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**Global Dynamics  
of Social Policy**

CRC 1342

# **‘EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE’ ACTIVITY REPORT 2018 - 2019**

Collaborative Research Centre 1342:  
Global Dynamics of Social Policy

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## Equal Opportunities Committee Report

Collaborative Research Centre 1342: Global Dynamics of Social Policy

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## 1. Introduction

Advocating gender equality and family-friendly working conditions are key objectives of the CRC 1342 (hereafter CRC). Both aims are stated in the CRC funding proposal and are based on the equal opportunities mandate defined within the Bremen Higher Education Act (Bremisches Hochschulgesetz) and on the Gender Equality Standards of the German Research Foundation (DFG). Regarding gender equality, the stated aim is to increase the number of female researchers at all academic levels and especially reach equal numbers of women and men project leaders. Regarding the advancement of family-friendly working conditions, the CRC aims to support structures alongside the general support structure of the University of Bremen.<sup>1</sup>

The CRC's Statute provides for the election of an Equal Opportunities Committee (hereafter EOC) among all women researchers of the CRC. A Women's Representative is then elected from among the EOC members. The EOC is composed of six elected representatives, as follows: two professors, two postdoctoral researchers and two doctoral researchers.<sup>2</sup> Since October 2018, the Equal Opportunities Committee consists of six women members: the Women's Representative Dr. Teresa Huhle, Johanna Fischer, Prof. Dr. Kerstin Martens, Alex Nadège Ouedraogo, Dr. Anna Safuta, and Prof. Dr. Carina Schmitt, supported by student assistant Franziska Missler (in 2019). Between January and October 2018, the EOC consisted of Dr. Teresa Huhle and Dr. Petra Buhr.

## 2. Activities of the EOC

### 2.1. Responsibilities and networks

#### 2.1.1. Responsibilities of the EOC

The EOC has several formal roles within the CRC. First, the EOC advises the CRC Board and participates in its meetings. Second, the EOC advises all recruitment procedures of academic staff within the CRC, from the job posting to the selection of a candidate, including interviews. The EOC has to sign the documents related to the hiring of each new candidate. Third, the EOC

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<sup>1</sup> CRC funding proposal, p. 46-47.

<sup>2</sup> § 7 Statute of the Collaborative Research Centre 1342 (as of 19 October 2018)



manages the equal opportunities budget. This budget is primarily used to fund EOC activities aimed at supporting women researchers and researchers with care responsibilities, as well as co-funding equal opportunity measures and infrastructure at the University of Bremen. The EOC's annual budget amounts to 30.000 EUR.

One primary field of action of the EOC lies in advocating for equal opportunities within the CRC, with special focus on gender equality, women researchers, and researchers with care responsibilities. A core part of this work is communication about support structures, offers and regulations pertaining to gender equality and care. In particular, the EOC informs about its activities and funding lines, agreements within the CRC and further support available to the targeted groups, e.g. offered by the University of Bremen. This information is provided via the CRC's mailing lists, the EOC's Seafile folder open to all CRC members and in the EOC section on the CRC website. Furthermore, the events organized by the EOC are advertised on the website. The address for the page is: <https://www.socialpolicydynamics.de/about-the-crc/equality-at-the-crc/en>

#### 2.1.2. Interaction with CRC members

In order to know the needs of the members, questionnaires on needs and support for scholars with caring responsibilities within the CRC have been created and distributed in October 2018. The answers indicated that the main problematic areas were meeting hours, and the offer of family support and childcare during work-related absences. Additionally, a need was identified to have a specific room for older children (primary school aged), where they would be able to do homework while their parents are at work. The EOC has also asked for feedback on the content of potential workshops for women researchers during the first women's assembly in October 2018. A second women assembly and an assembly for researchers with care responsibilities was held in January 2020 in order to discuss potential issues and receive feedback from all target groups.



### 2.1.3. Involvement in and support from university structures

The University of Bremen has two network structures dealing with gender equality and equal opportunities, in which the EOC takes part. These structures are the *ZKFF – Zentrale Kommission für Frauenfragen* (Central Commission for Women’s Issues), and the network *Chancengleichheit in Forschungsverbänden* (Equal Opportunities in Research Alliances). The ZKFF is the highest organ for the representation of women’s interests at the university and regularly invites all Department Women’s Representatives (Dezentrale Frauenbeauftragte), including the EOC, in order to exchange information and communicate about encountered problems. The network *Chancengleichheit* is organized by the *Referat 04 Chancengleichheit* and includes equal opportunity representatives of all DFG-funded projects at the university, again with the purpose of knowledge exchange.

