

For our Environment

Umwelt   
Bundesamt

Gender Summit 7 Europe, November 6th, 2015, dbb forum, Berlin  
Parallel 3: Gender as cross cutting issue in research and innovation

# Gender Mainstreaming in Health Research and Organizational Development

Marika Kolossa-Gehring  
Department of Environmental Hygiene, Section Toxicology  
Health Related Environmental Monitoring

Arn Sauer  
Research Officer for Gender Mainstreaming

## Table of Content

### **1 Gender Mainstreaming at the Federal Environment Agency**

Arn Sauer

### **2 Gender Aspects in Toxicology and Health Research**

Marika Kolossa

## 1. Reasoning for Gender Mainstreaming

### **Definition of Gender Mainstreaming (GM):**

*“Gender Mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and all stages, by the actor normally involved in policy making.”*

(Council of Europe 1998)

- ▶ **Legal duty:** § 4(1) German Gender Equality Law, § 2 Joint Rules of Procedure of the Federal Ministries
- ▶ **Unused potential and effectiveness** of policy recommendations

## 1. The Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming at the UBA

- Pilot project "Gender relations and sustainability" 2000-2004
- Decision of head deputies dated May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2003 → **Introduction of Gender Mainstreaming**
- Decision of head deputies dated March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2004 → **Capacity for Gender Mainstreaming** (Research Officer for Gender Mainstreaming)
- Decision of head deputies dated March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 → **First concept** for implementing gender mainstreaming
- UBA gender equality plan 2013-2016 → Designing a **concept for gender controlling**

# 1. New Steered Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming

Decision of head deputies dated February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

- Systematic integration of gender equality goals in planning, organizational goals and stewardship
- Measurable and monitored
- Top-down *and* bottom-up approach (support structure)
- Improved quality management
- Improved effectiveness

# 1. The Steered Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming

## Pilot phase 2015-2016

- Integration into strategies and goals
- Participatory steering team consisting of Central Steering Department, Presidential Department, Gender Equality Commissioner and Gender Mainstreaming Research Officer
- Monitoring and reporting in gender equality plan
- Evaluation and re-design in 2016

## 1. Goals: Human Resources Development

### **Pilot phase 2015-2016:**

- Advanced education about gender competency for managers
- Advanced education about gender mainstreaming instruments for practitioners/researchers
- Gender balance in relevant commissions
- Procurement of advanced education (quality criteria)
- Gender mainstreaming in Occupational Health Management
- Gender-disaggregated evaluation of Re-integration Management (BEM) and Social Counseling Service

## 1. Goals: Organizational Development

### **Pilot phase 2015-2016:**

- Gender Mainstreaming integrated in UBA's Joint Rules of Procedure
- Gender balance in relevant commissions (legal basis)
- Gender mainstreaming integrated in UBA's Mission Statement



## 1. Goals: Product/Content Specific Goals (Research and Policy Advice)

### **Pilot phase 2015-2016:**

- Ex-ante gender relevance check (gender impact assessment)
- Integration in research design
- Presentation of gender-specific research results
- Reporting in gender equality plan

### **Systematic integration:**

- Gender sensitive
- Gender responsive
- Gender transformative

# From Theory to Practice

## Sex and Gender in Environmental Health Research



Graphic: Pixabay Piktogramm\_CCO

## 2. Biological Dimension of Environmental Health: Sex

The biological difference between male and female based on biological differences

Women	Men
Smaller body weight	Higher body weight
More body fat	More muscle mass
Reduced hepatic clearance	Higher detoxification rate?
Breastfeeding: elimination of lipophilic pollutants	
Differences in metabolism of pollutants	

Rademaker, 2001  
Schwartz, 2003

## 2. Social Dimension: Gender

Different social expectations and roles in society cause differences in behavior:

