

•

Data source:

Population:

Average time between hires in different job categories

Broken down by gender and Danish/international: How long does it take from employment in one job category to another?

Data source:

Population:

Associate Professor -> Professor			
			7,8
			7,4
			8,0
			6,3
Adjunct -> Lecturer			
			3,0
			3,6
			3,3
			2,9

Postdoc -> Lecturer			
			4,2
			3,3
			3,7
			4,3

2. CAREER PATH FROM PHD TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR ACROSS ALL DANISH UNIVERSITIES

This section brings together selected pages from the DEA report: From Ph.D. to associate professor: Uncertain research careers and persistent gender imbalances that focus on career pathways and retention across all Danish universities.

The selected pages provide an overview of key patterns in the transition from Ph.D. to permanent research positions, including the importance of temporary employment, gender differences in retention and structural conditions that may have an impact on gender equality and career development in research environments.

Data source: Register data from Statistics Denmark

Population: All researchers at Danish universities in the period 2014-2022

FROM PHD TO ASSOCIATE

UNSAFE RESEARCHER CAREERRER AND PERSISTENT GENDER IMBALANCES



Report

Background

In many countries, academic careers are increasingly characterised by precarious employment, especially early in their careers, where researchers often move through repeated fixed-term contracts before obtaining permanent employment (OECD, 2024). In Denmark, available figures point to a similar development: Already in 2017, the postdoc category (2,683 people) was larger than the group of professors (1,956), and the path from Ph.D. to the highest positions was on average 8.8 years for associate professor and 16.4 years for professor (DAMVAD Analytics, 2018). At the same time, younger researchers are particularly vulnerable in the transition to associate professor and professor positions because there are few opportunities for extension and internal candidates lose out to external applicants (Langberg, 2008).

The increasing prevalence of temporary employment has documented consequences for the well-being of researchers. A survey of 676 postdocs at nine Dutch universities found that around 40 per cent reported serious mental health problems with uncertain career prospects, publication and grant pressure, and a lack of work-life balance as the main stressors (van der Weijden & Teelken, 2023). A systematic review points out that economic insecurity and job insecurity are directly linked to poorer well-being among researchers across career stages (Nicholls et al., 2022). At the same time, uncertainty can affect research itself if researchers avoid risky research projects in favour of safer, publication-oriented strategies, as well as scare talent away from academia (OECD, 2024).

It is also a basic premise that the majority of PhD graduates find employment outside the universities. From 2008 to 2023, approximately 30,000 people completed a PhD programme in Denmark, and the private sector took on approximately 13,500 additional employees with a PhD degree during the period, while the public sector admitted 13,800 (Confederation of Danish Industry, 2025). Large companies in particular are increasingly looking for highly educated people with research skills: The proportion of employees with a master's or PhD degree in the 20 largest global companies in Denmark increased from 26 per cent in 2014 to 39 per cent in 2023 (Confederation of Danish Industry, 2026).

The literature also indicates that the career paths are different for women and men. The gender differences at associate professor and professor level cannot be explained solely by representation at the earlier career stages (Langberg, 2008), and women who have children are less likely to be promoted (DAMVAD Analytics, 2018). However, the existing Danish register analyses of researchers' career paths (DAMVAD Analytics, 2018; Langberg, 2008) are based on data that are now a few years old.

This report presents a new survey that sheds light on the path to permanent employment today, which groups are more likely to leave the university sector, and whether the trends identified in these areas by the previous literature have been reinforced or dismissed.

Main conclusions

- The number of postdocs has increased by 45 per cent from 2014-2022. This is more than twice as large an increase as for all other research positions.
- An increasing proportion of PhD cohorts have left university research six years after completing their PhD: from 72 per cent in 2014 to 80 per cent in 2022.
- Those who stay in university research remain in postdoc and assistant professor positions for a longer period of time before they either leave the university or are employed as associate professors or professors.
- Women are more likely to leave research than men when we compare researchers from the same PhD cohort, and fewer are employed as associate professors/professors six years after completing their PhD.
- Likewise, there are fewer women the further up you look at the career ladder: While just over half of the PhD students are women, the same applies to just under one in four professors.

Implications

For the researchers who stay at the university, a research career is associated with increasing uncertainty. The number of postdocs has increased sharply, the path to permanent employment has become longer, and researchers spend several years in temporary positions before they obtain either an associate professor position or a professor position or leave the sector. Possible solutions may include creating an overall overview of how to work with individual career plans for postdocs and assistant professors, introducing indicative time limits for temporary appointments, and obliging departments to make even more visible to the individual researcher what the chances of a later permanent appointment are.

It may also give rise to a broader discussion of whether the temporary positions are actually beneficial for both the researchers and the research. The postdoc position is intended as a qualification period, but when it extends over many years in practice, it potentially risks becoming a parking lot rather than a stepping stone. Universities can consider investigating whether longer periods of time in temporary positions actually increase qualifications for either permanent employment or an external career, and follow up on the researchers' own experience through systematic well-being measurements, with a particular focus on the effect of newer *tenure track* assistant professor schemes.

The majority of researchers also end up working and creating value outside the university. The international evaluations of the PhD schools, which the universities are obliged to carry out, cf. section 14(5) of the University Act, can therefore advantageously include topics such as *employability* and assessments of how and to what extent the PhD programmes are aimed at the labour market outside the university sector. Likewise, in the same way that there are employer panels and dedicated career guidance for master's students, similar initiatives can be developed for the PhD schools where they do not already exist.

The growth in the number of temporary positions is also closely linked to the universities' funding structure. When an increasing proportion of research is funded through competitive, fixed-term grants, it is natural that appointments follow the same pattern. A political discussion about the balance between basic and competitive funding is therefore also a discussion about researchers' working conditions. This discussion is already underway; on the one hand, the universities have increased their room for manoeuvre through increased basic funding[1], and on the other hand, a number of private foundations have entered into agreements to cover certain types of indirect costs[2]. Depending on the magnitude of the effect of these changes on the overall funding landscape, it may make room for more researchers to be offered permanent positions in the future.

At the same time, the analysis shows that research careers look very different across main academic areas. In the health sciences, where there are many PhD students, 87 per cent of a PhD cohort leave university research within six years, while in the humanities, with far fewer PhD students, 66 per cent leave university research within six years. Career guidance, job structures and employment policies cannot therefore be meaningfully designed as a single overall strategy, but must take into account the individual main academic areas' special career patterns and labour market conditions.

Finally, all these trends interact with gender differences. Women make up more than half of PhD students, but only about a quarter of professors, and they leave university research to a greater extent than men. When temporary employment takes up more space and the road to permanent employment becomes longer, there is a risk that women will be hit harder. Universities should therefore incorporate the gender perspective into the aforementioned analysis, recruitment and career policies.

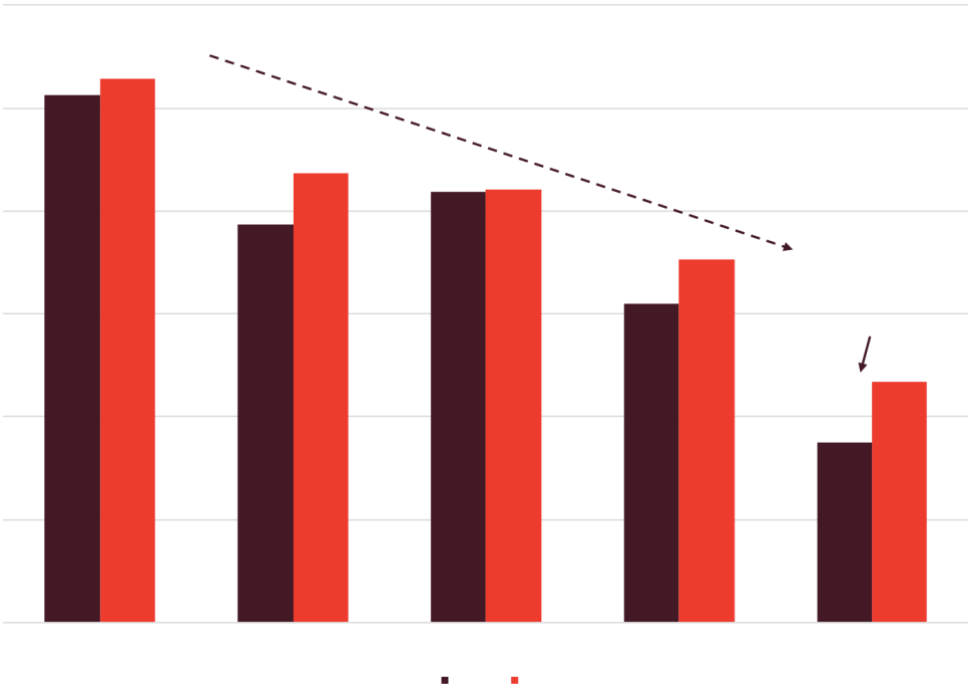
Today, as in 2014, the proportion of women among researchers decreases the later in one's career, cf. Figure 10. The gender distribution is almost evenly distributed at PhD level (51 per cent women in 2014, 53 per cent in 2022), but decreases at each subsequent career stage. In 2022, the proportion of women is 44 per cent among postdocs, 35 per

[1] https://ufm.dk/lovstof/politiske-agreements/2025/november/agreements-on-research-and-innovation-2026-2029/.

