An (epidemiological) glossary of a female research career

Vera R. Mitter, PhD

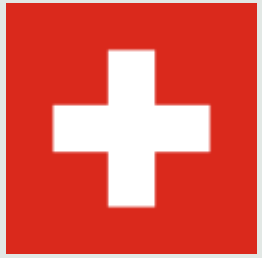
HOW MY LIFE CHANGED

November 2023

- Lived in Norway
- Postdoc at the University of Oslo, PharmaSafe
- Perinatal Pharmacoepidemiology
- Fixed-term Contract

November 2024

- Living in Switzerland
- Head of Research Group at Bern University of Applied Sciences
- Midwifery
- Permanent Contract



Your body - my choice

Equal rights? Americans w
vote for a man who talks like a maniac
than a woman

CDU politician questions women's right to vote - if they vote for Habeck

BIAS

SELECTION BIAS

/sɪˈlɛkʃən ˈbaɪəs/

occurs when individuals or groups in a study differ systematically from the population of interest leading to systematic error

INFORMATION BIAS

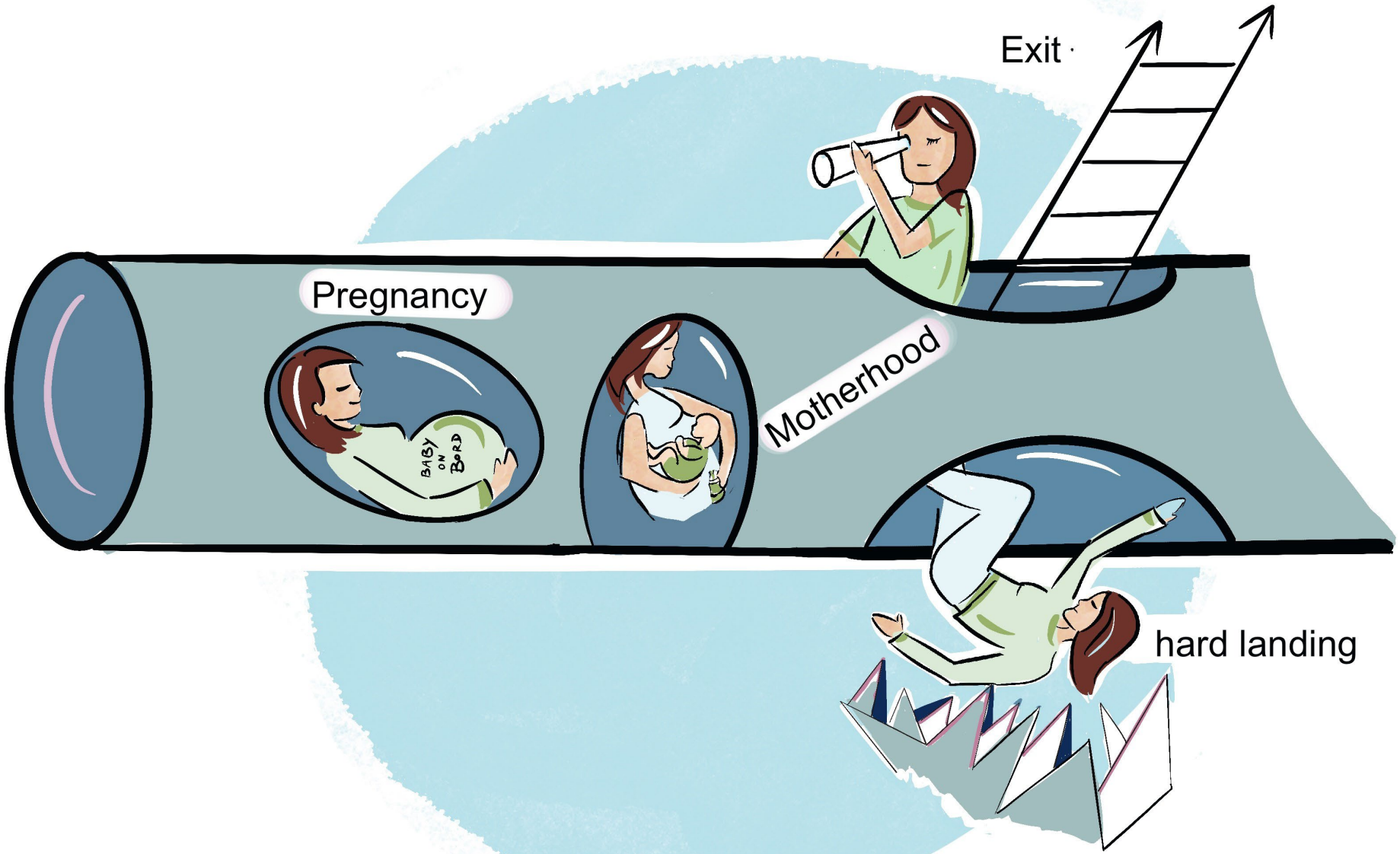
/ˌɪnfəˈmeɪʃən ˈbaɪəs/

Arises from systematic differences in the collection, recall, recording or handling of information