- smoking status
- nutritional behavior
- consumer habits
- household chores

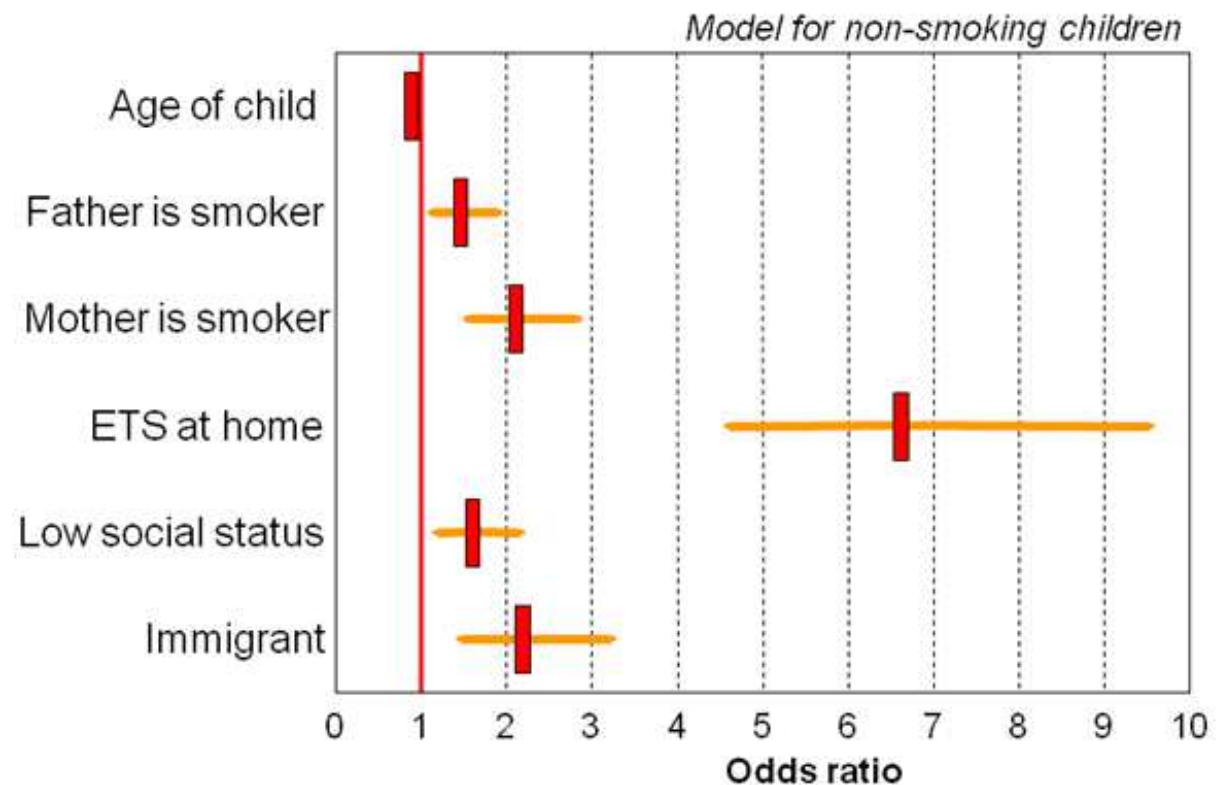
## 2. Example (1):

### Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke (ETS) - Parent's Gender Matters

#### Gender aspects in GerES 2003-06

Higher impact, if mother is smoking compared to father

→ Mothers are spending more time with their children?



II 1.2.: Toxicology, health-related environmental monitoring (André Conrad)