[2] https://dkuni.dk/aftale-a-common-model-for-financing-of-research-projects/.

cent among associate professors and only 23 per cent among professors. The proportion of women has increased at all levels from 2014 to 2022, but the proportion of women is still significantly lower at the upper career levels.

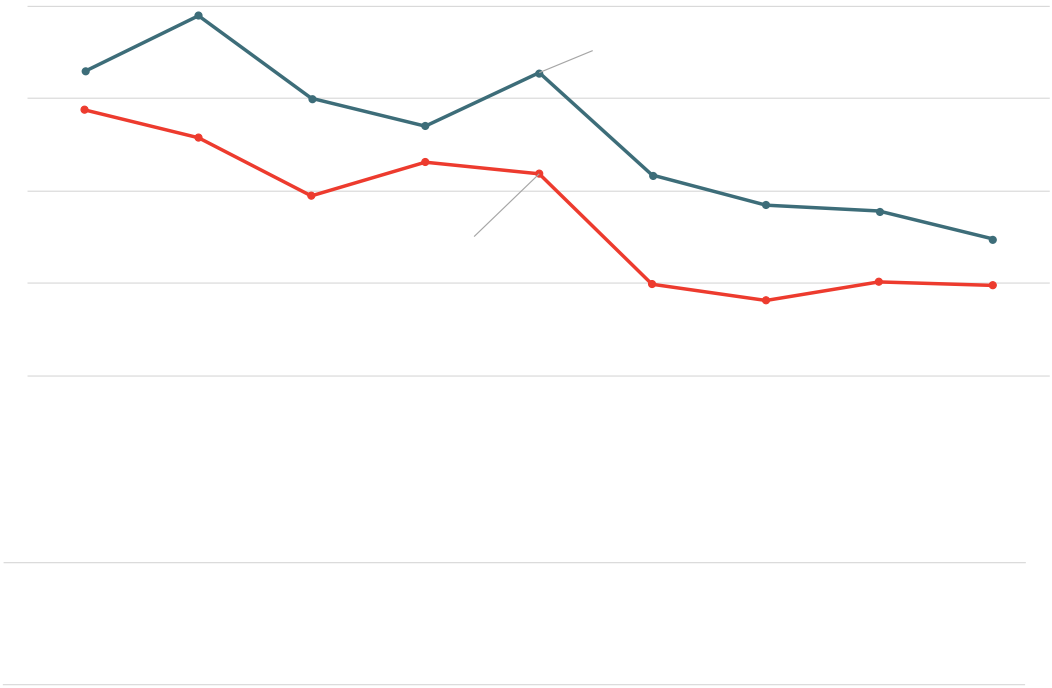
Figure 10 // The gender balance is equal among PhD students, but skewed at higher career levels



Source: own calculations based on register data from Statistics Denmark Note: Population is everyone who is employed at each career stage.

This gender imbalance is also evident when focusing on the individual PhD cohorts, cf. Figure 11. Six years after completing the PhD. A smaller proportion of women are still employed in university research compared to men from the same PhD cohort. In 2022, approximately 17 per cent of men were still engaged in research, compared with approximately 15 per cent of women. Both gender proportions have decreased significantly during the period (men from approximately 27 per cent, women from approximately 24 per cent in 2014), but the gender gap has persisted over the period.

Figure 11 // Women are less likely to be employed as researchers six years after completing their PhD.



Source: own calculations based on register data from Statistics Denmark
Note: The population is all those who received a PhD. from a Danish PhD school in the period 2008-2016. The figure shows the proportion who are employed in university research six years after completing their PhD.

3. EXPERIENCES OF INCLUSION AND BARRIERS IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

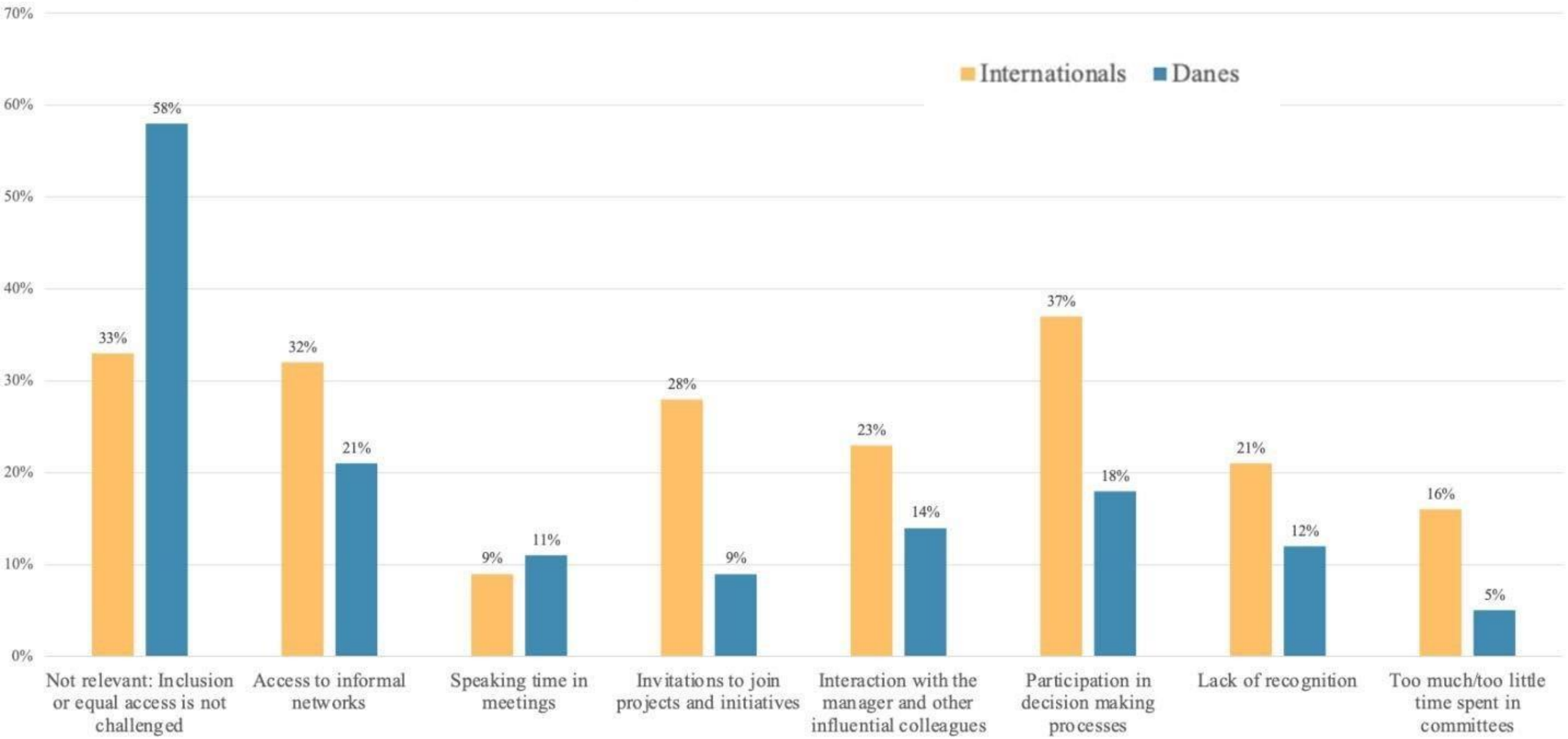
Selected results from the inclusion survey conducted among employees at Aalborg University.

The results highlight situations where employees feel that inclusion is challenged, for example in relation to access to networks, participation in decision-making processes and interaction with management and colleagues. The results are shown by gender and citizenship, among other things.