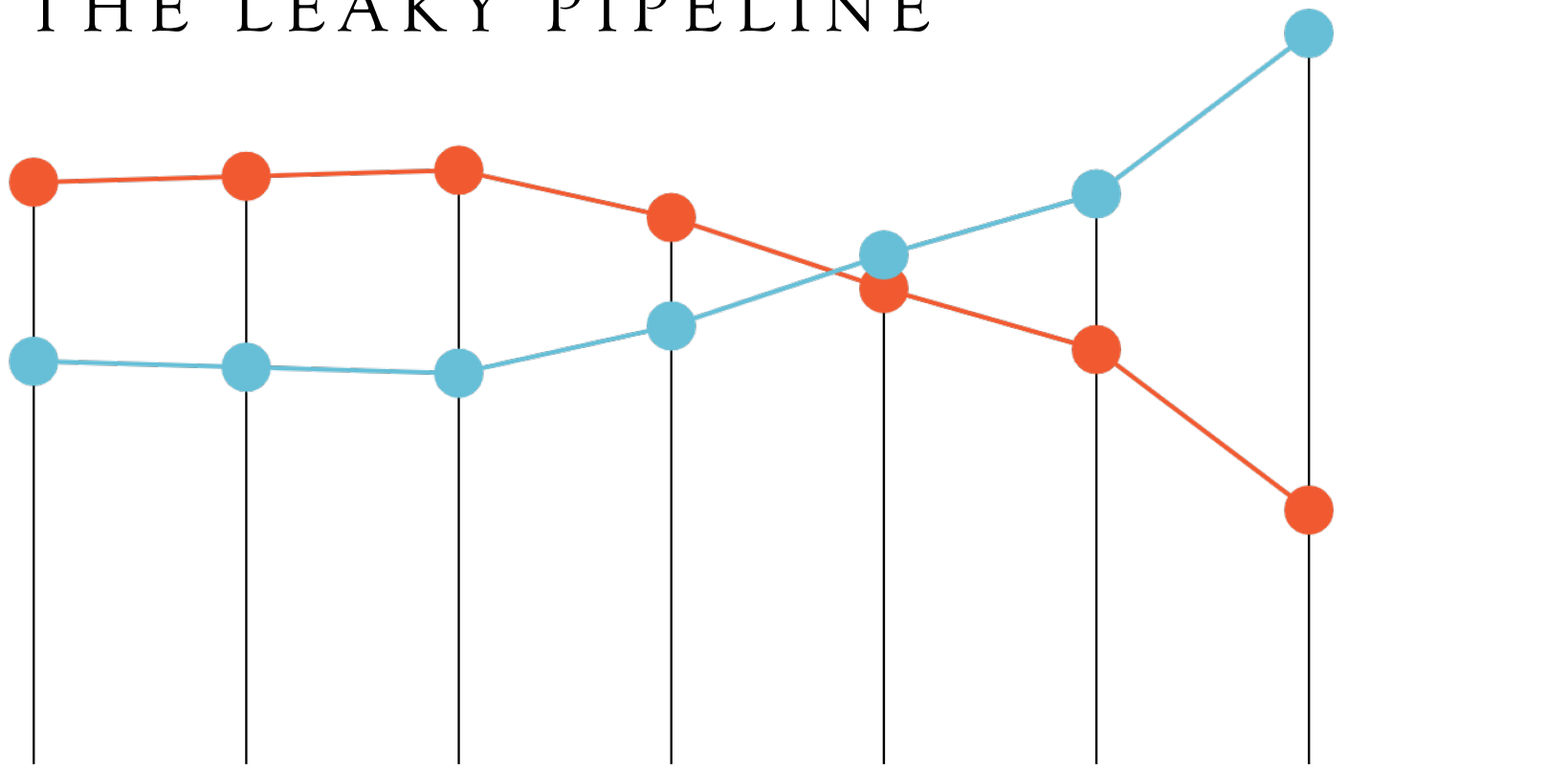
ATTRITION BIAS

/əˈtrɪʃən ˈbaɪəs/

Unequal loss of participants


Exit
Pregnancy
BABY ON BORD
Motherhood
hard landing

THE LEAKY PIPELINE



Eintritte*	Studierende*	Abschlüsse**	Doktorate	Postdokto-rierende	Assistenz-professuren	Professuren***
59.1%	59.7%	60.3%	55.5%	48.3%	42.1%	25.8%
40.9%	40.3%	39.7%	44.5%	51.7%	57.9%	74.2%