Beyond organizing the network, the *Referat 04 Chancengleichheit* also supports and advises the EOC in the organization of workshops for women researchers and other issues. This is why the EOC co-finances personnel within this body.

### 2.1.4. Training, exchange and networking for EOC members

EOC members participated in events and trainings, with the aim of further developing our skills and competences. In June 2019, Women’s Representative Dr. Teresa Huhle participated in a two-day workshop (“Gleichstellungsmittel richtig einsetzen”) organized by the Zentrum für Wissenschaftsmanagement e. V. and DFG-Forum Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsmanagement in Hamburg. This allowed her to learn more about the DFG’s equal opportunity standards, share experiences with other DFG-funded projects, and increased the EOC’s knowledge about further possible funding lines and activities. Dr. Huhle remains in touch with other workshop participants through a mailing list, where tricky details on financing possibilities are continuously discussed. In September 2019, Alex Nadège Ouedraogo took part in the I-Scientist conference in Berlin, where she learned about gender and LGBTQI+ issues in academia.

## 2.2. Activities for women researchers

### 2.2.1. Workshops

In 2019, the EOC organized two workshops to advance women researchers' careers and support them in their academic duties and aspirations. The two-day workshop "The Art of Self-Presenting for Female Scientists: From positive language to powerful performance" took place on 18-19 September 2019, followed by the workshop "Leadership Skills for Women Team Leaders" held on 5-6 December 2019. A third workshop "Professor wanted! Planning and optimizing your academic career" was planned for 1 April 2020, but had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The organization of the workshops comprised contacts with potential participants, with the instructor, with managers of the venue (when the workshop was held outside of university premises) and with co-organising research groups. It also included travel and/or accommodation reservations for the workshop instructor and coordination with CRC administrative personnel (responsible for accountancy).

The objective of the first workshop was to provide the participants with effective self-presentation tools. It was led by Dr. Saskia Schottelius, who is a mental trainer, a teacher of martial arts, meditation and philosophy, and gives courses and seminars on the subject of personality development and career training for women. Different methods were used, such as theory-input, group-work, role-play scenarios, exercise-based learning, body work, etc.

In total, there were twelve participants, including CRC scholars as well as researchers co-funded by the Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS) and the Centre for Marine Environmental Sciences *Marum*. The evaluation surveys were positive: they indicated high satisfaction with the trainer, the choice of topics, and the methods. Participants' feedback stated that they learned more about themselves, had realizations about the structural position of women in science and unconscious behaviours. The workshop provided new perspectives on self-presentation, particularly on typical behaviours by female scientists as opposed to men, therefore offering also wider insights into internalized gender structures and workplace relations in academia.



The second workshop, “Leadership Skills for Women Team Leaders”, was led by Dr. Anette Hammerschmidt, a trainer and coach in academia and business. This workshop was co-financed by the DFG Research Training Group *Models of Gravity*.

The objectives of this workshop were to support women in leadership positions within academia by helping them expand their skill set and offering suggestions to solve concrete situations. Some of the topics covered were understanding structural aspects of leading from a "sandwich" position, defining and clarifying one's role and mutual expectations, leadership styles, understanding social systems and team-development, and handling tricky situations based on real life examples. The training consisted of short inputs and experience sharing. The main target group of this workshop were women postdoc researchers.

#### 2.2.2. Conference funding

In 2019, the EOC introduced a programme aimed at supporting women researchers' individual careers by financing their participation in external events (e.g. conferences, workshops). The reimbursement of travel, accommodation and participation costs within this programme is possible if at least one of the following three criteria is fulfilled: (a) participating will advance specific soft skills (e.g. presentation, communication, etc.), (b) participating will represent a career advancement, through enhancing research visibility, enabling the development of own scientific network, etc. or (c) the topic of the event deals specifically with gender and equal opportunities in academia. The EOC assesses the applications and selects recipients depending on available funds. Two criteria are employed in the selection process in the case eligible applications exceed available funds: whether applicants have access to other sources of funding, and considerations about a fair distribution of resources between scholars. In 2019, two event participations were funded plus two applications granted for event participations taking place in 2020.

### 2.3. Measures for researchers with care responsibilities

#### 2.3.1. Results of the questionnaire

In October 2018, the EOC asked CRC researchers with care responsibilities to answer a questionnaire aimed at better understanding their needs. Ten researchers answered, either under



their name or anonymously. All had children under 14 (including one researcher with an infant under 1 at the time). No respondent mentioned that they were taking care of other care-dependent family members.