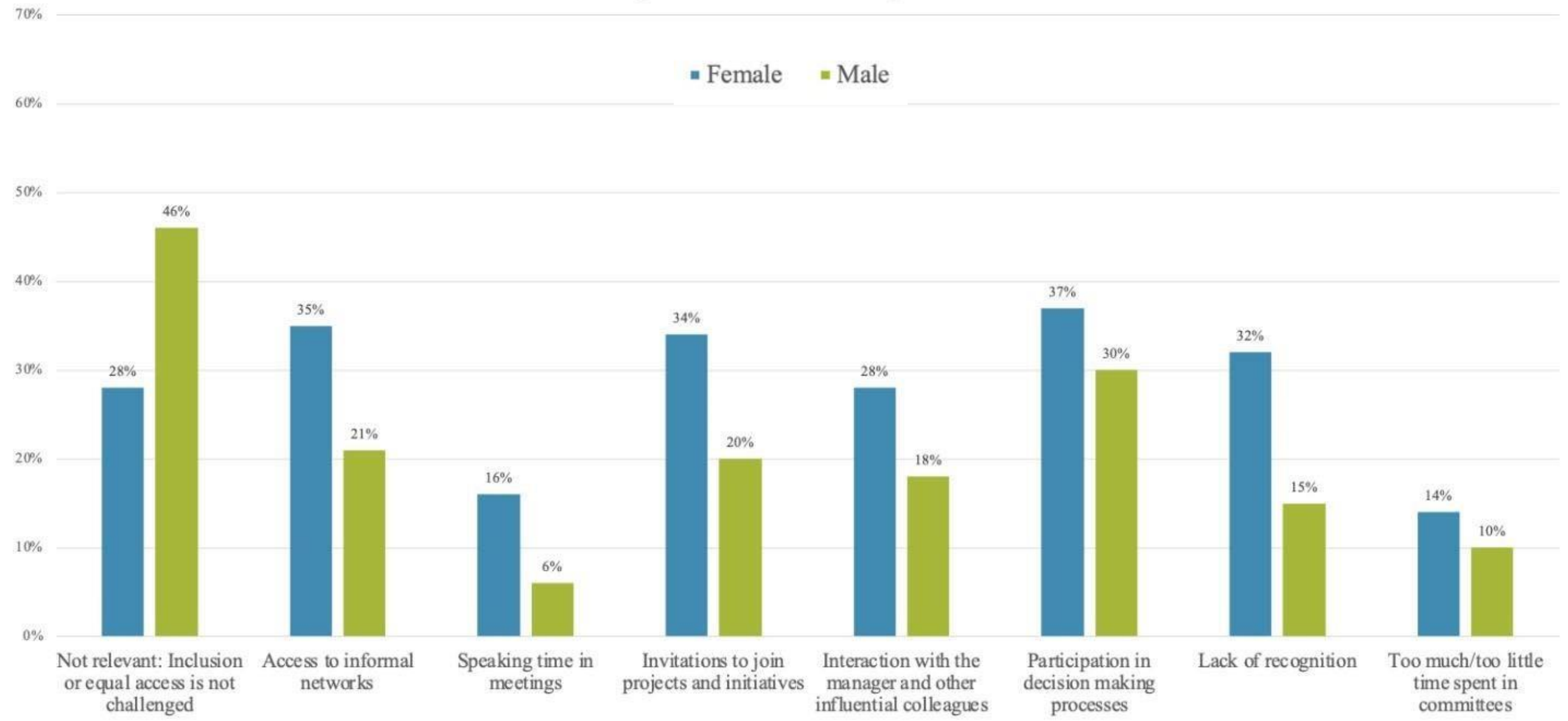
Population: employees at Aalborg University