Universität Zürich[UZH]

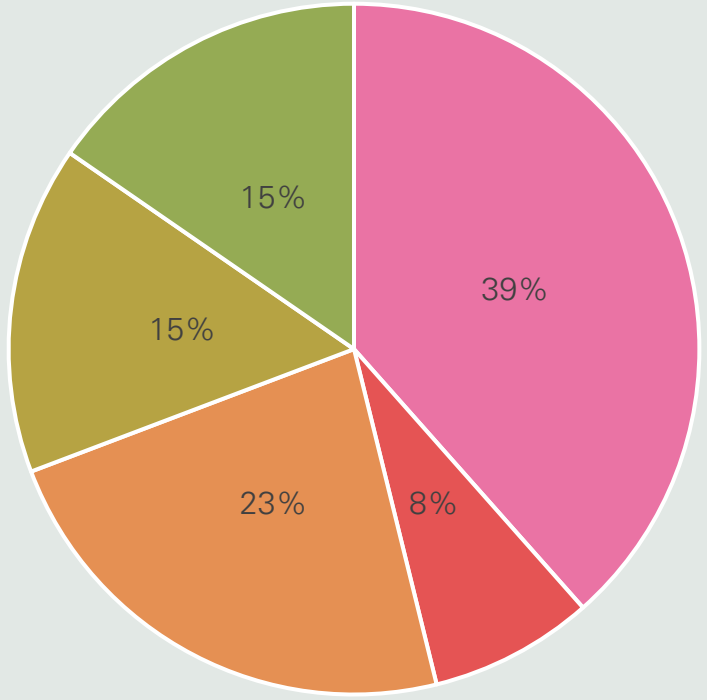
CASE STUDY

/keɪs ˈstʌdi/

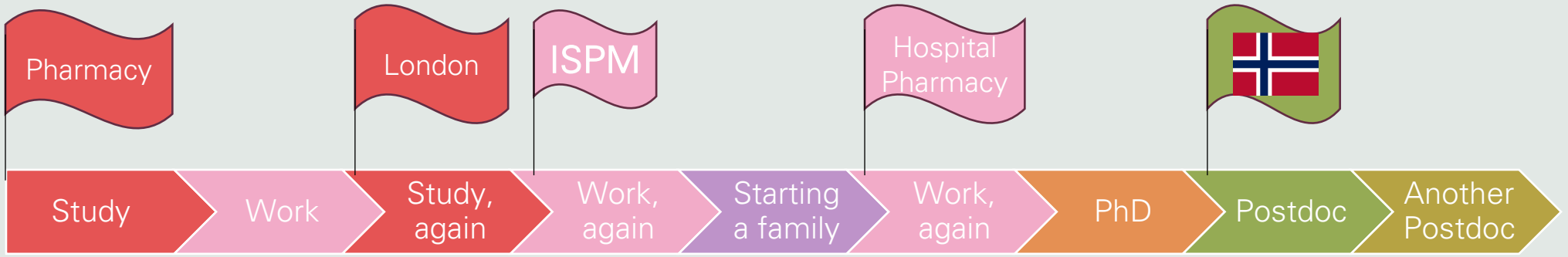
A study of a specific subject, commonly used in social, educational, or clinical research

Disclaimer: The situations presented were experienced by women in academia.
While some may not be seen as very severe, they might still trigger others.