Among suggested family-friendly measures that could be offered within the CRC, collective babysitting services during events taking place on the weekend, late in the afternoon or evening received the most votes. Other popular solutions were the offer of student assistant support for CRC researchers with care responsibilities, and the creation of a workspace for parents with children in the Unicom-building – two measures that have since then been implemented (see hereunder). Four respondents expressed interest in support for home office and workshops on work-life balance. Three respondents were interested in financial support for a companion during work travels and only one respondent expressed interest in a kindergarten place for their child.

Respondents could also suggest additional measures that would make for a family-friendly working environment. Five respondents mentioned the importance of family-friendly working hours, including no meetings in the late afternoon and no events in the evenings or on the weekends. Other recommended solutions included financial support for accompanying family members during longer field research and business trips; financial support for childcare during work-related travel in order to support researchers' partners who stay behind with the children (e.g. help with pick up from school and babysitting); childcare during school holidays, ideally within the building or on campus; and parking spaces for parents who cannot use the bike (for health or organizational reasons). A respondent also wished for a work environment favourable to bringing children to work on days where childcare is not possible.

Respondents also mentioned some of the difficulties they were facing: the challenge of organizing care for children who fall ill and have to stay at home during the day; the impossibility to carry travel funds into next years, despite the fact that fieldwork or business trips with a small child is often very difficult; the impossibility to extend the project duration in case of parental leave; the complexity of the procedure allowing to combine work travel and family holidays, and the lack of dual career support for postdocs.





### 2.3.2. Infrastructure

Two amenities have been put in place to serve CRC researchers with care responsibilities - a children's corner and laptops to borrow. The "children's corner" is located in meeting room 7.4500. CRC members can work in it while their child(ren) play or (a) child(ren) can play there under the supervision of a babysitter. Possible meetings in the room come second to childcare needs, but please always inform someone from the CRC administration (Project Z) immediately when you use or plan to use the room, so that those who possibly reserved it can be informed. The room has a small table and chair and several toys which have been financed by the university.

In addition to facilitating childcare responsibilities within CRC premises, three laptops for flexible office work have been bought. They can be used for home office on days when your child(ren) or the person(s) you care for is/are sick, kindergarten/day care centres are closed or any other emergencies coming up. To borrow an EOC laptop, please contact Dr. Anna Sauter. Laptops may also be used to work in the workspace for parents in room 7.4500.

### 2.3.3. Student assistants

Furthermore, the EOC established a funding scheme allowing colleagues with care responsibilities to hire student assistants for their own needs. For the first funding period from January to June 2020, 314 student assistant hours were granted to six colleagues. The applicant chooses how to allocate the hours within a six-months timeframe. There will probably be a second call in April for the period from July to December 2020. Applications are assessed by the EOC depending on the number of applicants, available funds, and the particularities of each individual case.

### 2.3.4. Childcare

In terms of supporting CRC researchers with care responsibilities, the EOC financially contributes to the infrastructure of Uni KLEX and finances individual and collective childcare.



On the initiative of a group of researchers with care responsibilities and coordinated by the *Referat 04 Chancengleichheit*, the purpose of Uni KLEX is to offer individual flexible childcare for early career researchers outside regular working hours, collective childcare during conferences, childcare support during business trips, support for finding child caregivers, and provision of toy boxes and mobile child rooms. The services offered by Uni KLEX are available to all PhD candidates, postdoctoral researchers and junior professors of the university. The university provides 5.000 EUR per annum for flexible childcare for this three-year pilot project that started in May 2019. This budget is supplemented by funds from DFG-funded projects, including the CRC. Independent of the funding source, all parents can receive up to 200 € per family per year for individual childcare. Uni KLEX has set up a pool of twelve students with childcare experience available to babysit.

DFG-funded research projects like the CRC are supported by Uni KLEX when offering collective childcare during events. CRC researchers who receive CRC funds for individual childcare outside of business hours have to arrange the details and financing with Uni KLEX. The *Referat 04 Chancengleichheit* handles childcare requests, organises babysitters, provides advice, information material and invoice documents. Each DFG programme contributes to Uni KLEX's infrastructure (student assistant, marketing material, etc.) via the pooling fund at the Equal Opportunities Office. The co-financing model has been approved by the DFG.

