

# ERC Scientific Council

Advancing Gender Balance in Science  
– from the perspective of a funding agency

**Professor Teresa Lago**  
ERC Scientific Council,  
Chair of the ERC ScC Gender Balance Working Group

European Gender Summit  
November 2011



*Portraits of selected ERC 2007 Starting Grantees*

European Research Council



Elisabeth Sjöstedt  
ERC EA Unit A1 Support to the Scientific Council

# The European Research Council

European Research Council



- a new type of funding body in Europe to support excellence in frontier research

## Legislation

- Scientific Council with 22 members
- Support by the ERC Executive Agency
- Significant budget from EC – 1.2 billion €/year
- Excellence as the only valid criterion

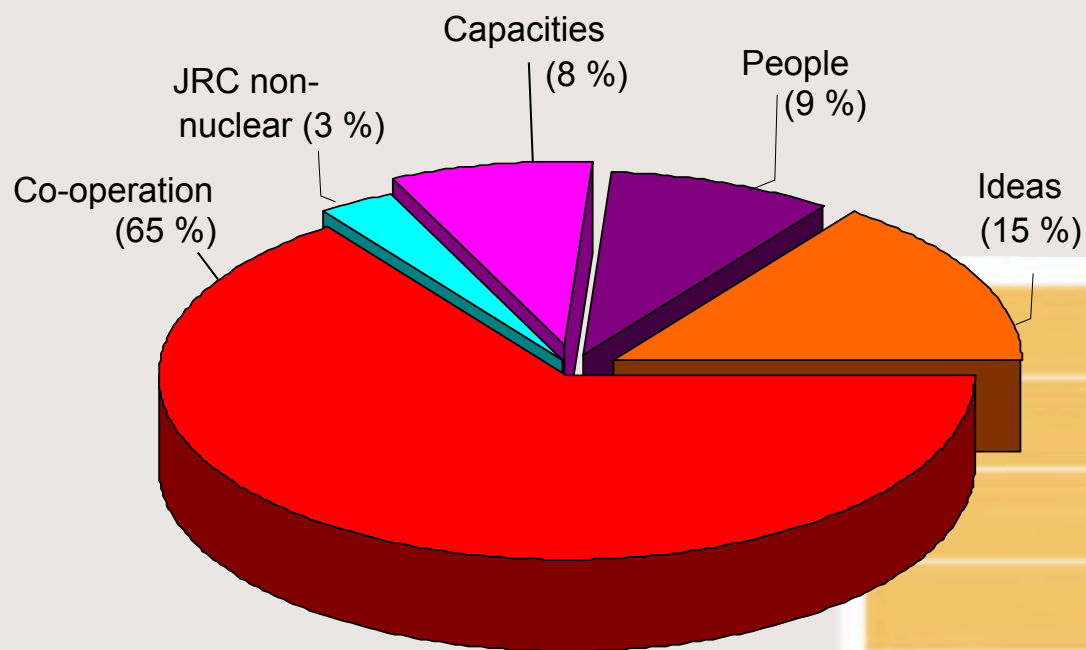
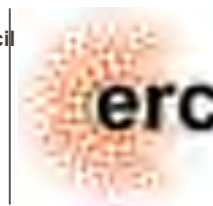
## Strategy

- Support for the individual scientist
- Pan-European competition, international peer review
- Support frontier research in all fields of science and humanities (bottom up, no predetermined subjects)

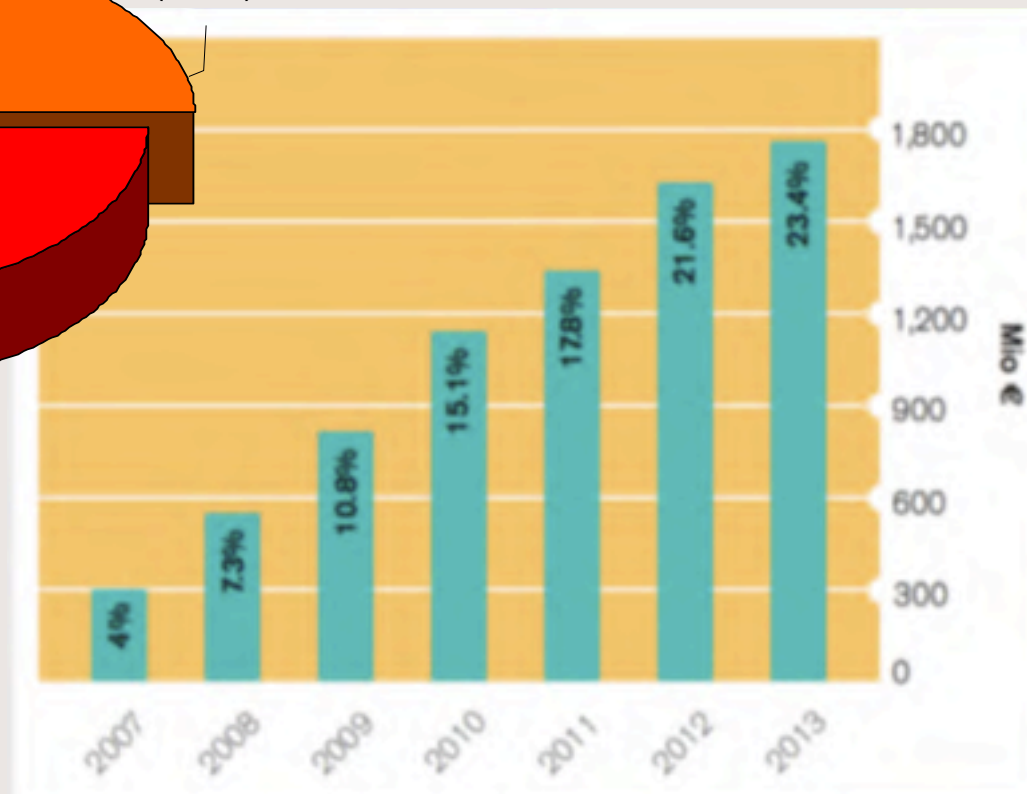
# European Research Council

## Budget € 7.5 billion

European Research Council



FP7 budget € 50.5 billion





# The ERC Scientific Council Members

(renewed 1 February 2011)