MY ACADEMIC TRAINING



CAREER PATHS



UNCONCIOUS BIAS

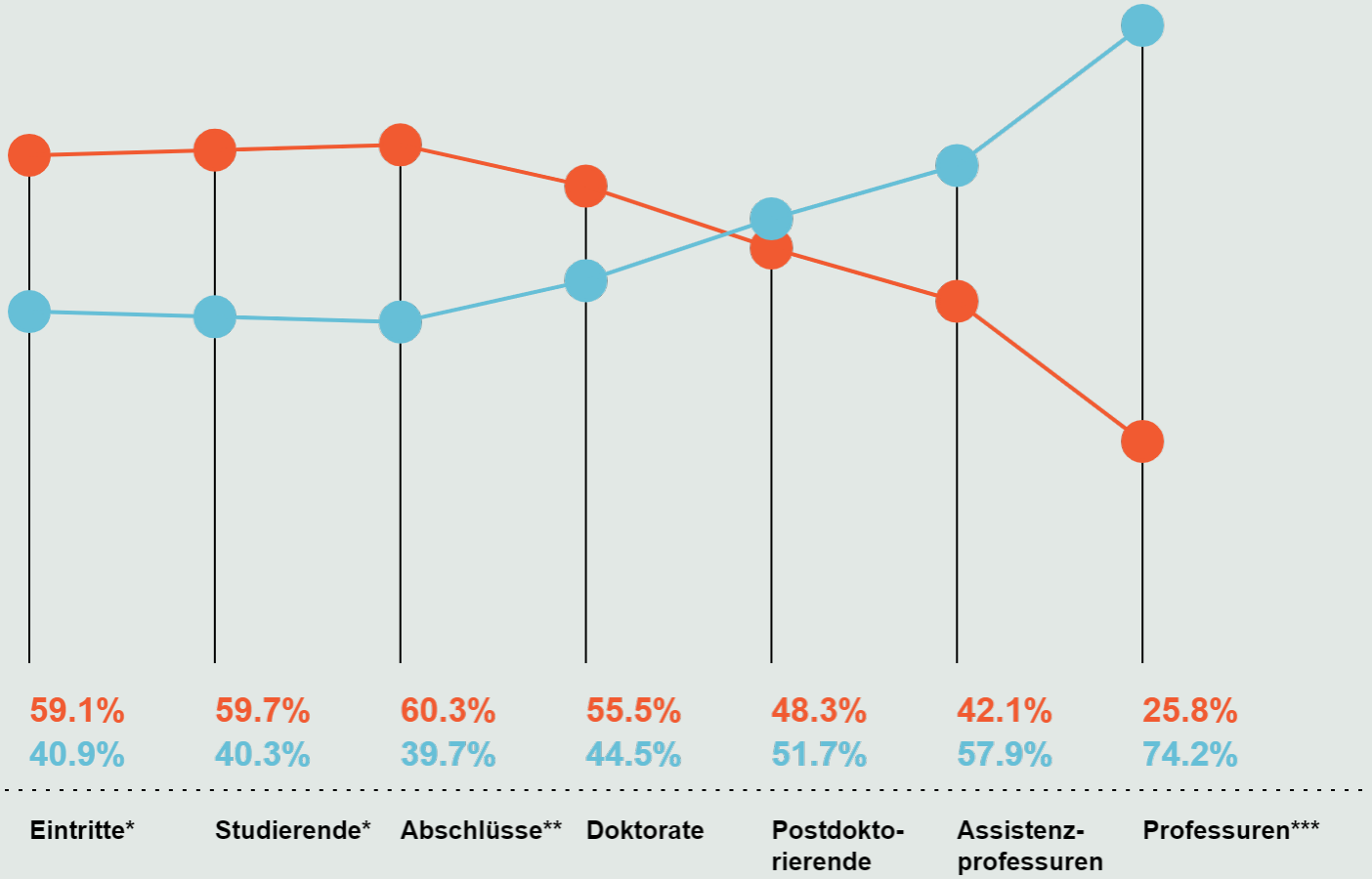
/ʌnˈkɒnʃəs ˈbaɪəs/

Unconscious forms of discrimination and stereotyping based on personal characteristics

It is about me!
It is MY fellowship
SNF!
ME!
Norway?
Has your
husband
a new job?

