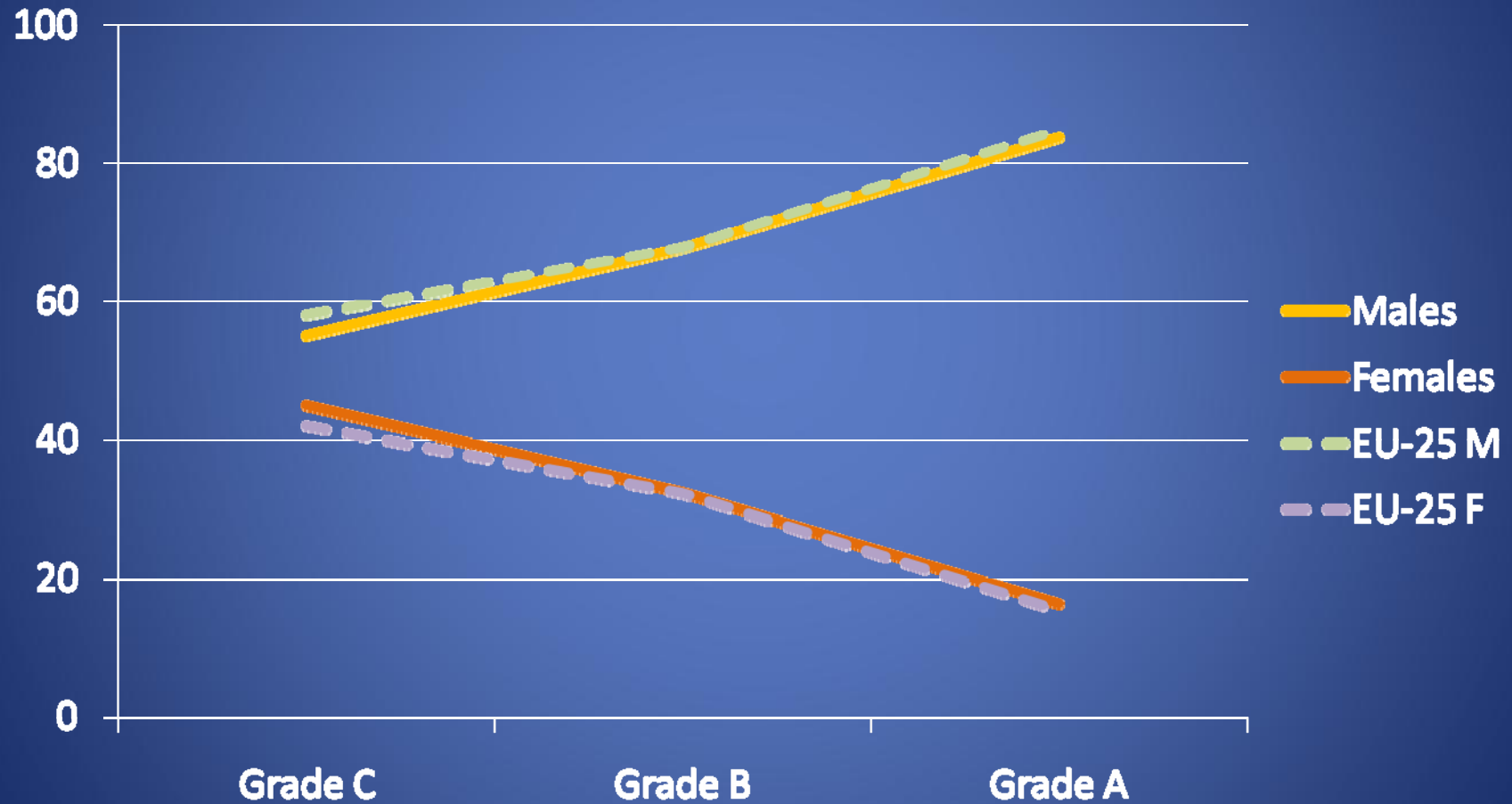


Scissors in scientific career path, Italy and EU



Do we need more women in science?

- We can answer from three perspectives:
 - the perspective of society,
 - the perspective of science and
 - the perspective of women



From the perspective of society

1. Technological advancements have a huge impact on society and everyday life. **A responsibility that cannot be a male-only responsibility.**
2. In many countries high level scientists are appointed to governmental committees. As such, scientists influence the focus of research and the general development of society. **A responsibility that cannot be a male-only responsibility.**
3. It is a **democratic** principle that power should be distributed equally and proportionally among different social groups avoiding discrimination.



From the perspective of science

- under-representation of women represents a huge **waste of talents**.
- under-representation of women threatens the goals of science in achieving **excellence**,
- under-representation of women is a **violation of the human rights** to be judged on the basis of their work and not of their **sex**.



From the perspective of women

- **Women** will of course **benefit** from an increased influence in society and in science.
- **Efficiency** of economic and scientific system **will improve** because is wasteful to educate and train young women in science but then not to use their skills in employment.