- Prof. Claudio BORDIGNON (Medicine)
- Prof. Nicholas CANNY, (History)
- Prof. Sierd A.P.L. CLOETINGH (Earth Sciences)
- Prof. Mathias DEWATRIPONT (Economics)
- Prof. Tomasz DIETL (Physics)
- Prof. Daniel DOLEV (Computer Sciences)
- Prof. Carlos M. DUARTE (Biology)
- Prof. Daniel ESTEVE (Physics)
- Prof. Pavel EXNER (Applied Mathematics & Mathematical Physics),  
ERC Vice President
- Prof. Hans-Joachim FREUND (Physics & Physical Chemistry)
- Prof. Carl-Henrik HELDIN (Molecular Cell Biology), ERC Vice President
- Prof. Timothy HUNT (Biology)
- Prof. Norbert KROO (Physics)
- Prof. Maria Teresa LAGO (Astrophysics)
- Prof. Henrietta L. MOORE (Social Anthropology)
- Prof. Helga NOWOTNY (Social Studies of Science), ERC President
- Prof. Christiane NÜSSLEIN-VOLHARD (Genetics)
- Prof. Alain PEYRAUBE (Linguistics)
- Dr. Jens ROSTRUP-NIELSEN (Chemistry)
- Prof. Mart SAARMA (Biology)
- Prof. Anna TRAMONTANO (Biochemistry)
- Prof. Isabelle VERNOS (Molecular Biology)

ERC Secretary General:  
Prof. Donald DINGWELL  
*(As from September 2011)*

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## Gender Balance Working Group

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The ERC Scientific Council has formed four Working Groups (July 2008):  
International Strategy, **Gender Balance**, Relations with Industry, and Open Access

Members of the Gender Balance Working Group:

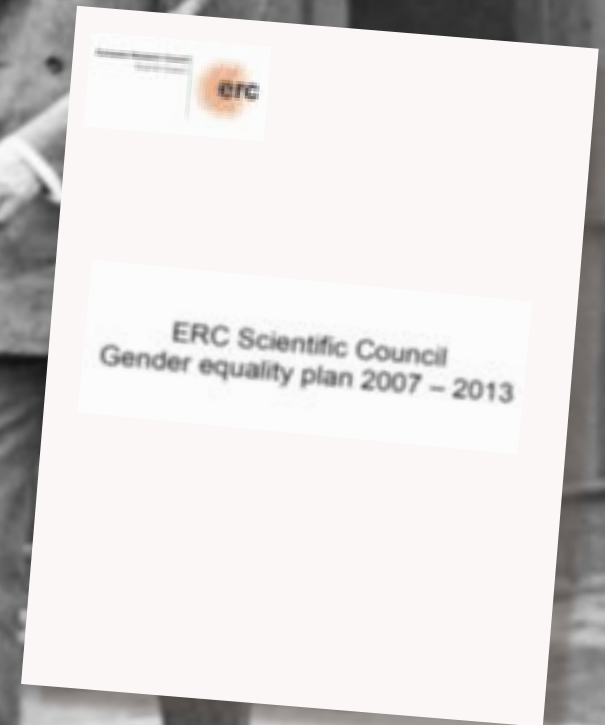
- **ERC Scientific Council:** Danny Dolev, Carlos Duarte, Carl-Henrik Heldin, Teresa Lago (chair), Helga Nowotny, Anna Tramontano, Isabelle Vernos
- **ERC EA:** Jens Hemmelskamp, Severina Shopova, Elisabeth Sjöstedt



ERC's mission is to support excellent frontier researchers across Europe, irrespective of nationality, gender or age. ERC Scientific Council Gender equality plan was adopted in December 2010.

### Three main objectives:

- to raise awareness of ERC gender policy among potential applicants in all research fields
- to identify and challenge any potential gender bias in the ERC evaluation procedure
- to improve the gender balance within the ERC's peer review system





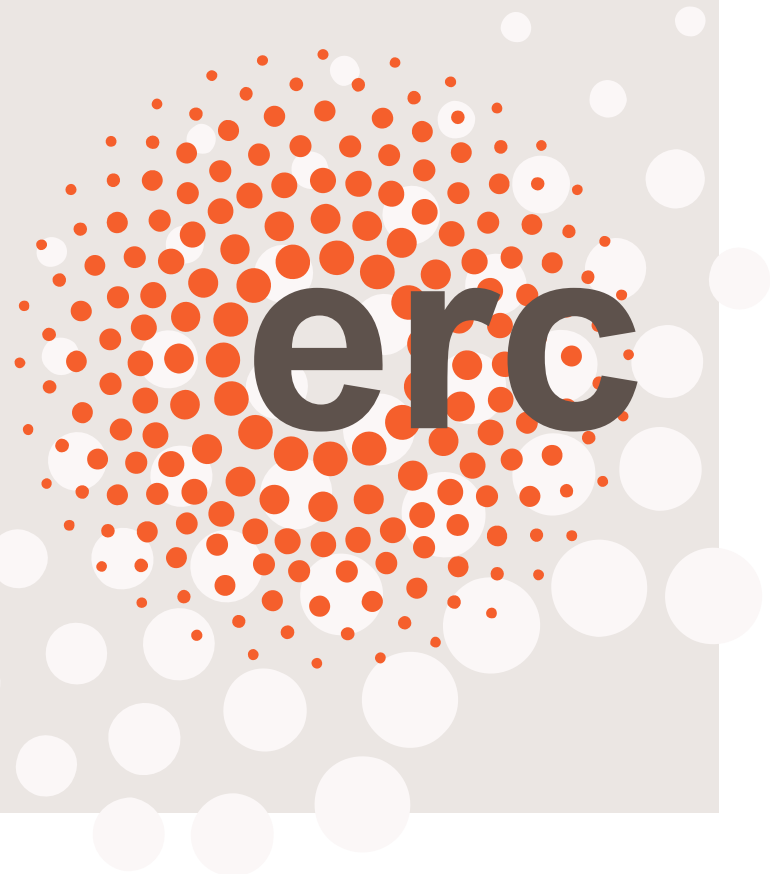
# ERC Scientific Council

## Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013

1.