THE LEAKY PIPELINE

What happens before?



EDUCATION BIAS

/ˌɛdʒʊˈkeɪʃən ˈbaɪəs/

oversimplified beliefs or expectations based on assumptions and preconceptions in educational settings.

Don’t lie to your classmate! For sure you study hard!
I just love and understand it easily. I don’t do anything…
Why are you so strong in mathematics?

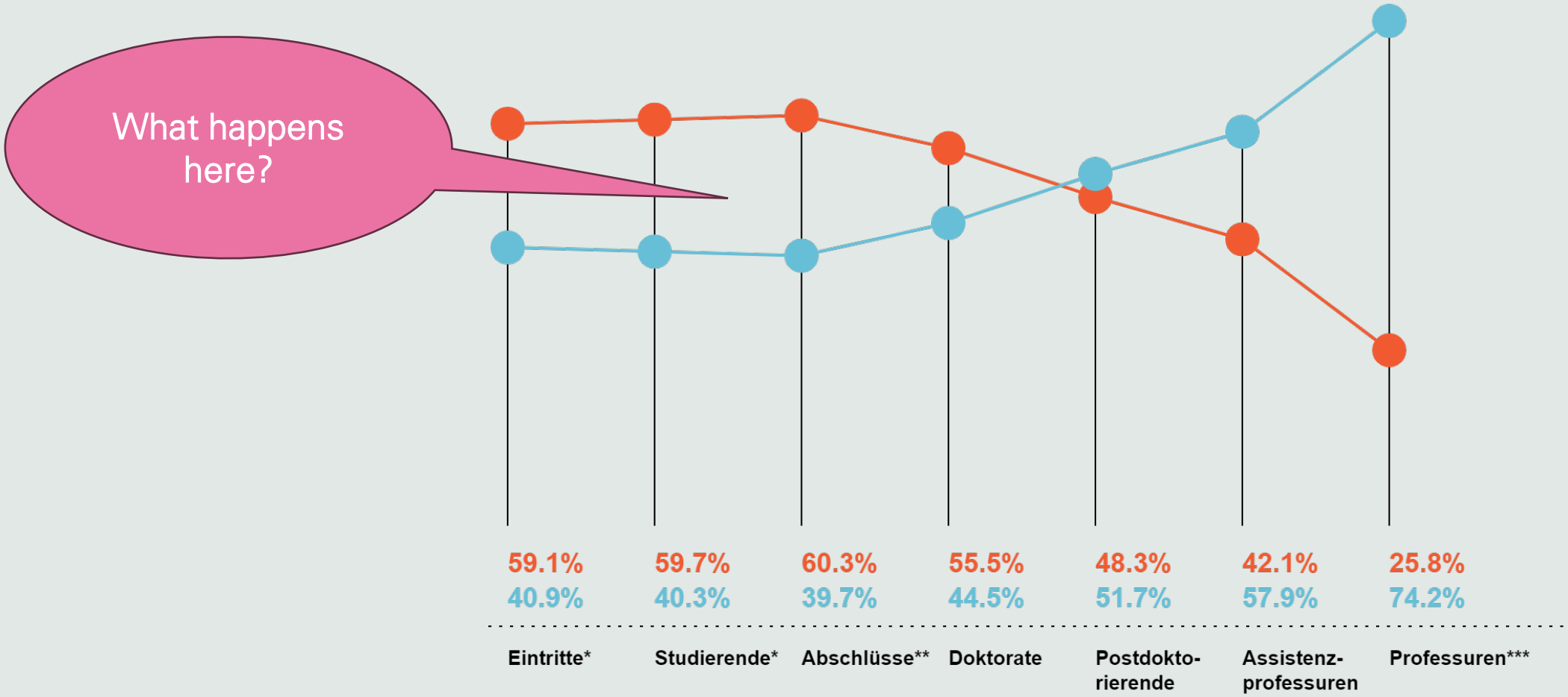
SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS

/səˈsaɪətəl ˌɛkspɛkˈteɪʃənz/

norms and beliefs that a society holds about how individuals should think, behave, and perform based on their roles, gender, age, or other characteristics.