Source: <http://www.inderscience.com/info/inarticle.php?artid=20931>

## 2. Example (2):

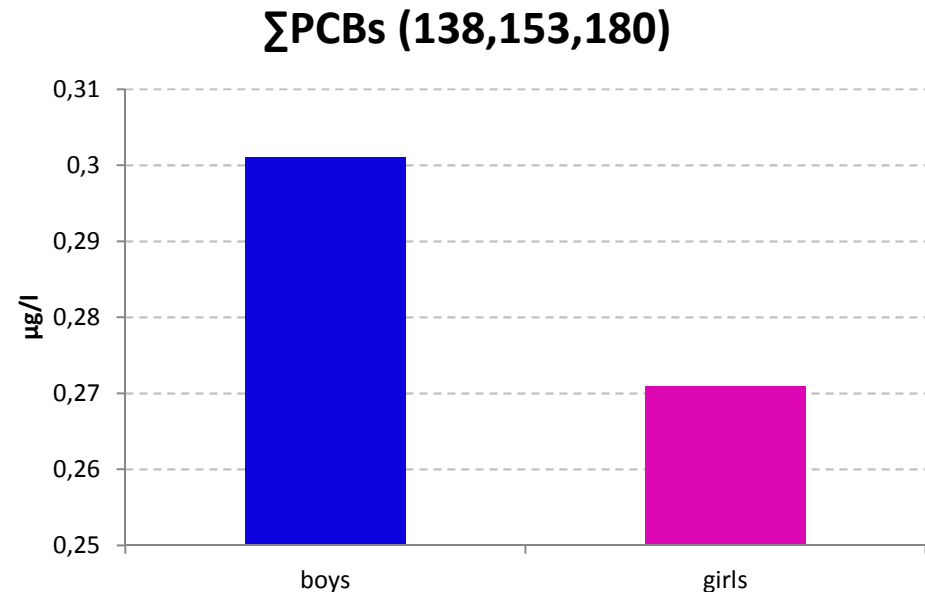
### Do boys have higher pollutants levels than girls?

#### Toxicological gender aspects in GerES 2003-2006:

3-14 year-old boys are more exposed to arsenic, lead, mercury and PCBs than girls.

Girls same age are more exposed to different biocides.

→ Different nutritional behavior or sex-related effects (e.g. metabolism)?



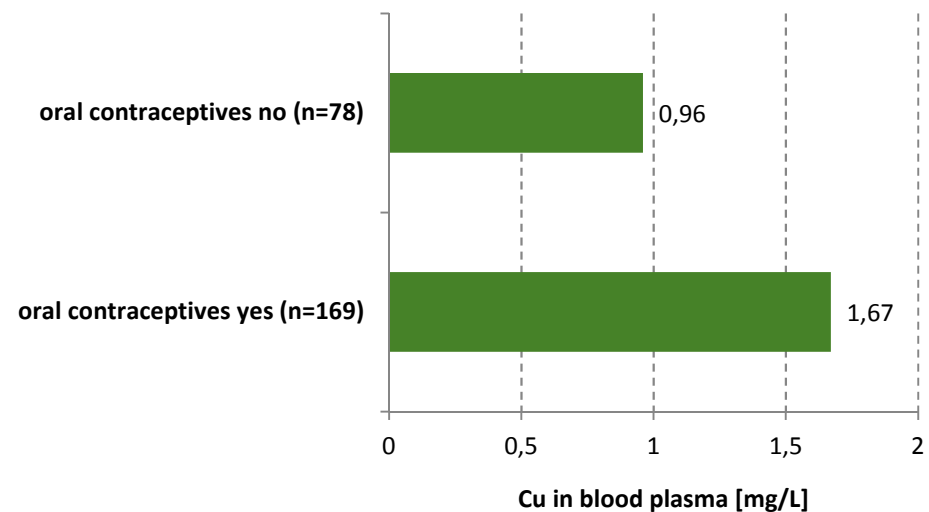
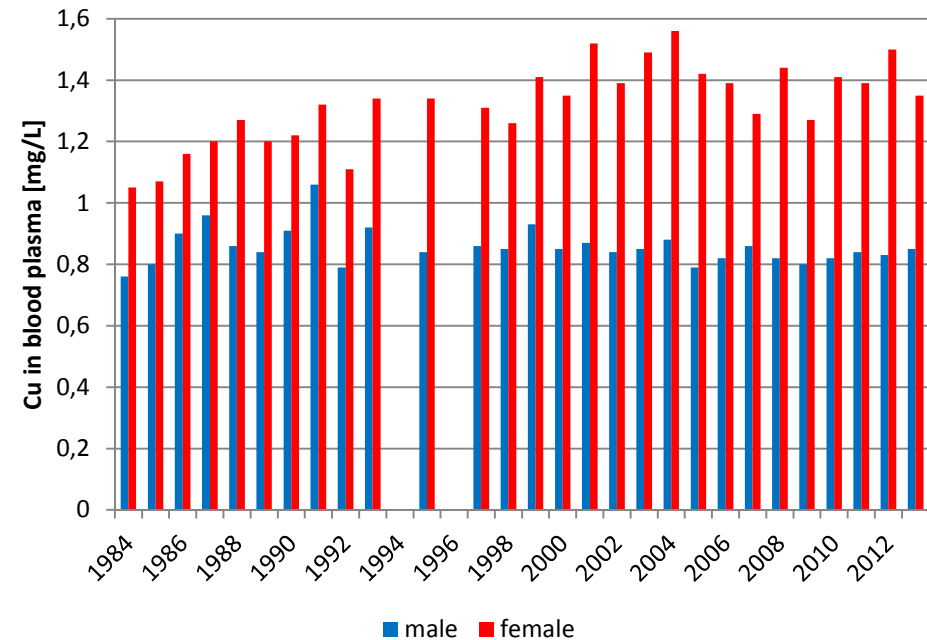
## 2. Example (3): Pollutant Levels in Adults