Besides Uni KLEX, the University of Bremen also introduced an emergency childcare programme, "Die Notfallmamas" (and Papas), in October 2019. Employees with children aged 0-12, including CRC researchers, can make use of this service in case of unforeseeable events such as sickness of a child if they face important work-related commitments.

Individual childcare also includes financing travel companions for breastfeeding women with children under 2 years on business trips. If project funds for the companion are not available, the EOC can examine and probably cover these costs.



#### 2.4. EOC expenses 2019

7.161 €	Co-funding of personnel within the Referat 04 Chancengleichheit
799 €	Trainings for EOC members
915 €	EOC Student assistant
3.849 €	Workshops Self-Presenting and Leadership
2.251 €	Conference travels for women researchers
86 €	Individual Childcare through KLEX
3.744 €	Three Laptops
469 €	Support for business travels with small children
19.275 €	<i>Total</i>

### 3. The state of equal opportunities at the CRC

#### 3.1. Family-friendly hours

To improve working conditions within the CRC, the EOC advocates to abide by family-friendly meeting hours. Meetings ending in the late afternoon should no longer be the rule, but exceptions. They are challenging for researchers with care responsibilities, as childcare institutions and schools close in the afternoon. Meetings planned in the afternoon are a structural problem for researchers with care responsibilities, who have to leave before the end of such meetings to pick up children from schools/childcare. The EOC put the topic on the agenda and on 12 November 2018 the CRC Board decided that CRC meetings and events should generally end no later than 16.00. This timeframe stems from the answers to the questionnaire prepared by the EOC for researchers with care responsibilities. A large share of CRC-researchers has part-time working contracts.

During the last assembly of CRC researchers with care responsibilities held on 27 January 2020 discussions revealed that 16.00 was still a challenging timeframe and therefore the EOC would recommend to end all CRC events no later than 15.30, a recommendation we will formulate during the upcoming Board meeting. If meeting after 16.00 cannot be avoided, the EOC can



finance collective childcare for all attending CRC members with care responsibilities or CRC researchers can use Uni KLEX for individual babysitting. Despite those options, the EOC generally recommends to avoid events ending late. Moreover, whenever it comes to our attention that an event is held after 16.00, we approach the organizers to discuss the possibility of moving it earlier.

### 3.2. Gender balance at CRC events

The *Jour Fixe* lecture series is jointly organized by the CRC, SOCIUM, and BIGSSS, and each institution suggests speakers for the series. Since October 2018 and until January 2020, fourteen *Jour Fixe* presenters were men and only two were women. The EOC raised the issue of a necessary gender balance of *Jour Fixe* presenters twice before the Board, and suggestions for women speakers have been made by providing a list of possible female experts.

### 3.3. Gender repartition of the CRC

The following statistics and figures refer to researchers employed since the beginning of the CRC as of the end of 2019. Not all of them are still employed within the CRC. Since no data is available concerning non-binary people, we are only able to speak of the share of male versus female personnel. Two female positions in “Aufstockungen und Stellenfinanzierungen zu Konferenz und Workshopkoordination” have been left out as they are employed by the University of Bremen and not the CRC. All in all, eighty-five people have been considered. The gender repartition is detailed below for all academic staff, per pillar and career status (see Images).

In total, there is a slightly larger share of female personnel over male personnel. Women account for an overwhelming majority of administrative personnel (six women to one man) as well as for a slight majority of doctoral researchers and postdocs. However, there are three more male than female project directors overall (Image 2). Image 3 and 4 show that in the A pillar, there are overall more male researchers, in particular due to the higher share on post-doctoral and project director level. In the B pillar, female researchers make up a larger share, most evidently on the doctoral level.