I plan to study pharmacy
O you will become an academic drawer puller
O great, this is a super Job to work part time once you have kids!
O isn‘t it too difficult?

THE LEAKY PIPELINE



Abo Grosse Umfrage

Die meisten Studentinnen wollen lieber einen erfolgreichen Mann als selber Karriere machen

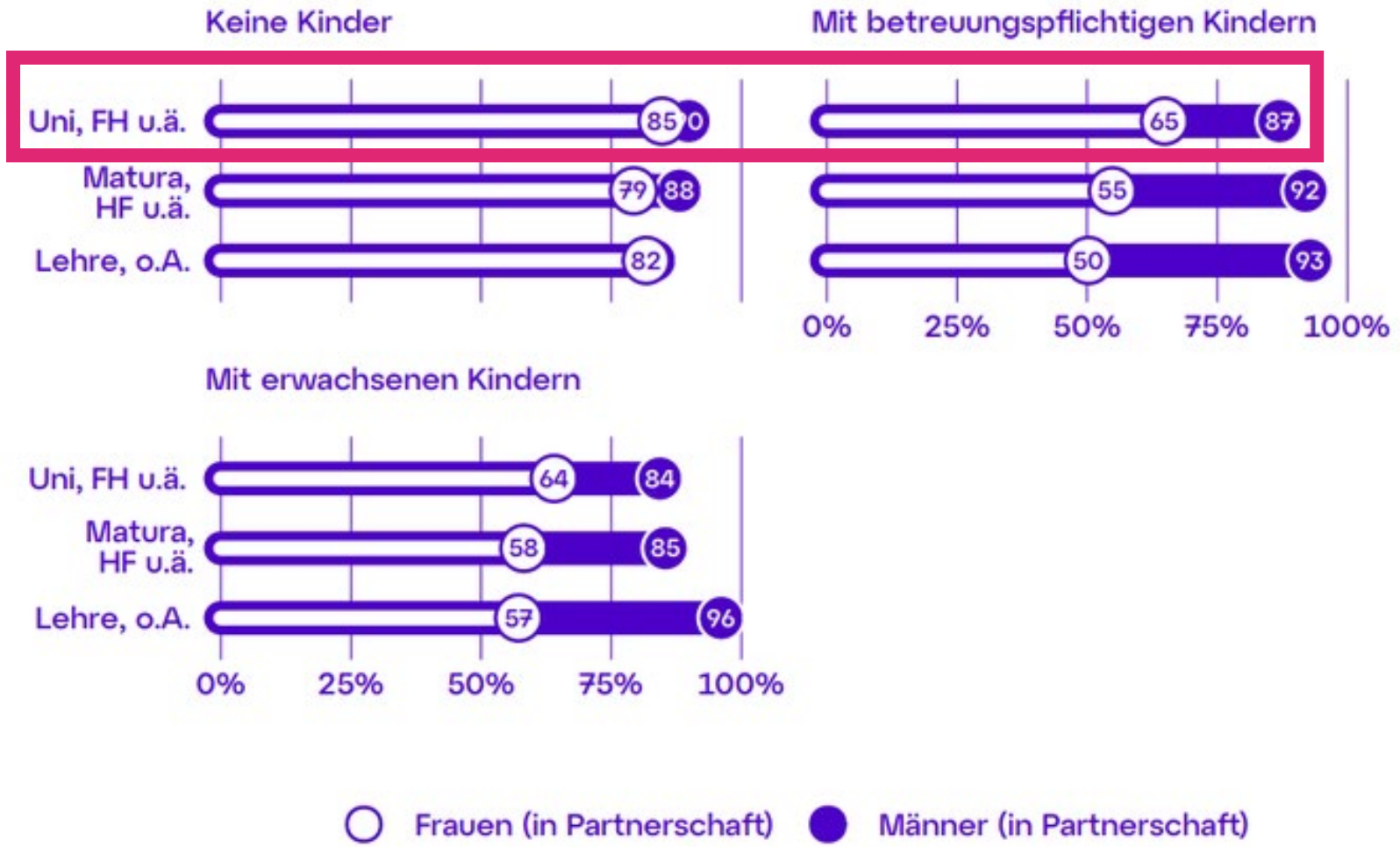
Zwei renommierte Forscherinnen haben 10'000 Studierende über ihre Ansichten zu Karriere, Familie, Partnerschaft und Diskriminierung befragt. Das Resultat verblüfft – und könnte die Debatte um die Gleichstellung verändern.