Main objective

– encourage more excellent female researchers to apply for ERC grants





# ERC Scientific Council

## Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013

– example of steps taken or following

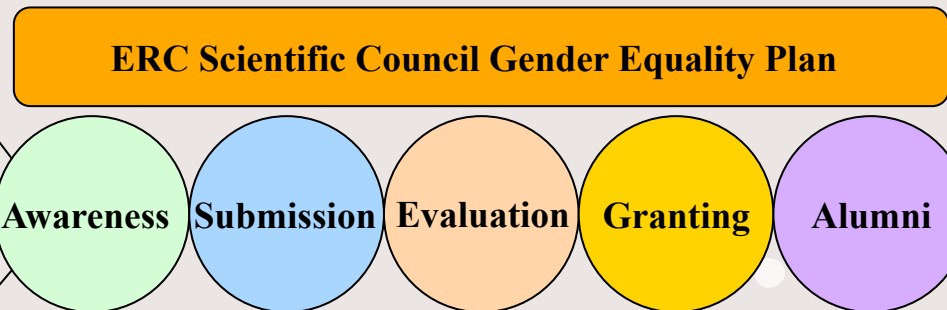
The **ERC Gender Equality Plan** covers all phases of the **ERC process** (awareness, submission, evaluation, evaluation, granting, alumni), is based on **gender mainstreaming with focus kept on excellence.**

Take an active role in the **gender debate**, gender equality networks and workshops.

Make **targeted visits** to scientific meetings and workshops addressing gender topics, to inform about open ERC calls.

Highlight ERC women grantees as **role models** for potential ERC applicants.

Monitor **submission rates** of women and men.





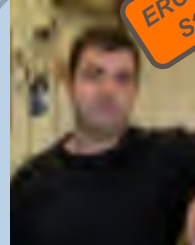
# The ERC attracts high calibre scientists

*"Despite being a new, and thus untried instrument, the ERC has manifestly succeeded in attracting and funding world-class research and is playing an important role in anchoring research talent."  
The independent interim evaluation of FP7*