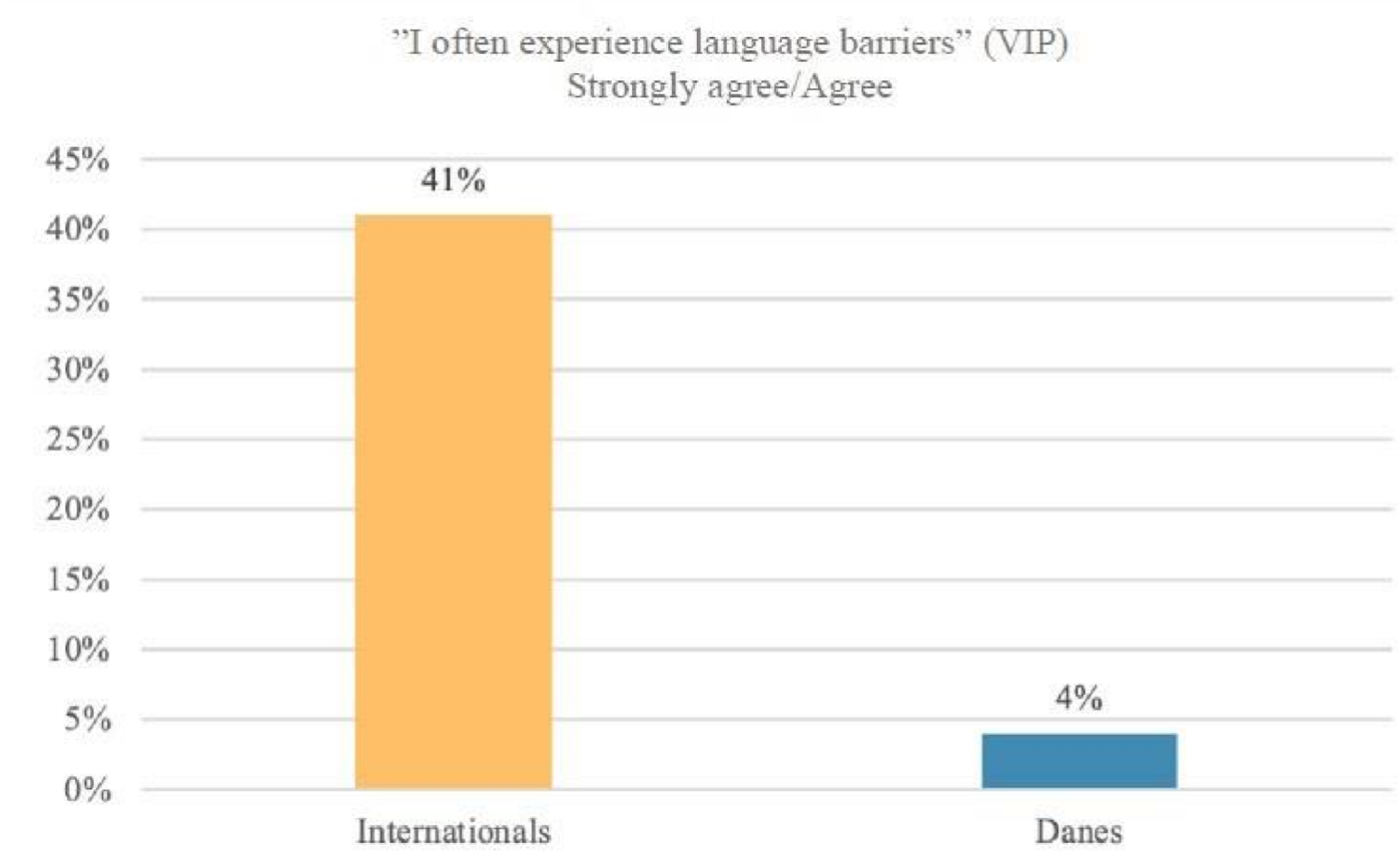
Number of respondents: 1,608

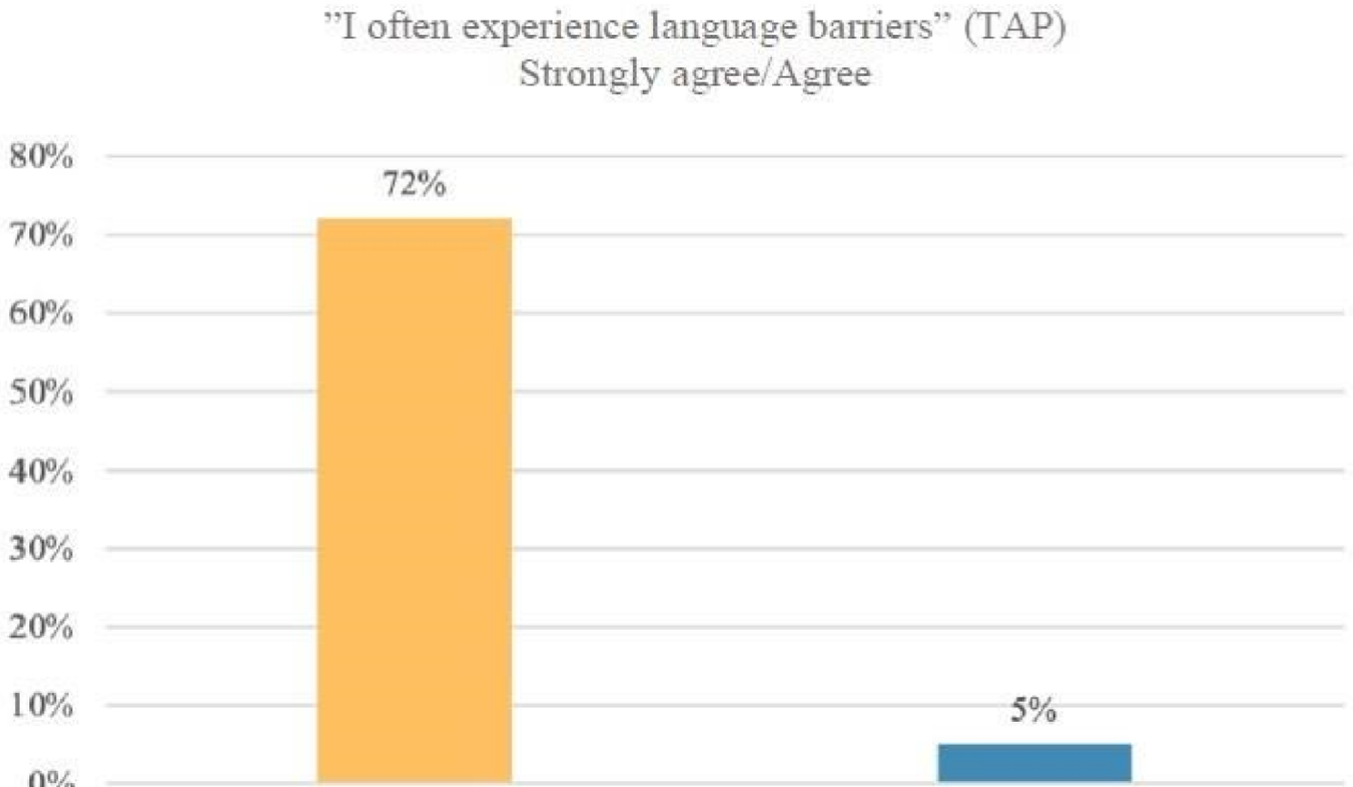
In which specific situations have you experienced that inclusion is challenged, to the effect that diverse staff do not have the same possibilities as their colleagues?

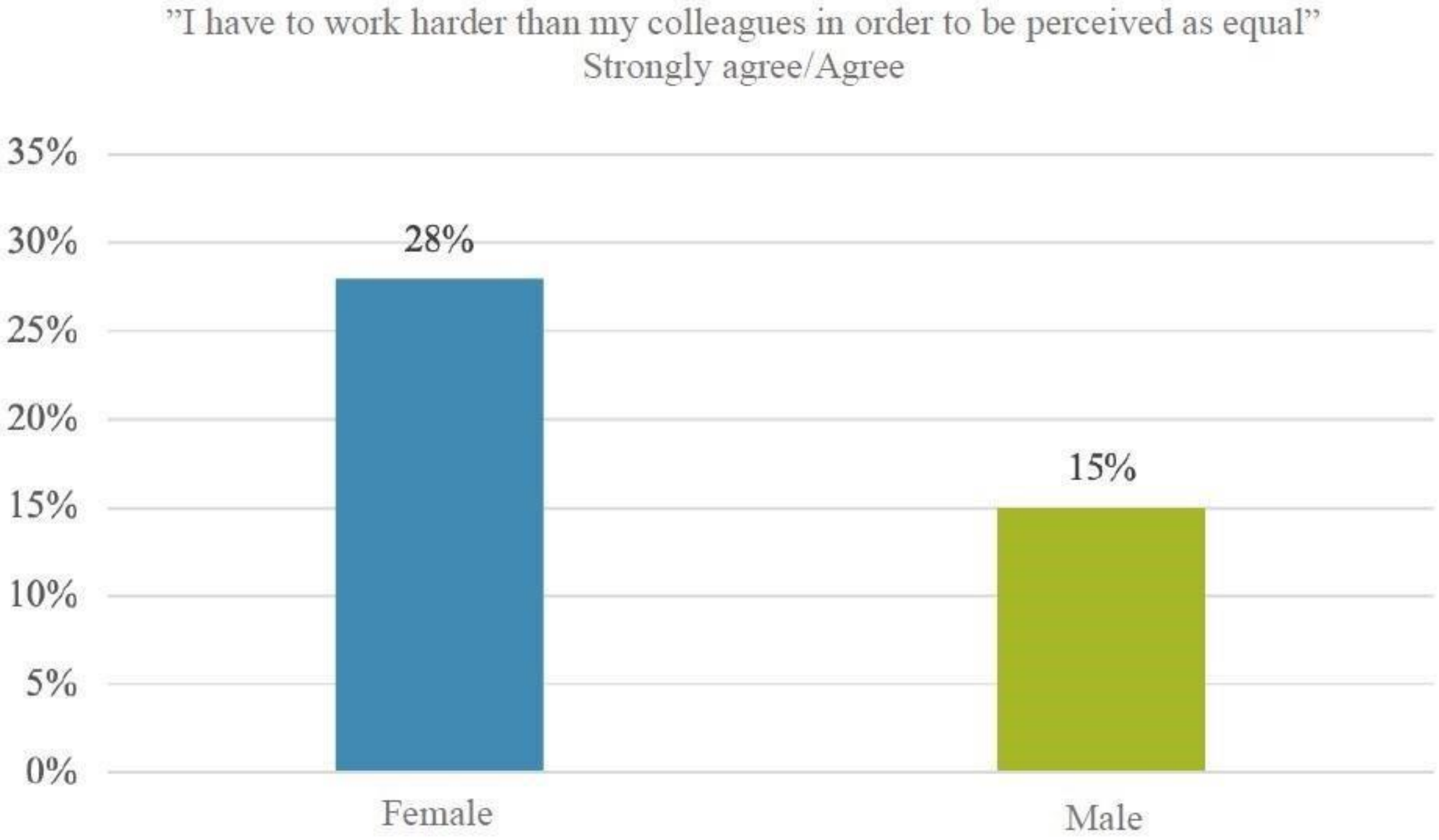


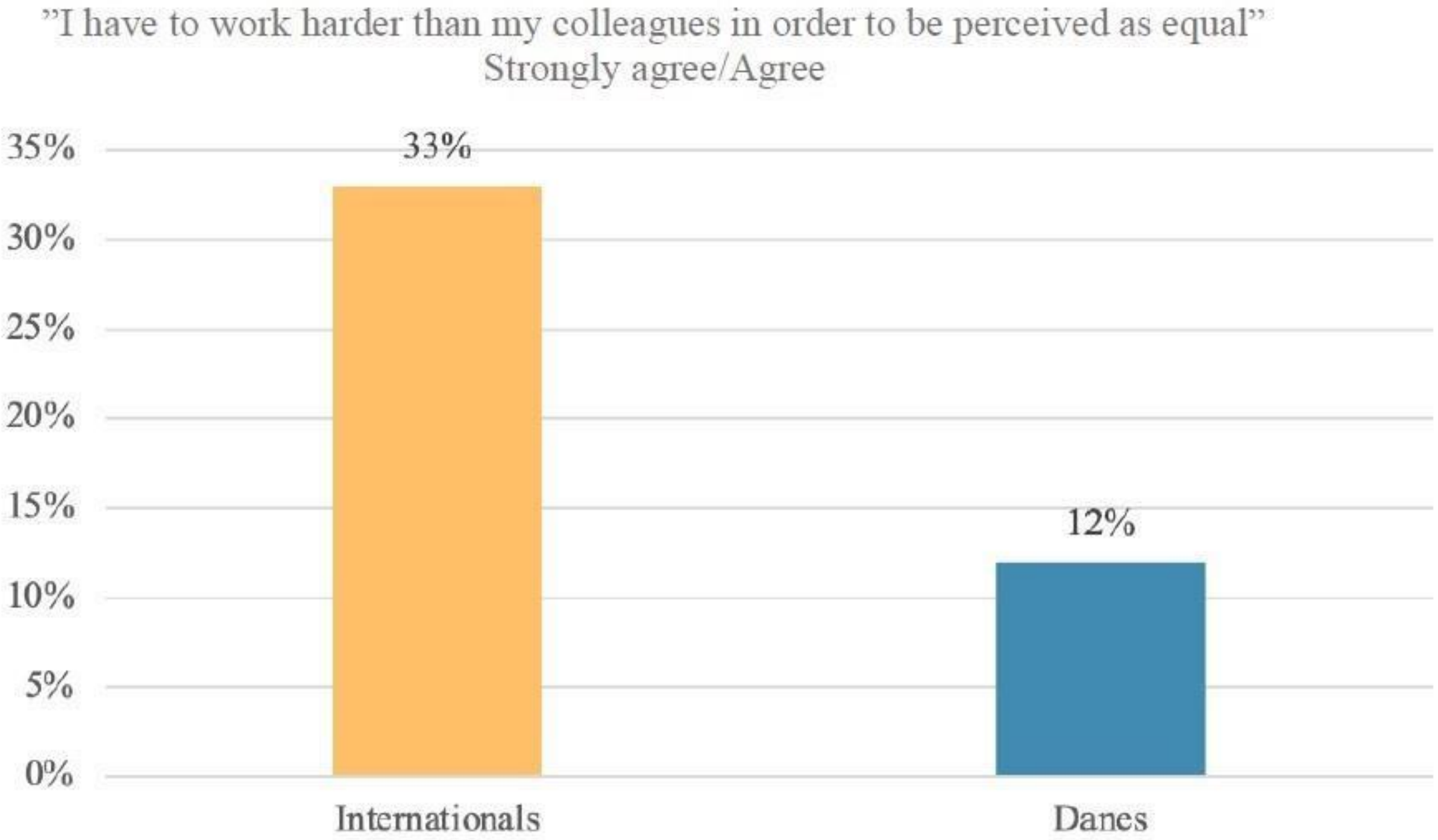
In which specific situations have you experienced that inclusion is challenged, to the effect that diverse staff do not have the same possibilities as their colleagues?