Wasting female talents: Italy

- Italian women are the population group with the highest education level.
 - 57% of university students are women (48% in Germany, 55% in France and UK)
 - They perform better than men at university
 - 51% of PhDs are women as compared to 43% at EU level
 - **Only 38%** of academic staff less than 30 years old are women.



Why are there so few top women scientists?

- The availability of better gender-sensitive data improves the understanding of the mechanisms underlying women's under-representation
- It was proven the existence of **gender bias** in science and career advancements; in peer review evaluation; in rewarding excellence.



Is the system changing?

- Because of the observed increase in the access to science of younger cohorts of women, it **could be argued that it is simply a matter of time before gender equity is achieved.**
- With current female growth rates, to achieve gender parity in the top grade A we need:
 - 112 years in Italy
 - 68 in Germany
 - 58 in Belgium

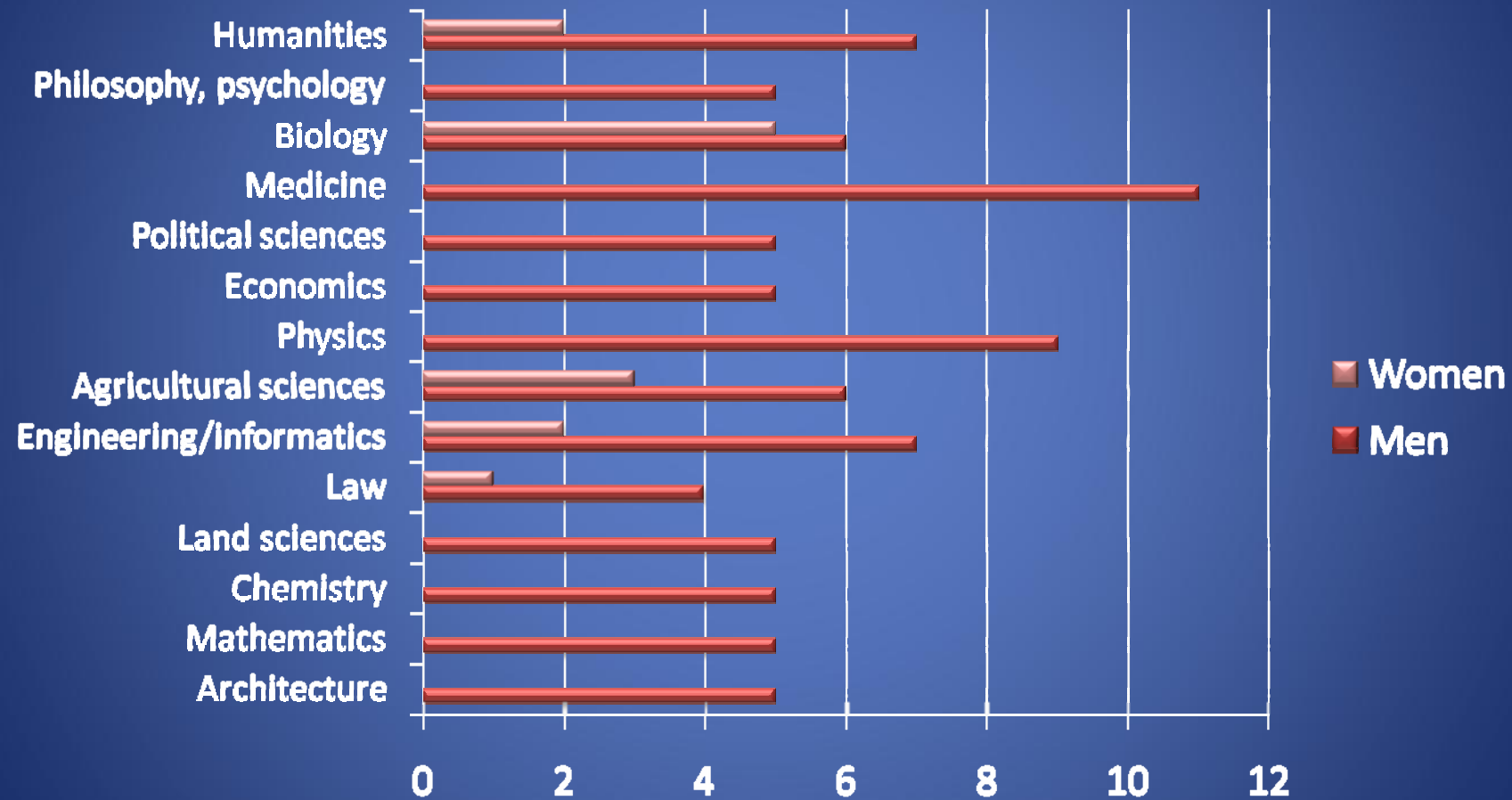


What are the consequences?