### Gender differences observed by German Environmental Specimen Bank

Chronic exposure to copper can  
damage liver and kidneys

Women are higher exposed to  
copper than men

→ Related to oral contraceptives?



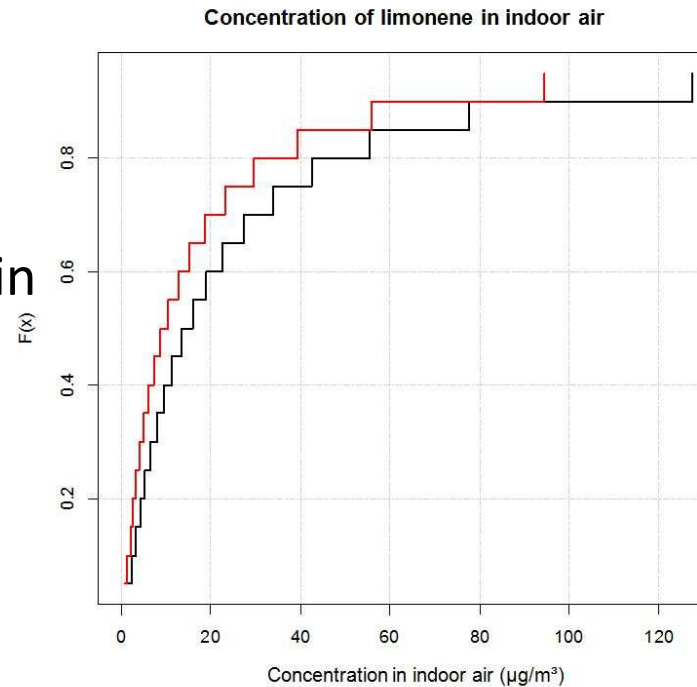
## 2. Example (4): Gender Differences in Children Room's Indoor Air Quality

Differences of limonene concentration in indoor air

→ girl's rooms show higher concentrations of limonene in indoor air compared to boys rooms

Gender-related behavior?

Hypothesis: girls more often use scented candles, fragrances or cleaning agents



Percentile	Girls	Boys
0.05	1.4	0.8
0.1	2.3	1.4
0.15	3.3	2.0
0.2	4.2	2.6
0.25	5.3	3.3
0.3	6.6	4.1
0.35	7.9	5.0
0.4	9.5	6.1
0.45	11.3	7.3
0.5	13.4	8.8
0.55	15.9	10.5
0.6	19.0	12.6
0.65	22.7	15.3
0.7	27.5	18.7
0.75	33.8	23.2
0.8	42.4	29.6
0.85	55.4	39.2
0.9	77.5	55.8
0.95	127.4	94.3