## Nobel prize in physics 2010



**Andre Geim**  
Uni of Manchester (Graphene)



**Konstantin Novoselov**  
Uni of Manchester (Graphene)

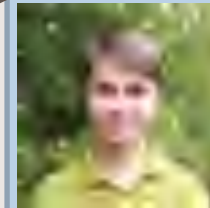
ERC Grantee StG 2007

## Fields Medals 2010



**Cédric Villani**  
Institut Henri Poincaré

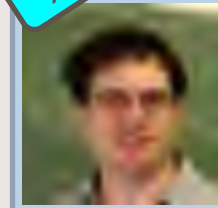
ERC Grantee AdG2008



**Stanislav Smirnov**  
Geneva Uni.



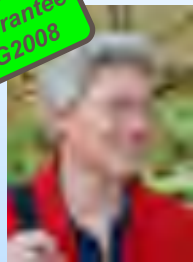
**Ngô Bảo Châu**  
Université Paris-Sud



**Elon Lindenstrauss**  
Hebrew Univ.

ERC Grantee AdG2010

## L'Oréal-UNESCO Award for Women in Science



**Anne L'Huillier**  
Lund University Physical Sciences

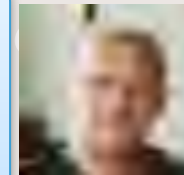
ERC Grantee AdG2008

## Wolf Prize 2010\*



**David Baulcombe**  
Cambridge Univ. (Agriculture)

ERC Grantee AdG2008



**Axel Ullrich**  
Max Planck (Medecine)



**Alain Aspect**  
Inst. d'Optique, Palaiseau (Physics)

ERC Grantee AdG2010



**Anton Zeilinger**  
Vienna Univ. (Physics)

ERC Grantee AdG2008

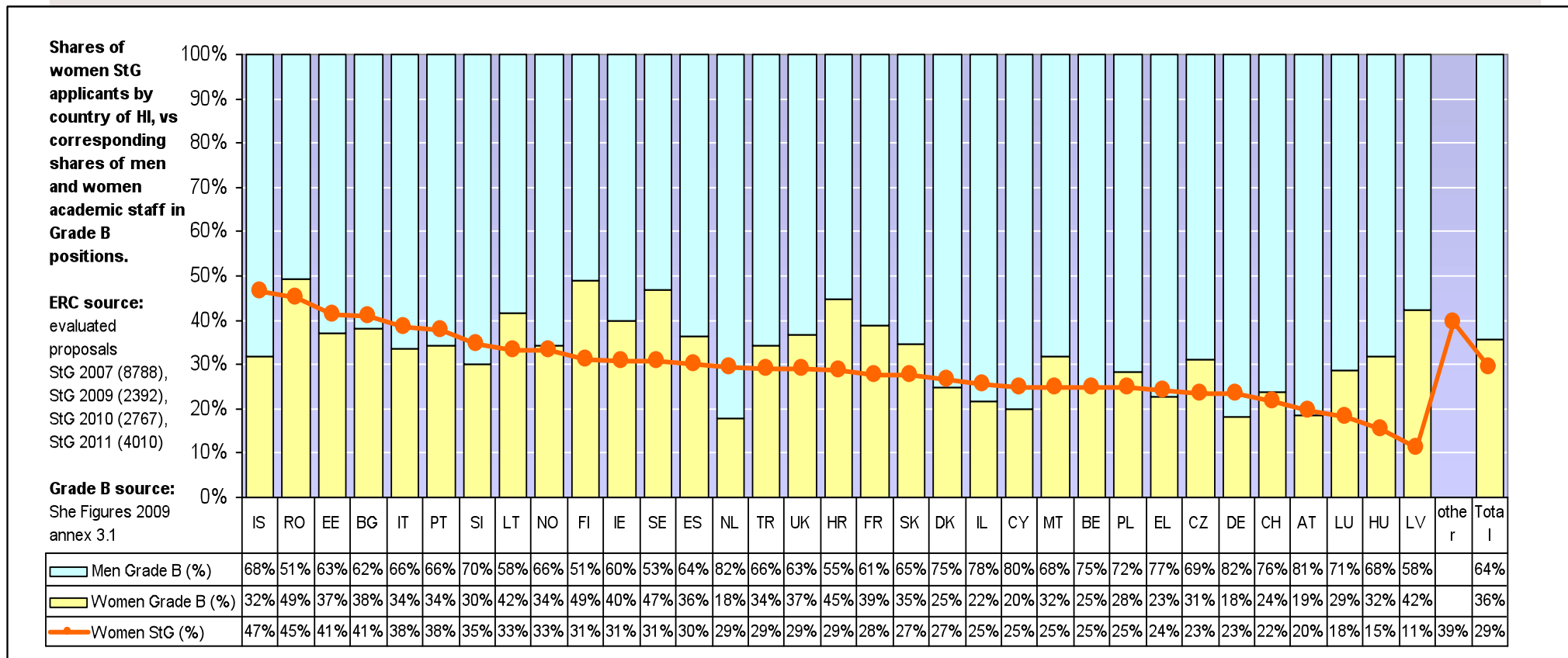
\*4 European winners in "Science" categories

# Monitor submission rates of women & men by country and research domain

European Research Council



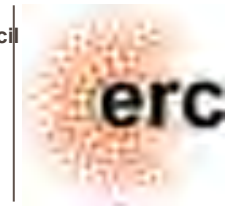
Share women StG applicants vs. women academic staff in Grade B, by country of host institution



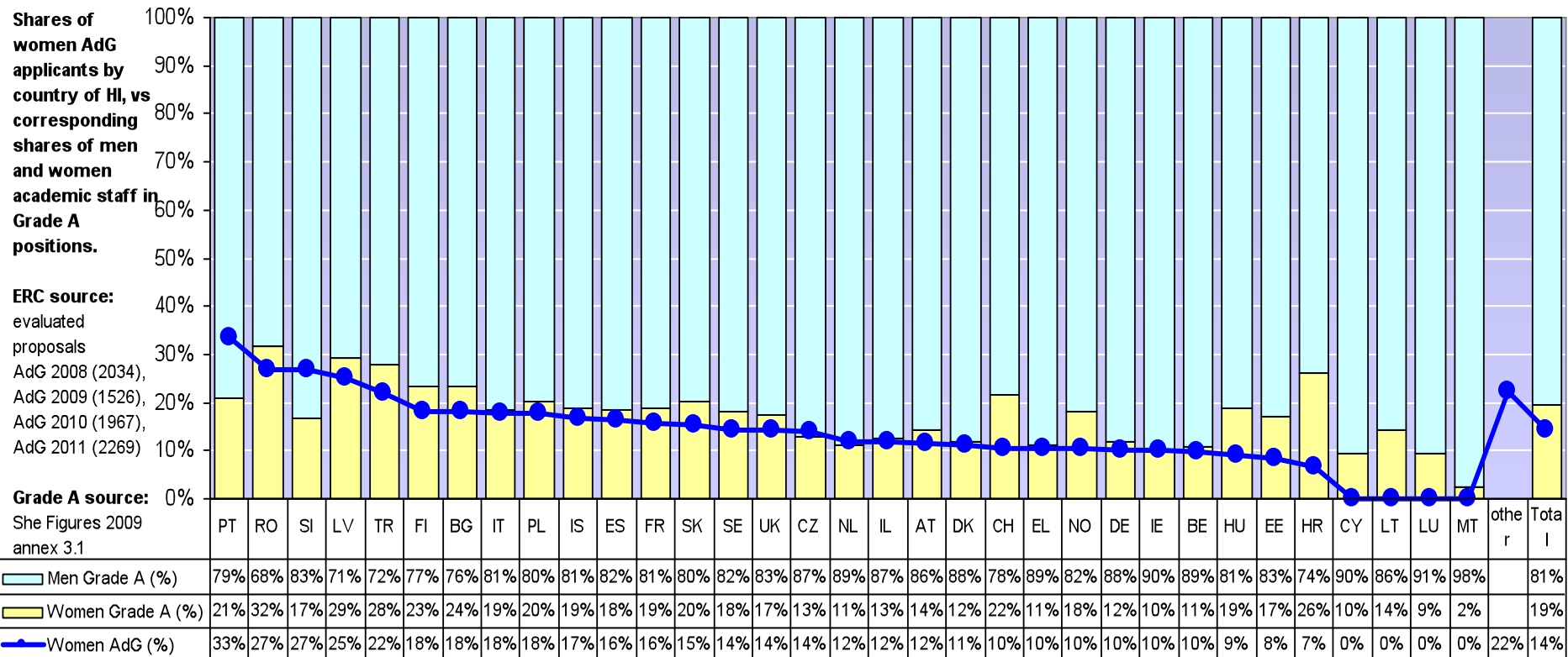
Grade B: " Researchers working in positions not as senior as top positions (A) but more senior than newly qualified PhD holders". (She Figures 2009)