" Most female students would rather have a successful husband than make a career for themselves. "

Source: Sonntagszeitung, 6.5.2023, Rico Bandle

Erwerbspensen in Partnerschaften – nach Familiensituation und Bildungsniveau (Abb. 22)

Erwerbspensum der 18- bis 65-jährigen Erwerbstätigen und der Personen, die sich um die Haushaltführung kümmern. Einbezogen sind Personen, die mit Partner:in in einem gemeinsamen Haushalt leben. Dargestellt ist das arithmetische Mittel



Source: Watson, 10.5.2023, Corsin Manser; Teilzeitstudie Michael Herrmann, Sotomo

ROLE MODELS

/rəʊl ˈmɒdl/

An individual who positively shapes a student’s motivation by acting as a successful example.

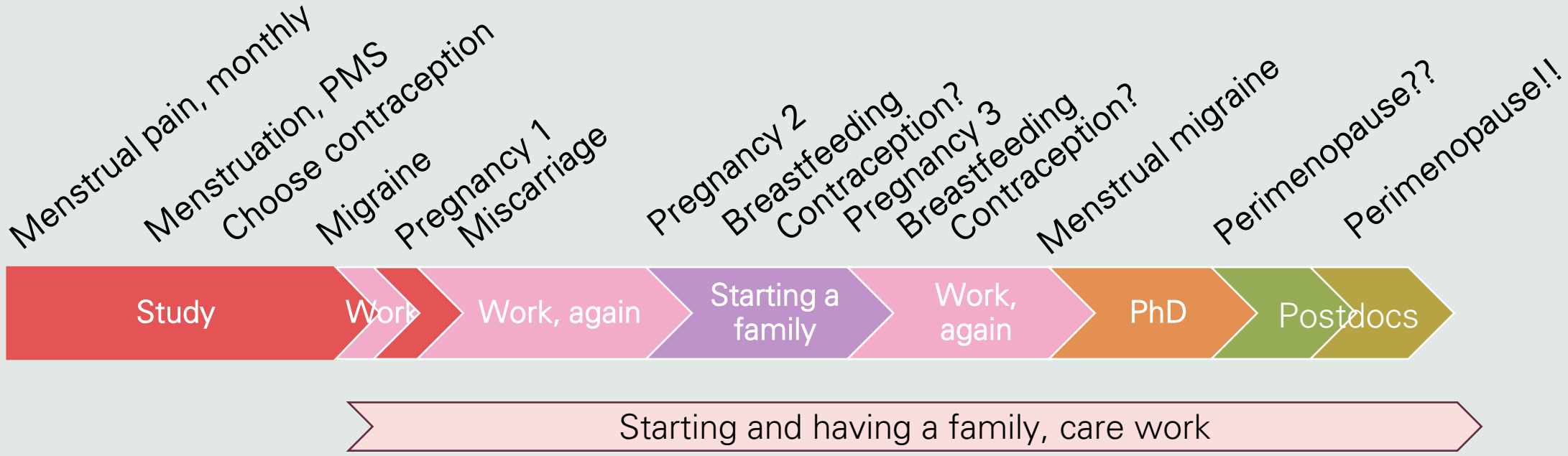
I have pregnancy complications, premature contractions!
What is your gestational week - 29? Oh, don’t worry, the baby will survive…

COMPETING RISK

/kəmˈpiːtɪŋ rɪsk/

The event which hinders or changes the possibility of observing the event of interest