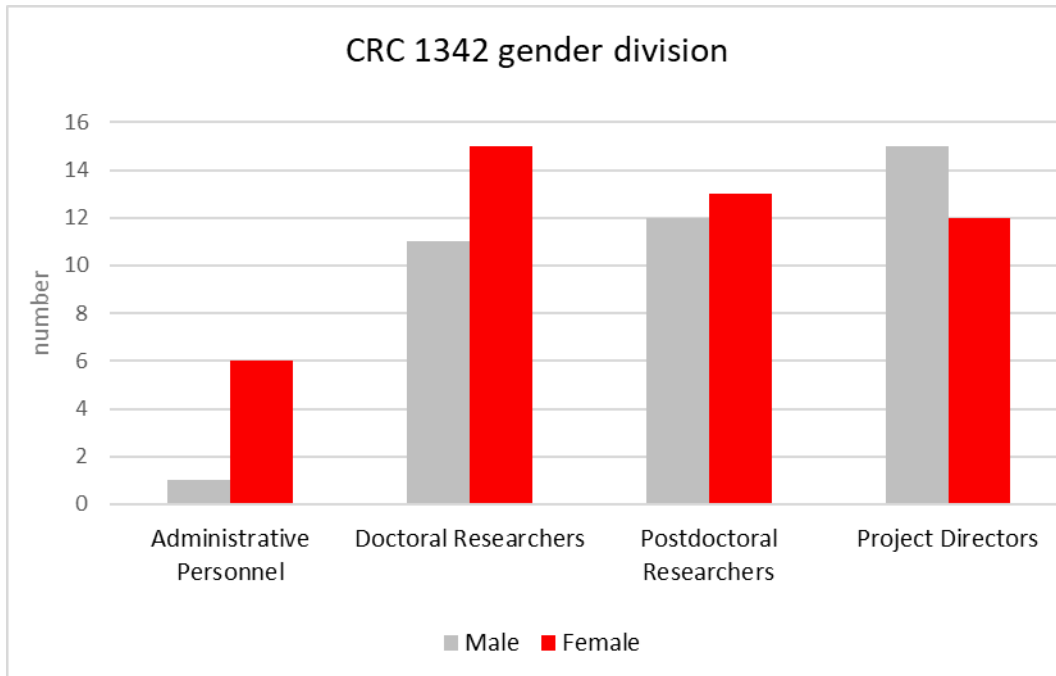


Image 1. Gender division of the CRC 1342 according to status

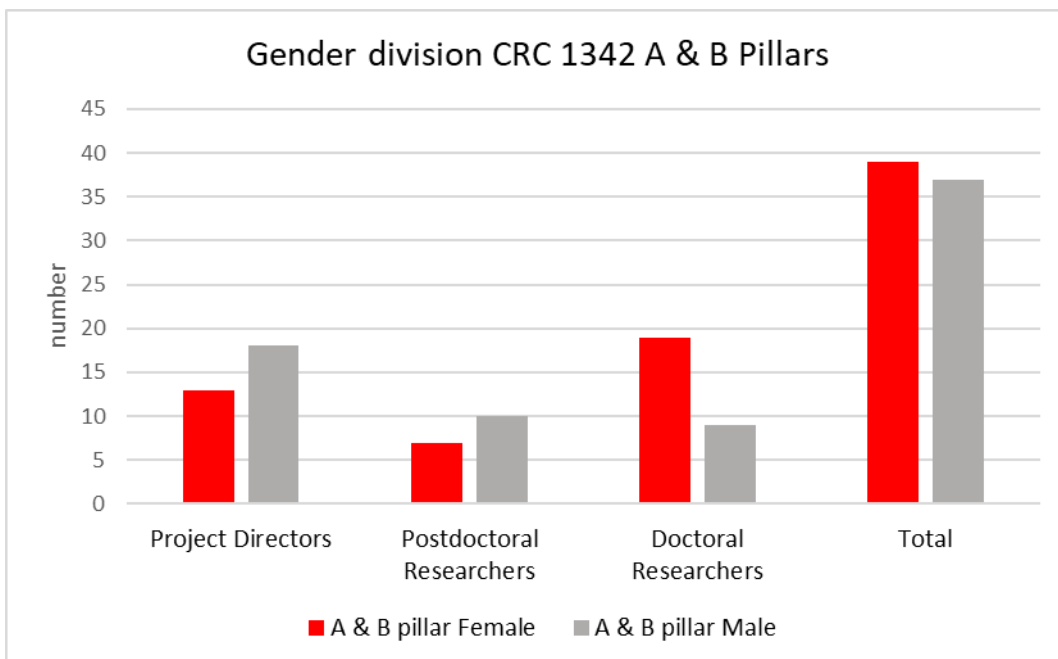


Image 2. Gender balance CRC 1342 within both pillars<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Two female postdoctoral researchers left in 2018 and 2019.