"I often experience language barriers" (VIP)
Strongly agree/Agree
45%
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
41%
4%
Internationals
Danes


"I often experience language barriers" (TAP)
Strongly agree/Agree
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
72%
5%


"I have to work harder than my colleagues in order to be perceived as equal"
Strongly agree/Agree
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
28%
15%
Female
Male


"I have to work harder than my colleagues in order to be perceived as equal"
Strongly agree/Agree
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
33%
12%
Internationals
Danes

4. WELL-BEING, WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND OFFENSIVE ACTIONS

Results from AAU's Well-being Barometer regarding work environment themes such as motivation, work tasks, influence, support at work, stress and satisfaction as well as experiences of offensive actions.

The results are presented by employment, age, gender, seniority and citizenship. Data on offensive actions include bullying, discriminatory behaviour and harassment and are only calculated for groups with a sufficient number of responses for reasons of anonymity.

Population: employees at Aalborg University
Number of respondents: 2,735 Response rate:
75%

OFFENSIVE ACTIONS

Aalborg University tolerates ***not*** offensive actions in any form.

insult

Sexual discriminatory

Bullying

physical violence

Threats about violence

humiliation suspicion

AALBORG UNIVERSITET

OFFENSIVE ACTIONS

Bullying, harassment, discriminatory or transgressive Behavior

		Numb	Distribution of Reports	Share of The target
Gend	Male	123	40%	9 %
	Female	156	60%	11 %
Citizen	Danish citizen	192	70%	9 %
	Not a Danish citizen	87	30%	13 %
Position	VIP	188	70%	13 %
	TAP	80	30%	7 %
	Managers	7	0%	5 %
VIP-Groups	Group 1 (PhD etc.)	32	10%	8 %
	Group 2 (Adjoint et al)	46	20%	13 %
	Group 3 (Lecturer et al)	110	40%	15 %
Campus	Aalborg	199	70%	10 %
	Copenhagen	54	20%	17 %
	The rest	22	10%	10 %

The numbers in the fields are average assessments on a scale from 1 to 5, where employees have rated statements about their work situation.

The scale can be read as follows:

1–2: low well-being / negative assessments

3: Neutral assessment

4: Mostly positive assessment

5: Very positive assessment

A figure of, for example, 4.6 therefore means that the employees overall assess the situation in question relatively positively. **The colours in the graphs**

The colors are a visual help to quickly see the level of the results:

Red / orange: relatively lower well-being

Yellow: medium level

ANSÆTTELSESFORHOLD	Fastansat	Tidsbegrænset	Total
Motivation	5,0	5,0	5,0
Arbejdsopgaver og arbejdsplads	4,5	4,7	4,6
Samspil mellem arbejde og privatliv	4,2	4,2	4,2
Indflydelse og udviklingsmuligheder	4,7	4,9	4,7
Forandringer og forudsigelighed	3,8	4,1	3,9
Støtte og opbakning i arbejdet	4,5	4,7	4,6
Anerkendelse	4,4	4,5	4,4
Stress	3,7	3,5	3,7
Tilfredshed	5,0	5,0	5,0



Light green / green: high well-being

The greener the field, the more positive the assessment.

ALDER	29 år eller under	30-39 år	40-49 år	50-59 år	60 år eller ældre	Total
Motivation	5,0	4,9	5,0	5,1	5,2	5,0
Arbejdsopgaver og arbejdsplads	4,8	4,6	4,4	4,6	4,6	4,6
Samspil mellem arbejde og privatliv	4,5	4,2	4,0	4,2	4,3	4,2
Indflydelse og udviklingsmuligheder	5,0	4,8	4,7	4,6	4,7	4,7
Forandringer og forudsigelighed	4,2	4,0	3,8	3,9	3,6	3,9
Støtte og opbakning i arbejdet	4,9	4,6	4,5	4,5	4,4	4,6
Anerkendelse	4,8	4,5	4,4	4,4	4,3	4,4
Stress	3,7	3,6	3,6	3,7	3,9	3,7
Tilfredshed	5,1	4,9	4,9	5,1	5,0	5,0

<3,5 <4,0 <4,5 <5,0 <5,5 ≥5,5

KØN	Mand	Kvinde	Total
Motivation	5,0	5,0	5,0
Arbejdsopgaver og arbejdsplads	4,6	4,6	4,6
Samspil mellem arbejde og privatliv	4,2	4,2	4,2
Indflydelse og udviklingsmuligheder	4,8	4,7	4,7
Forandringer og forudsigelighed	3,9	3,9	3,9
Støtte og opbakning i arbejdet	4,6	4,6	4,6
Anerkendelse	4,5	4,4	4,4
Stress	3,7	3,7	3,7
Tilfredshed	4,9	5,0	5,0

<3,5 <4,0 <4,5 <5,0 <5,5 ≥5,5

ANCIENNITET	Under 2 år	2-4 år	5-9 år	10-14 år	15 år eller mere	Total
Motivation	5,2	5,0	4,9	4,9	5,1	5,0
Arbejdsopgaver og arbejdsplads	4,9	4,6	4,4	4,4	4,5	4,6
Samspil mellem arbejde og privatliv	4,6	4,2	4,1	4,0	4,1	4,2
Indflydelse og udviklingsmuligheder	5,0	4,8	4,6	4,5	4,7	4,7
Forandringer og forudsigelighed	4,4	3,9	3,7	3,7	3,8	3,9
Støtte og opbakning i arbejdet	4,9	4,6	4,5	4,3	4,5	4,6
Anerkendelse	4,8	4,5	4,3	4,2	4,4	4,4
Stress	3,8	3,6	3,6	3,6	3,7	3,7
Tilfredshed	5,1	5,0	4,9	4,8	5,1	5,0

<3,5 <4,0 <4,5 <5,0 <5,5 ≥5,5

STATSBORGER	Dansk stats-borger	Ikke dansk stats-borger	Total
Motivation	5,0	5,0	5,0
Arbejdsopgaver og arbejdsplads	4,5	4,7	4,6
Samspil mellem arbejde og privatliv	4,2	4,2	4,2
Indflydelse og udviklingsmuligheder	4,7	4,8	4,7
Forandringer og forudsigelighed	3,9	4,1	3,9
Støtte og opbakning i arbejdet	4,5	4,7	4,6
Anerkendelse	4,4	4,5	4,4
Stress	3,7	3,5	3,7
Tilfredshed	5,0	4,9	5,0

<3,5 <4,0 <4,5 <5,0 <5,5 ≥5,5

5. SEXISM AND CAREER PATHWAYS IN RESEARCH ENVIRONMENTS

This section presents selected results from the national survey Sexism and career pathways at Danish universities conducted by VIVE.

Among other things, the study sheds light on PhD students' experiences with sexist incidents and how these can affect well-being and retention in research careers.