# Monitor submission rates of women & men by country and research domain

European Research Council



Share women AdG applicants vs. women academic staff in Grade A, by country of host institution



Grade A: "The single highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted."  
(She Figures 2009)



# ERC Scientific Council

## Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013

Main objective **2.**  
– identify and challenge any potential  
gender bias together with the ERC panels

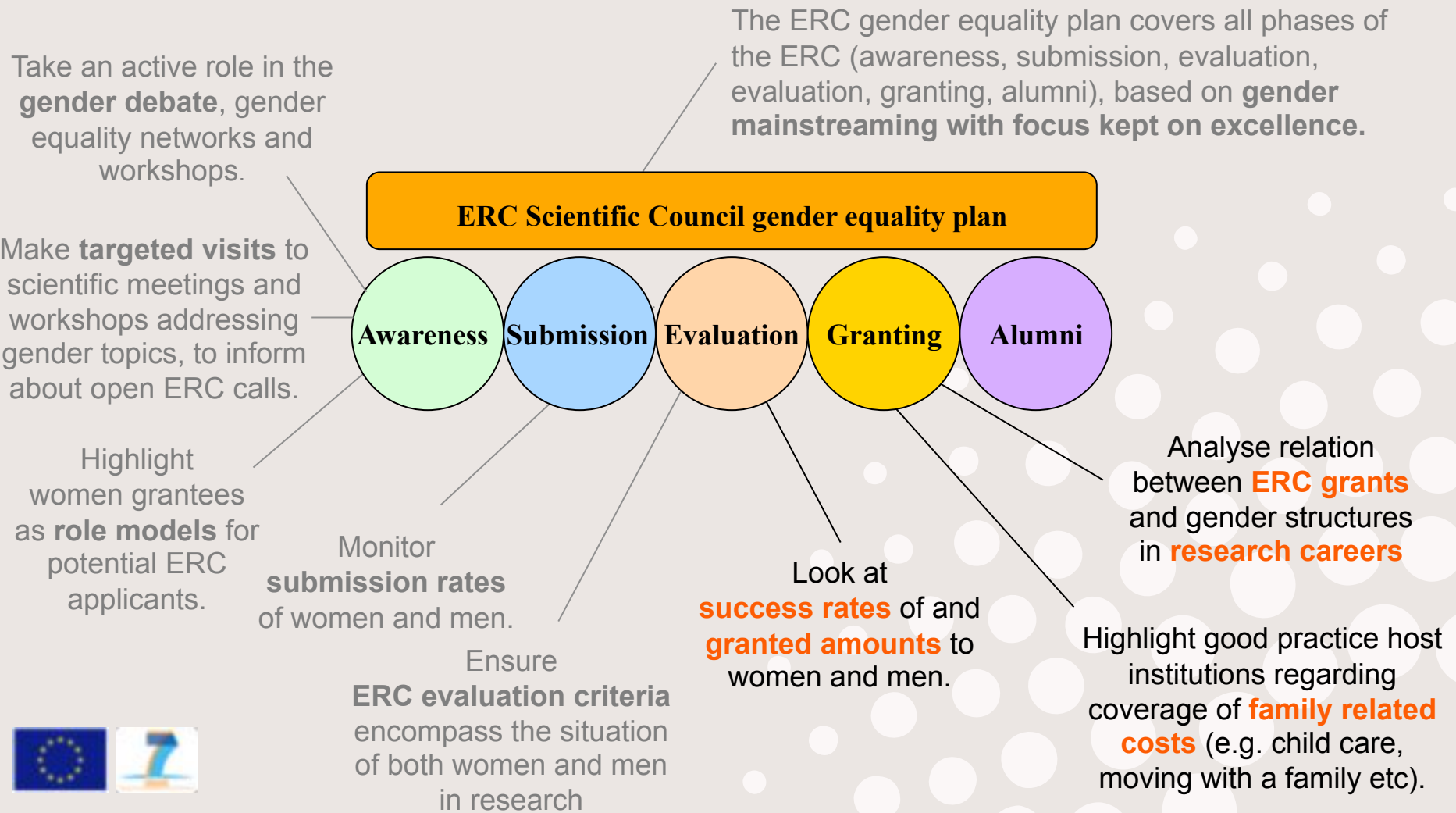


# ERC Scientific Council

## Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013

– example of steps taken or following

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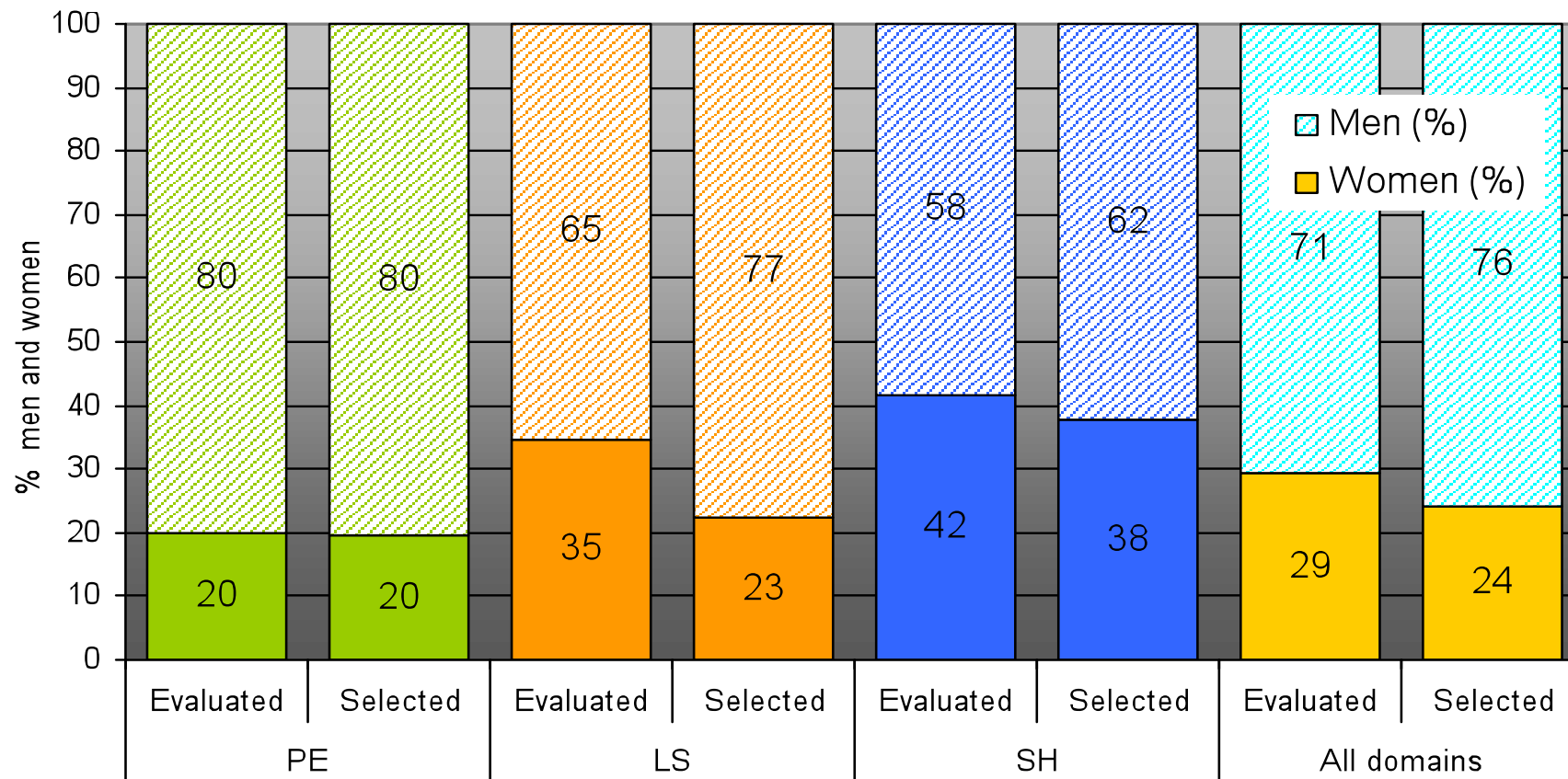


# ERC Starting Grants by domain:

Every 3<sup>rd</sup> applicant and every 4<sup>th</sup> grantee is a woman

## ERC Starting grants: Share of men and women applicants\* and grantees by domain

Source (evaluated/selected Oct 2011) : StG 2007 (8788/299), StG 2009 (2 392/245), StG 2010 (2767/436), StG 2011 (4005/480)