Tobollik M, Hornberg C, Plaß D, Steckling N, Claßen T, Wintermeyer D (2015) Genderaspekte bei der Quantifizierung umweltbedingter Krankheitslasten - Möglich? Sinnvoll? Erforderlich? Presentation at the conference: Gender, Environment and Health, 12. 06.2015; Bremen



## 2. Example (5):

### UBA pilot project “Gender and cleaning” (2004)

**Hypothesis:** women and men spend a different amount of time for washing and cleaning

→ different exposure to household chemicals

Federal Statistical Office data demonstrate:

Women are :

- seven times longer than man involved in doing the laundry
- three times longer dealing with the cleaning work
- 2,5 times longer in doing the dishes

Women are more frequent allergic to fragrances inter alia used in washing and cleansing agents.

In the past decades the number of women developing fragrance-allergies is increasing

→ gender and not sex-related!



Source: mark huls / Fotolia.com

## Summary

### **Several examples demonstrate relevant gender-aspects in environmental health**

- The UBA will strengthen gender-related research in future studies
- Providing adequate policy recommendations i.e. in chemical management, information of the general public and regulation

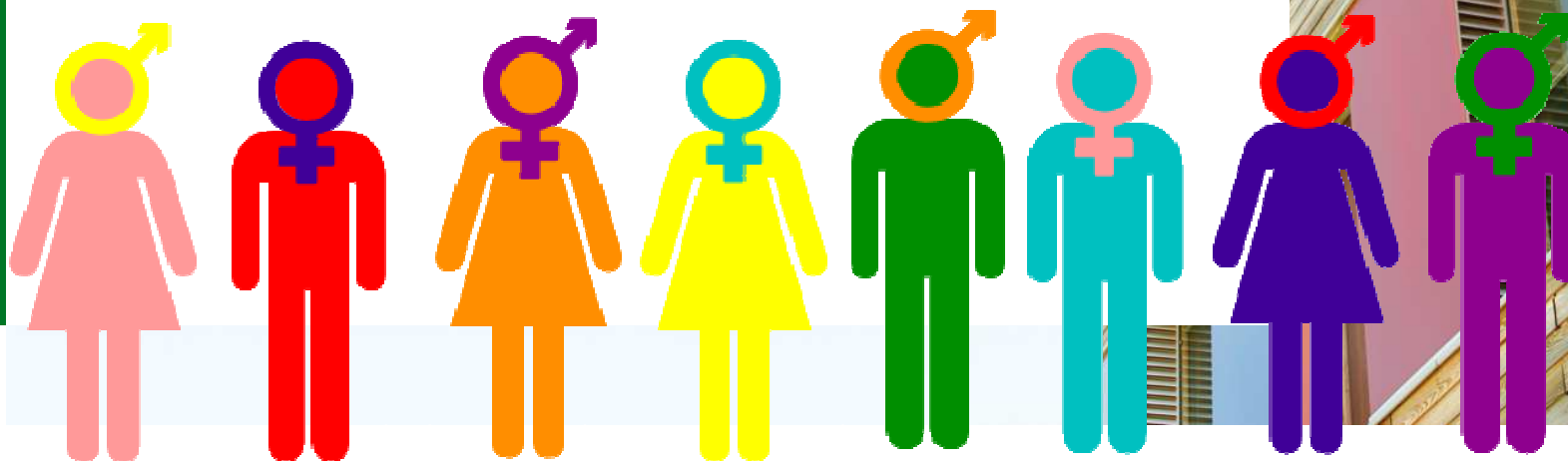
# Thank you very much for your attention!

**Marike Kolossa-Gehring & Arn Sauer**

marike.kolossa@uba.de

arn.sauer@uba.de

<http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/en>



## Excursion: Institutional Mechanisms for Gender Mainstreaming

- H1) Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies;*
- H2) Integrate gender perspectives into legislation, public policies, programmes and projects;*
- H3) Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.*

UBA: Integrationist approach under the expert-bureaucratic model