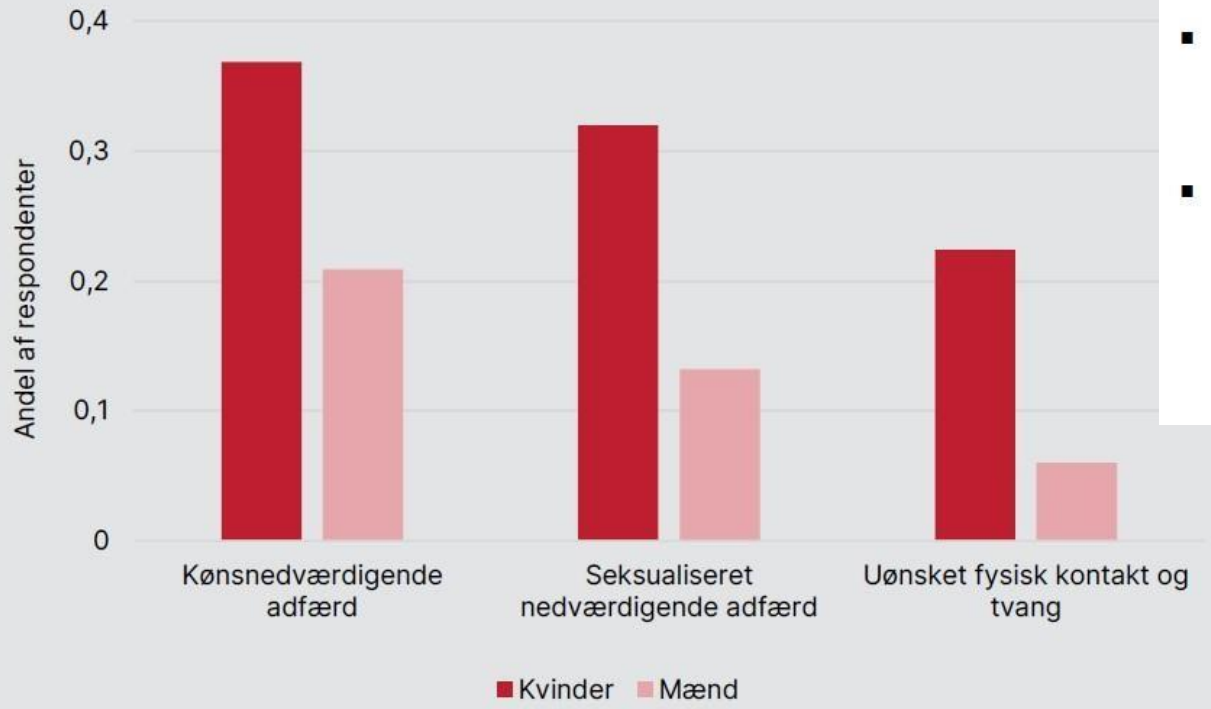
Population: persons who started their PhD studies in Denmark 2010–2018

Number of invitees: 15,040

Number of respondents: 5,587

Response rate: approx. 35 %

Figur 2.1 Andelen af respondenter, der har oplevet sexistiske hændelser fordelt på type

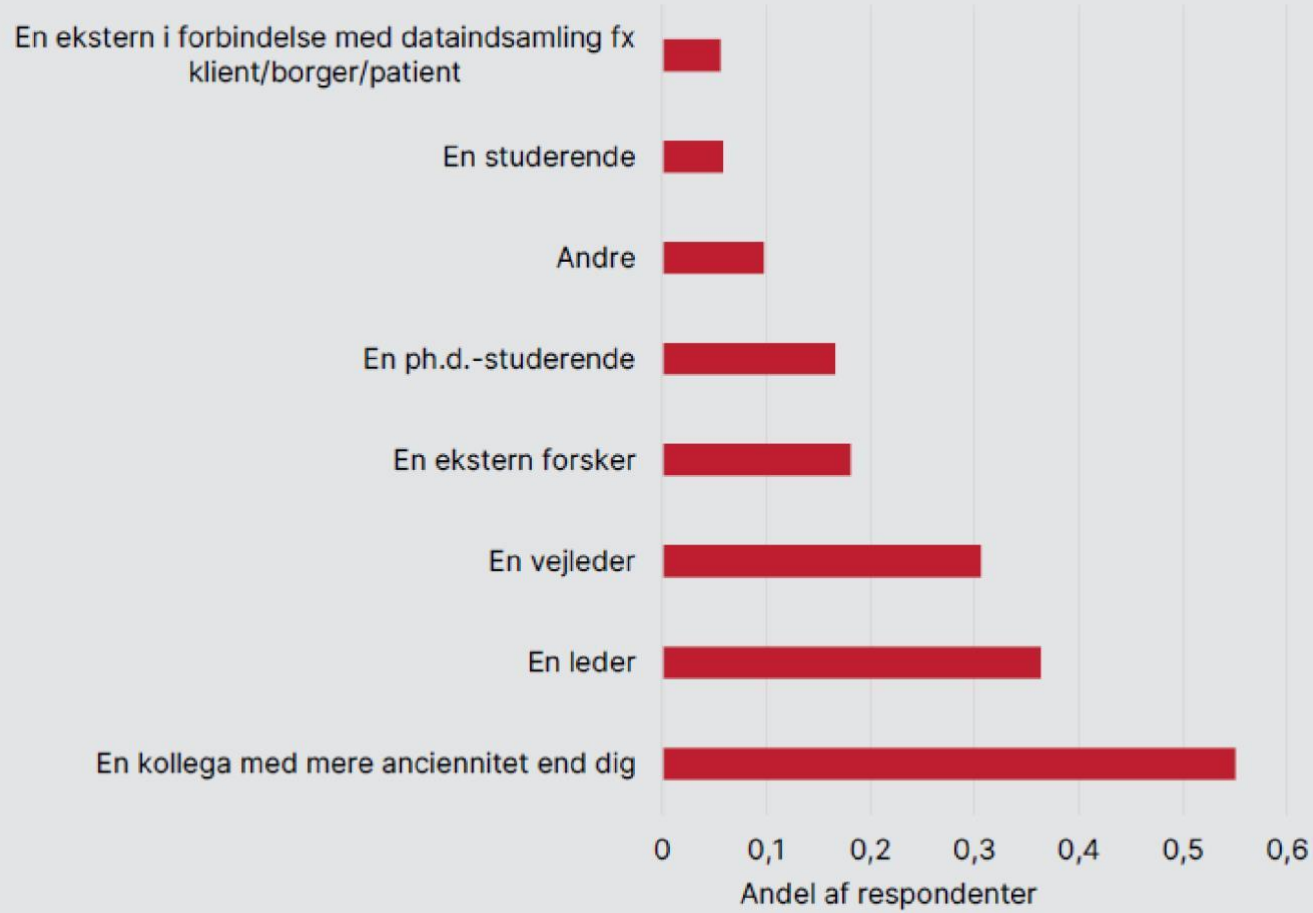


- 37 % af de kvindelige ph.d.-studerende og 21 % af de mandlige ph.d.-studerende har oplevet verbale handlinger, der objektiviserer, ekskluderer eller nedværdiger dem på baggrund af deres køn under deres ph.d.-uddannelse (kønsnedværdigende adfærd).
- 32 % af de kvindelige ph.d.-studerende og 13 % af de mandlige ph.d.-studerende har oplevet ondsindede seksuelle kommentarer, bevægelser eller blottelser (seksualiseret nedværdigende adfærd).
- 23 % af de kvindelige ph.d.-studerende og 6 % af de mandlige ph.d.-studerende har oplevet adfærd, der indbefatter uønsket fysisk kontakt eller forsøg på samme eller seksuel tvang er seksuel adfærd, hvor magtrelationer spiller en aktiv rolle, såsom trusler eller belønning (uønsket fysisk kontakt og tvang).

Anm.: Kønsnedværdigende adfærd er verbale handlinger, der objektiviserer, ekskluderer eller nedværdiger dem på baggrund af deres køn under deres ph.d.-uddannelse. Seksualiseret nedværdigende adfærd er ondsindede seksuelle kommentarer eller bevægelser eller blottelser. Uønsket fysisk kontakt og tvang er adfærd, der indbefatter uønsket fysisk kontakt eller forsøg på samme, eller seksuel tvang er seksuel adfærd, hvor magtrelationer spiller en aktiv rolle, så som trusler eller belønning. Se Boks 2.2 for detaljer. Antal respondenter: 5.587.

Kilde: VIVE.