- Gender is not a central issue in science and the feeling that “science is gender neutral” is still strong
- As a consequence recruitment systems and career promotion procedures are opaque respect to gender almost everywhere in EU
- The so called neutrality of science affects also evaluation procedures of scientific excellence and research funding

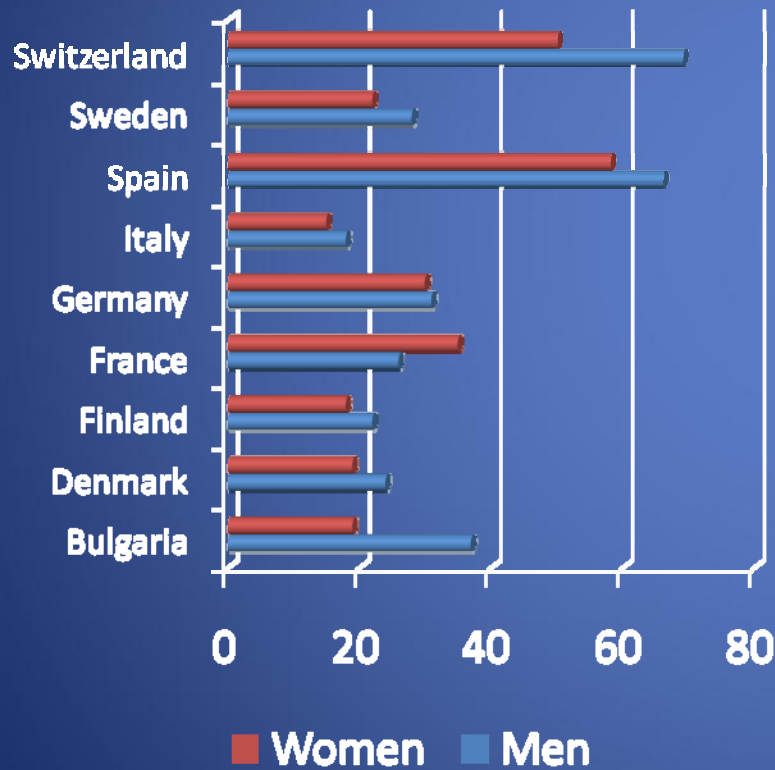


Gender composition of funding committees by discipline, Italy (absolute numbers)

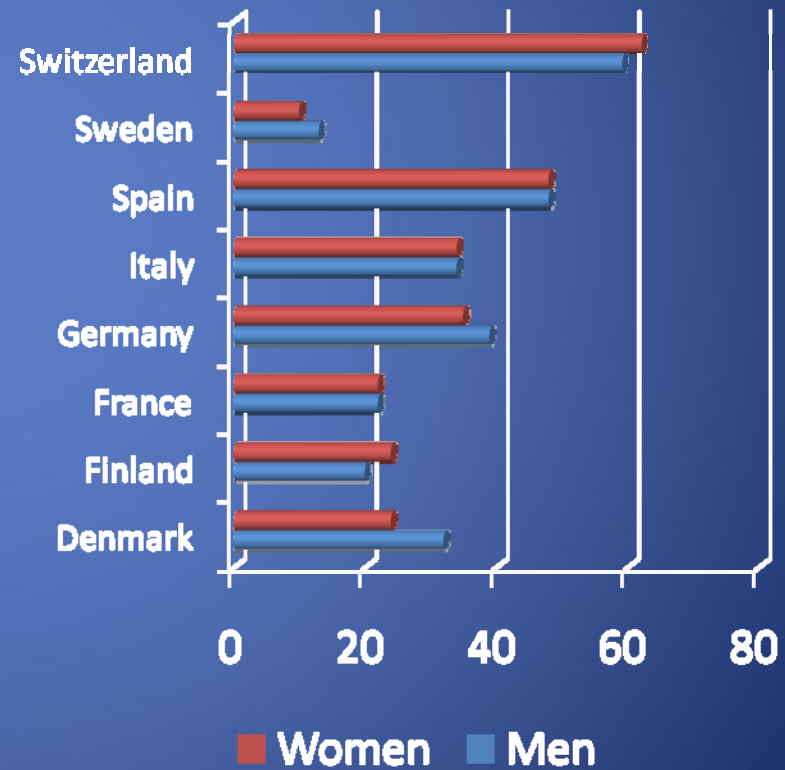


Measuring success rates: EU Report on Gender Challenge in research funding

Engineering and Technology: success rates by gender



Social sciences: success rates by gender



Under the surface of success rates

Funded projects by gender, absolute numbers					
	Eng.& Tech.		Social Sciences		
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Denmark	104	27	73	20	
Finland	110	12	68	41	
France	54	8	44	21	
Germany	484	26	191	49	
Italy	93	7	107	21	
Spain	734	112	513	209	
Sweden	197	30	76	41	
Switzerland	127	7	92	26	



Why is so difficult to change the system?

- Status quo is considered natural
- Gender biased procedures are not:
 - Officially recognized
 - Transparent
 - No beneficial for the organisation.
- Gender biased procedures are often against rationality but preserve the system.



Can we do something?

- We can start with something simple, immediate and difficult to reject.
- For example, it should be compulsory to publish percentages by gender in every funding process, competition, promotion, committee, commission or advisory board.
- It is simple but it is a real step forward towards transparency.