\* Not counting ineligible or withdrawn applications

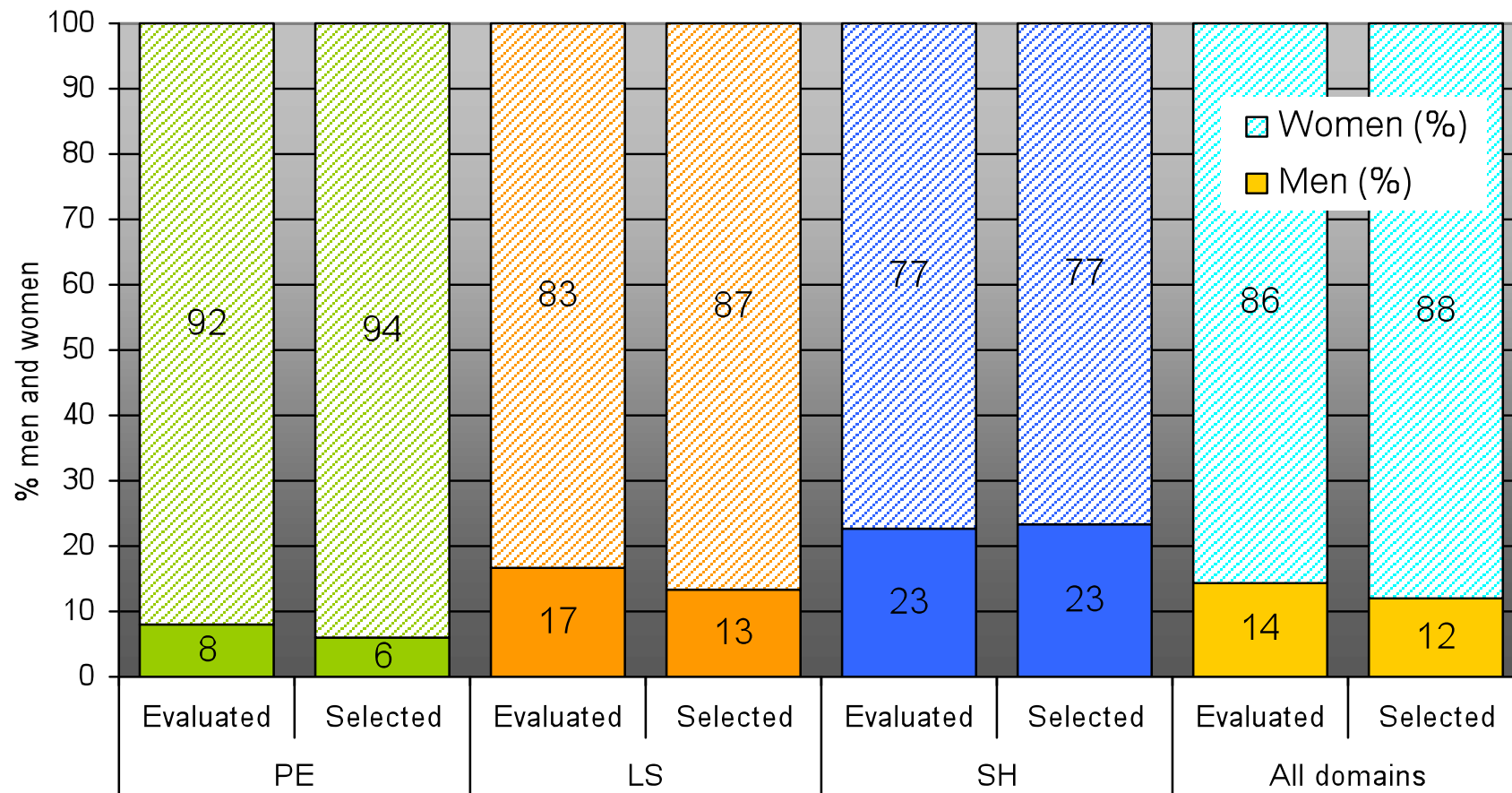


# ERC Advanced Grants by domain:

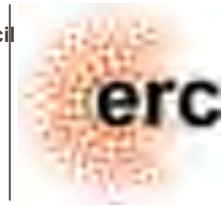
Every 7<sup>th</sup> applicant and every 8<sup>th</sup> grantee is a woman

## ERC Advanced grants: Share of men and women applicants\* and grantees by domain

Source (evaluated/selected Oct 2011): AdG 2008 (2034/282), AdG 2009 (1 526/245), AdG 2010 (1967/271), AdG 2011 (2246/-)



\* Not counting ineligible or withdrawn applications



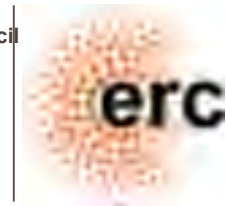
# ERC Scientific Council

## Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013

Main objective **3.**  
– improve the gender balance within the  
ERC's peer review system







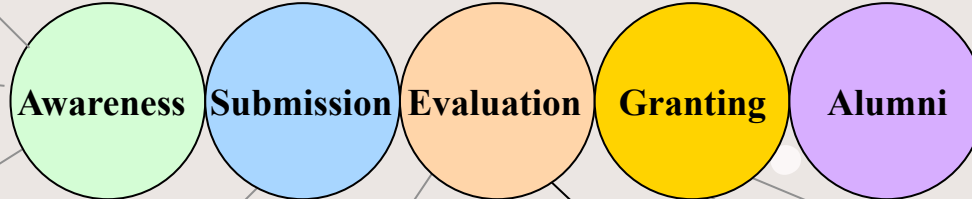
# ERC Scientific Council

## Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013

– example of steps taken or following