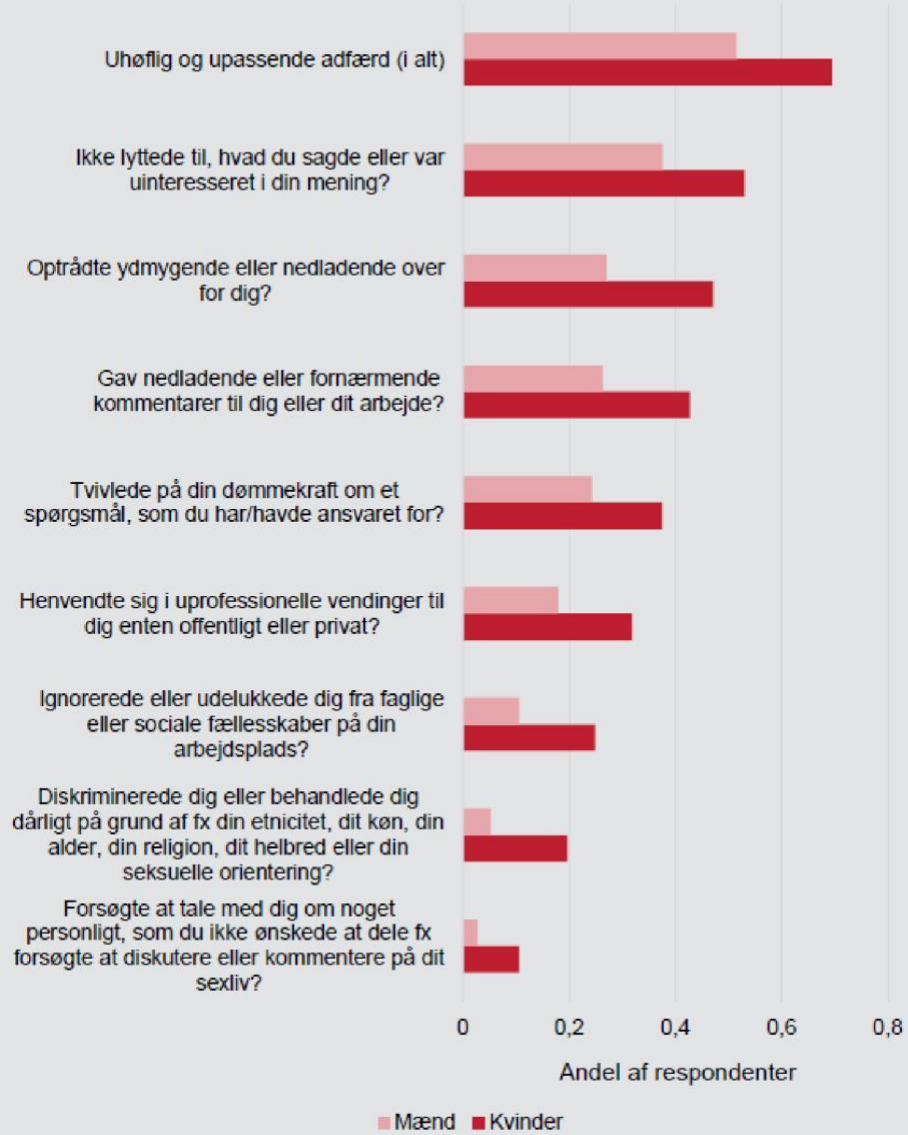
Figur 2.4 Fordeling af individer der udførte den nedværdigende handling for kvindelige ph.d.-studerende



Anm.: Inkluderer kun besvarelser fra kvinder, der angiver at have oplevet uønsket seksuel adfærd eller anden adfærd baseret på deres køn, som de oplevede som nedværdigende (ja/nej). Antal respondenter: 409.

Kilde: VIVE.

Figur 2.7 Oplevelser med uhøflig og upassende adfærd på arbejdspladsen



Anm.: Antal respondenter: 5.574.

Kilde: VIVE.

6. SUPPLEMENTARY DATA ON NEURODIVERSITY – USE OF ADHD MEDICATION

This section presents data from Statistics Denmark on the development in the use of ADHD medication in the population. Data are included as a supplementary perspective to the committee's interest in neurodiversity as a theme in the work on gender equality and diversity.

The reports show, among other things, the development in the use of ADHD medication over time as well as differences across age, level of education and labour market attachment. The data can contribute to a broader societal context for discussions of neurodiversity and mental prerequisites in working life.

Data source: Statistics Denmark – register data on prescription medicines

Population: people in Denmark with redeemed prescription for ADHD medication

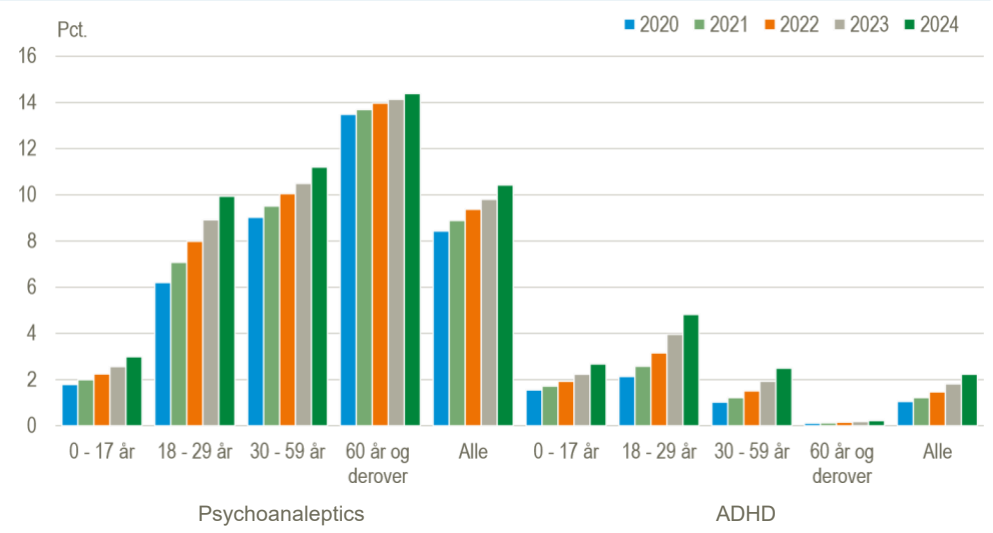
NYT FRA DANMARKS STATISTIK

6January2026 No.1

More people buy ADHD medication

The proportion of people in the population who have redeemed a prescription for psychoanaleptics at least once a year has increased from 8.4 per cent in 2020 to 10.4 per cent in 2024. Psychoanaleptics is a collective term for drugs that affect the brain and central nervous system, which are used for depression, ADHD and dementia, among other things. The number of people who have bought ADHD medication on prescription at least once a year has increased from approximately 61,000 in 2020 to approximately 133,000 in 2024. This corresponds to an increase in the share of 1.1 percentage points from 1.1 per cent to 2.2 per cent. Among 0-17-year-olds, the share increased from 1.6 to 2.7 per cent, among 30-59-year-olds from 1.0 to 2.5 per cent, and among persons aged 60 years and older, the share increased from 0.1 to 0.2 per cent. The largest proportion who use ADHD medication is found throughout the period among 18-29-year-olds. The share was 2.1 per cent in 2021 and 4.8 per cent in 2024.

Minimum of one redeemed prescription for psychoanaleptics or ADHD medication by age



Note: ADHD medication is defined on the basis of the definition fromwww.medstat.dk andincludes drugs with the ATC codes: 'C02AC02' which belongs to the drug group antihypertensives and 'N06BA02', 'N06BA04', 'N06BA09', 'N06BA12' which belongs to the drug group Psychoanaleptics. The medication is also used to a lesser extent to treat narcolepsy. Source: Special extract fromwww.statistikbanken.dk/medi1

Purchase of ADHD medication by residence

In Bornholm Municipality, 3.5 per cent of citizens have redeemed prescriptions for ADHD medication in 2024, which is the highest proportion in 2024. This is followed by Norddjurs Municipality with 3.2 per cent and Struer Municipality with 3.1 per cent.

DANMARKS STATISTIK

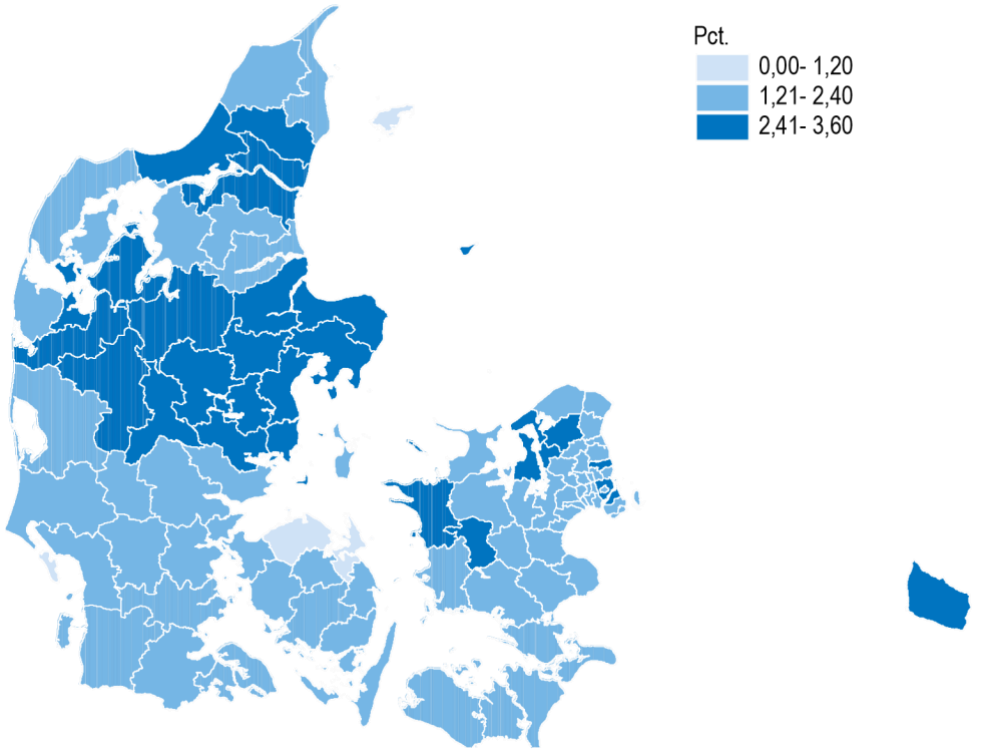
News from Statistics Denmark is published daily at 8.00 a.m.