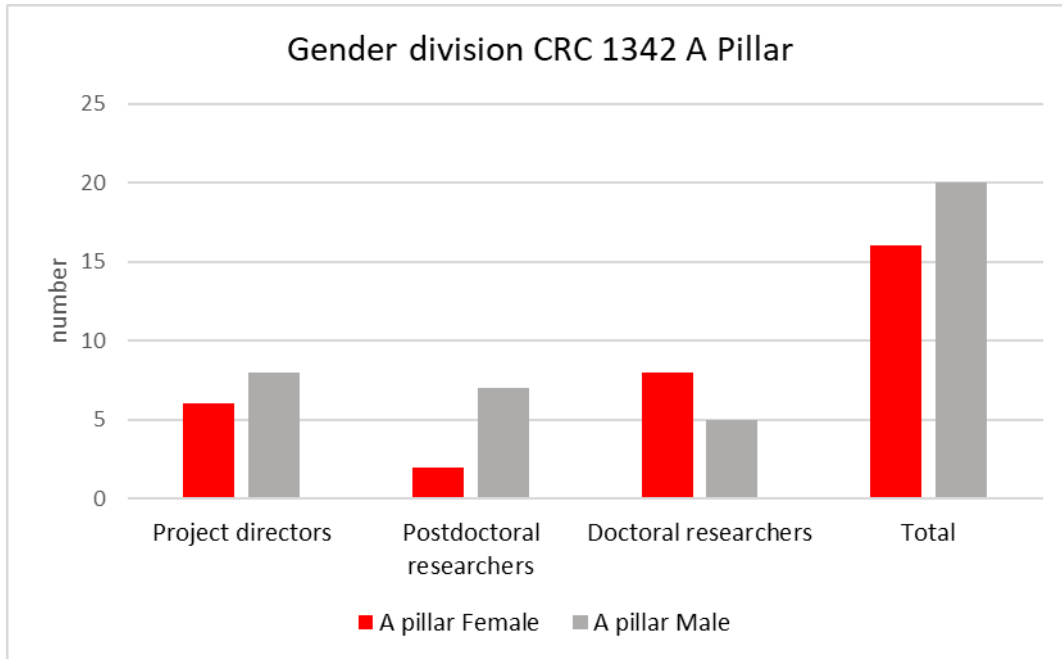


Image 3. Gender balance CRC 1342 within pillar A

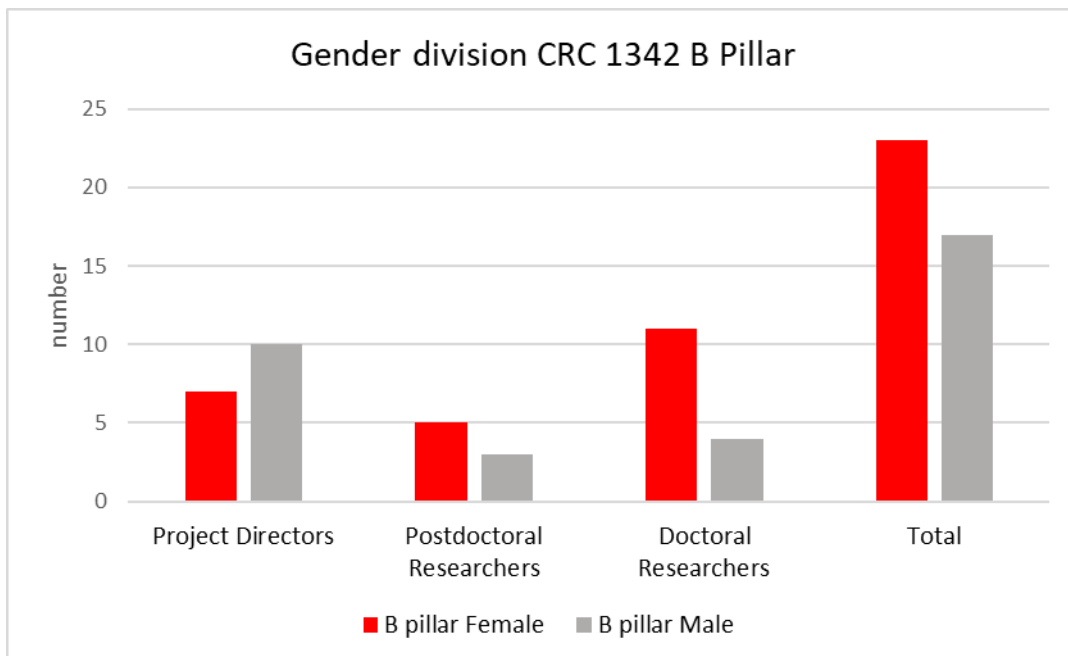


Image 4. Gender balance CRC 1342 in pillar B



## 4. EOC members and contact

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In case you have a more general request related to the CRC, please contact Dr. Irina Wiegand (CRC 1342 Managing Director) [iwiegand@uni-bremen.de](mailto:iwiegand@uni-bremen.de).