The ERC gender equality plan covers all phases of the ERC (awareness, submission, evaluation, evaluation, granting, alumni), based on **gender mainstreaming with focus kept on excellence.**

### ERC Scientific Council gender equality plan



Take an active role in the **gender debate**, gender equality networks and workshops.

Make **targeted visits** to scientific meetings and workshops addressing gender topics, to inform about open ERC calls.

Highlight ERC women grantees as **role models** for potential ERC applicants.

Monitor **submission rates** of women and men.

Ensure **ERC evaluation criteria** encompass the situation of both women and men in research

Look at **success rates** of and **granted amounts** to women and men.

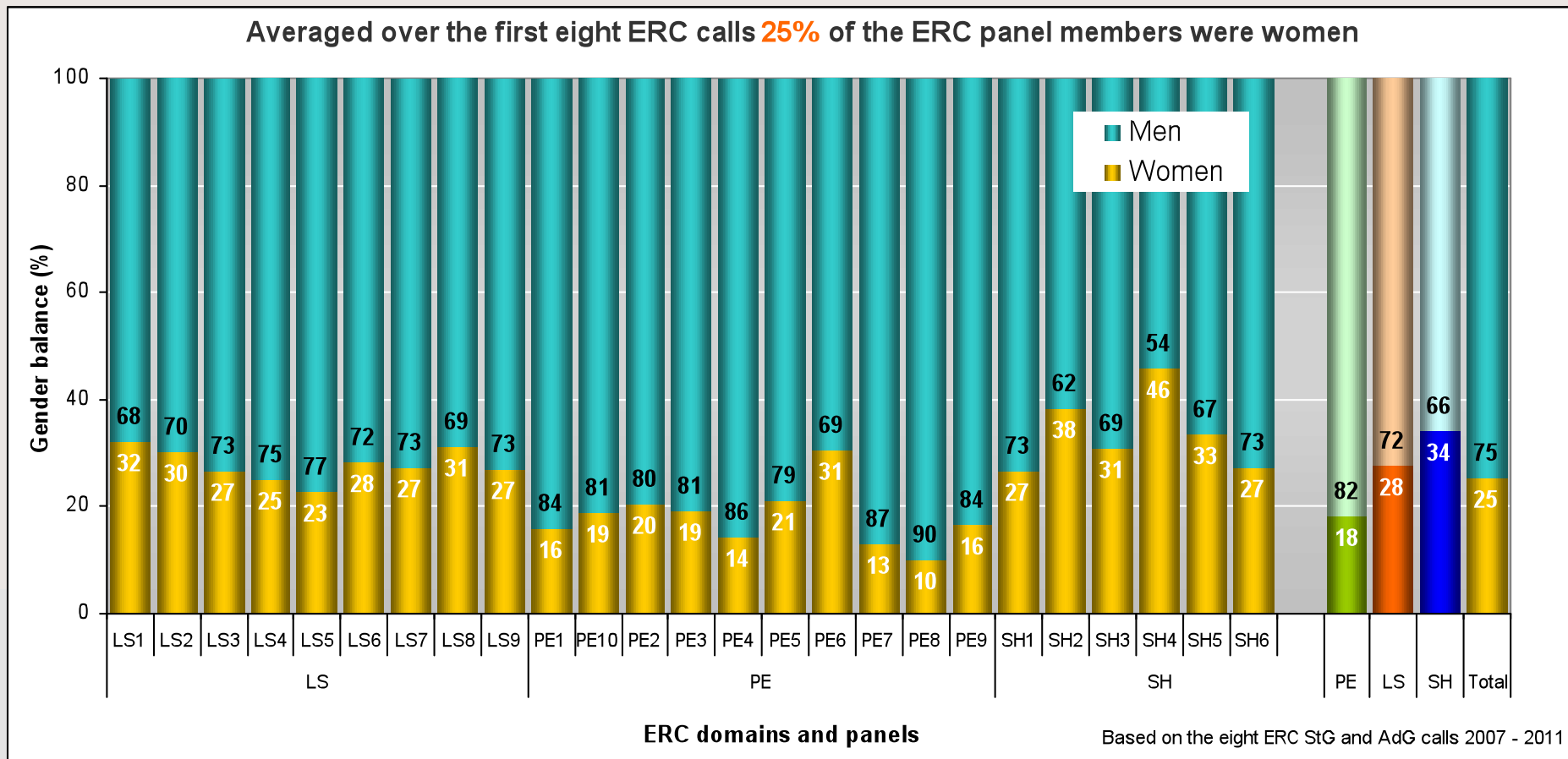
Achieve a better **gender balance** in each ERC evaluation panel as compared to that panel's relevant scientific communities.