Link to this release:
www.dst.dk/nytudg/57608

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In 2024, the municipalities of Fanø and Læsø have the lowest proportions of citizens who have redeemed prescriptions for ADHD medication. In 2024, 0.6 per cent of citizens in Fanø Municipality and 1.0 per cent of citizens in Læsø Municipality redeemed prescriptions for ADHD medication. This is followed by Kerteminde Municipality with 1.1 per cent, and Nordfyns Municipality with 1.2 per cent. The age distribution among citizens in the municipalities can have an impact on the proportion of citizens who buy ADHD medication.

At least one redeemed prescription for ADHD medication distributed by municipality. 2024

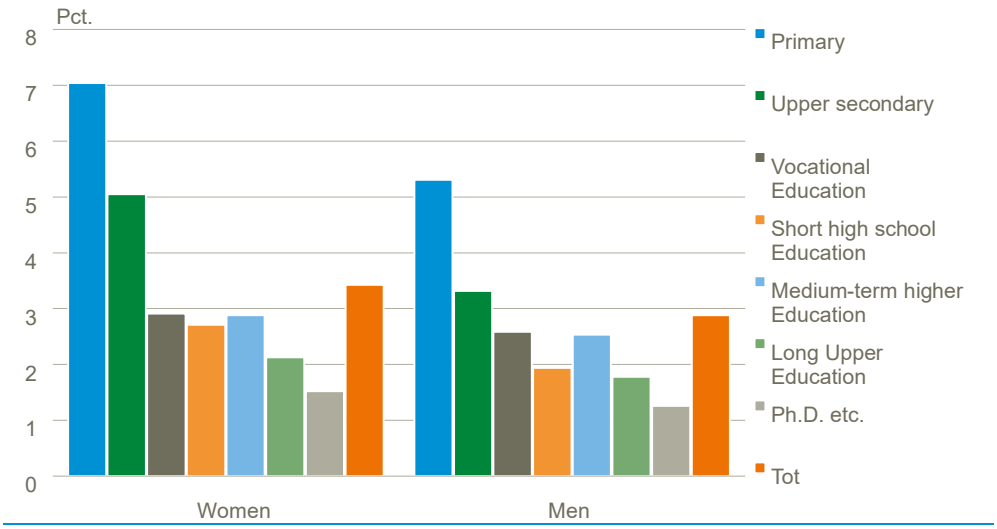


Note: ADHD medication is defined according to the definition from Medstat and includes drugs with the ATC codes: 'C02AC02', 'N06BA02', 'N06BA04', 'N06BA09', 'N06BA12'. The medication is also used to a lesser extent to treat narcolepsy.
Source: Special extract fromwww.statistikbanken.dk/medi1

Buying ADHD medication is most common among people with a lower level of education

Among 18-59-year-olds, the higher the level of education, the higher the share of people who redeemed a prescription for ADHD medication. The share is highest among people whose highest education is completed in primary school (7.0 per cent for women and 5.3 per cent for men, respectively), and it is lowest among people with a PhD degree (1.5 per cent for women and 1.3 per cent for men, respectively). In the age group 18-59-year-olds, there is generally a larger proportion of women than men who have redeemed a prescription for ADHD medication in 2024 - 3.4 per cent of women and 2.9 per cent of men.

At least one redeemed prescription for ADHD medication distributed among 18-59year-olds with the highest completed education. 2024

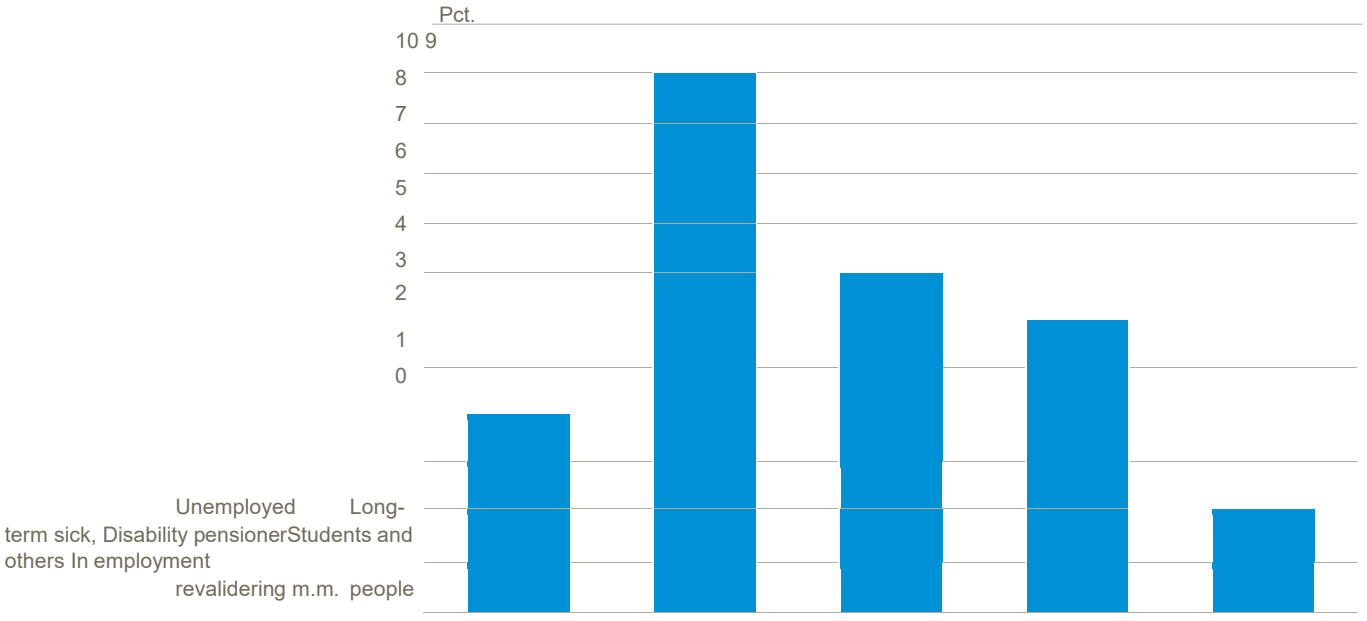


Note: ADHD medication is defined on the basis of www.medstat.dk and includes drugs with the ATC codes: 'C02AC02', 'N06BA02', 'N06BA04', 'N06BA09', 'N06BA12'. The medication is also used to a lesser extent to treat narcolepsy. Source: Special extract from www.statistikbanken.dk/mediudd

Fewer people in employment bought ADHD medication

Among 18-59-year-olds, the share of people who redeemed at least one prescription for ADHD medication in 2024 is lowest among people in employment, 2.1 per cent. The share is highest in the group of long-term ill people and people on rehabilitation, etc., 9.0 per cent. Among the unemployed, the share is 3.4 per cent, while it is 5.1 among disability pensioners.

At least one redeemed prescription for ADHD medication distributed by labour market attachment among 18-59-year-olds. 2024



Note: ADHD medication is defined by definition fromwww.medstat.dk andincludes drugs with the ATC codes: 'C02AC02', 'N06BA02', 'N06BA04', 'N06BA09', 'N06BA12'. The medication is also used to a lesser extent to treat narcolepsy.
Source: Special extract fromwww.statistikbanken.dk/mediarb

More information: Se www.dst.dk/stattabel/1325 in StatBank
Sources and methods: The statistics "Purchase of prescription medicines" contain information on all sales of medicinal products for human use in Denmark that have taken place via prescription at a pharmacy to a person with a civil registration number. The statistics also cover the sale of medicinal products that are not subject to prescription but are sold on

prescription. The purchases are calculated in relation to the number of persons who have redeemed a prescription and the number of prescriptions redeemed.
Read more about sources and methods in the statistical documentation on the purchase of prescription medicines

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