Analyse relation between **ERC grants** and gender structures in **research careers**

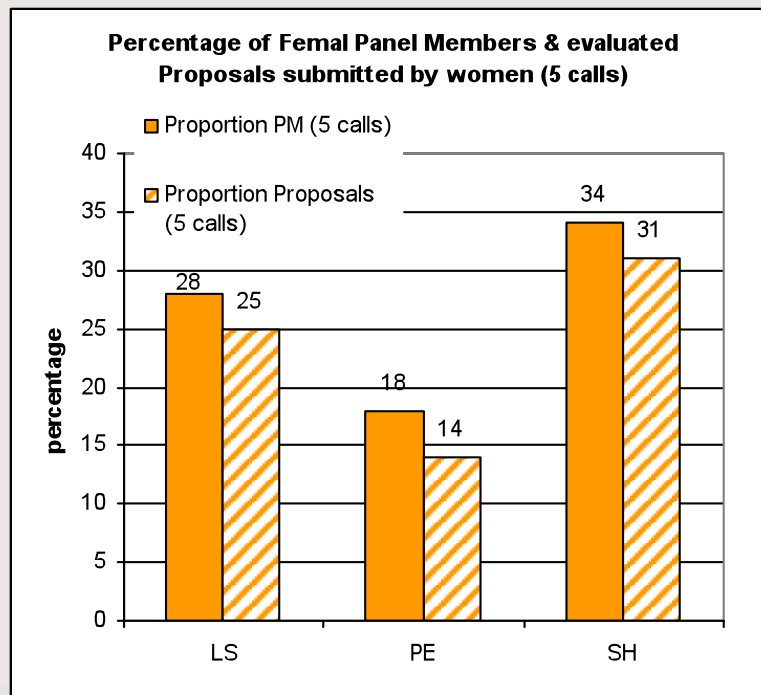
Highlight good practice host institutions regarding coverage of **family related costs** (e.g. child care, moving with a family etc).



# Gender balance in the ERC peer review system



# Gender balance in the ERC peer review system



“The medium term goal is to achieve **gender balance in each ERC evaluation panel as well as among the panel chairs**. This may take time, and will also depend on the overall gender balance in particular research fields. In a first step, the ERC will aim at a better gender proportionality in each ERC evaluation panel as compared to that panel's relevant scientific communities.”

*(ERC gender equality plan 2007 – 2013)*

Comparing the share of women panel members to the share of women applicants by ERC domain. Statistics based on five calls: StG 2009 and 2010, and AdG 2008, 2009 and 2010.



# ERC Scientific Council

## Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013

### What Next?

**ERC Scientific Council gender equality plan**

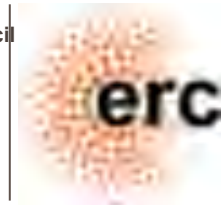
**Awareness**

**Submission**

**Evaluation**

**Granting**

**Alumni**



## Coordination and Support Actions (CSA) 2012 call on “*Gender aspects in career structures and career paths*”

**Budget:** € 150 000  
**Deadline:** 12 January 2012  
**Aim:** Support to ERC monitoring and evaluation strategy.

### **The studies may include:**

- Differences in terms of publications, invitations to conferences, citations, positions, teaching, funding, or recruitment;
- Differences in mobility behaviour and international networking;
- The career impact of work balance, family background or targeted support measures of host institutions (e.g. spouses, child care, moving allowances etc.);
- Career breaks and unconventional career paths;
- Future career perspectives taking into account national research systems;

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/ideas?callIdentifier=ERC-2012-Support-1>

# ERC Scientific Council

## Gender equality plan 2007 – 2013

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Thank you!

A large, stylized version of the ERC logo, consisting of a circular cluster of dots in shades of orange and red, with the lowercase letters 'erc' in a bold, black, sans-serif font overlaid on the cluster.

erc