FEMALE COMPETING RISKS



ANYTHING YOU CAN DO, I CAN DO

BLEEDING

PREGNANT

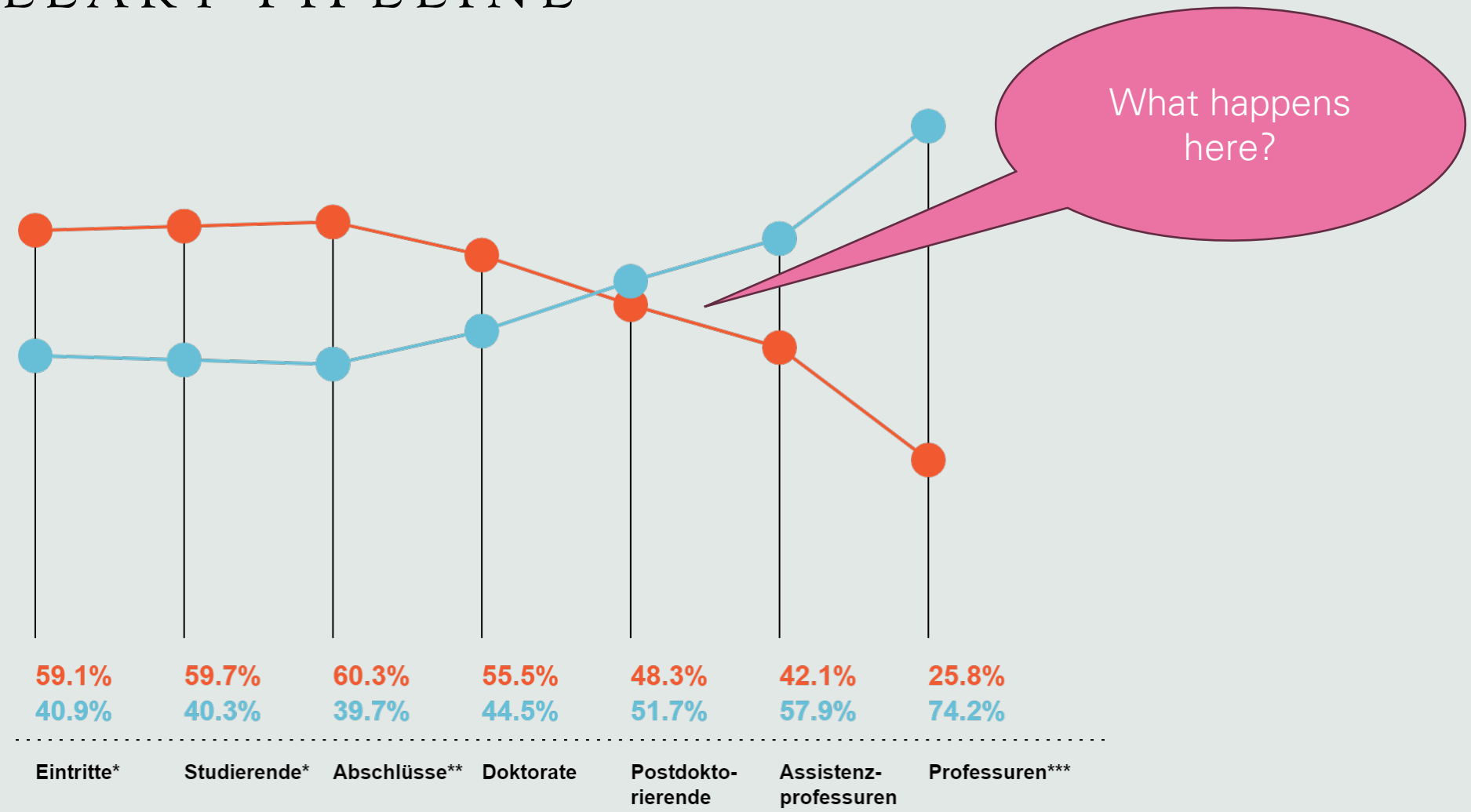
HAVING A MISCARRIAGE

HAVING ENDOMETRIOSIS

HAVING FERTILITY TREATMENT

I am pregnant
Ok, if you are too stupid to use contraception you should not do a PhD!

THE LEAKY PIPELINE

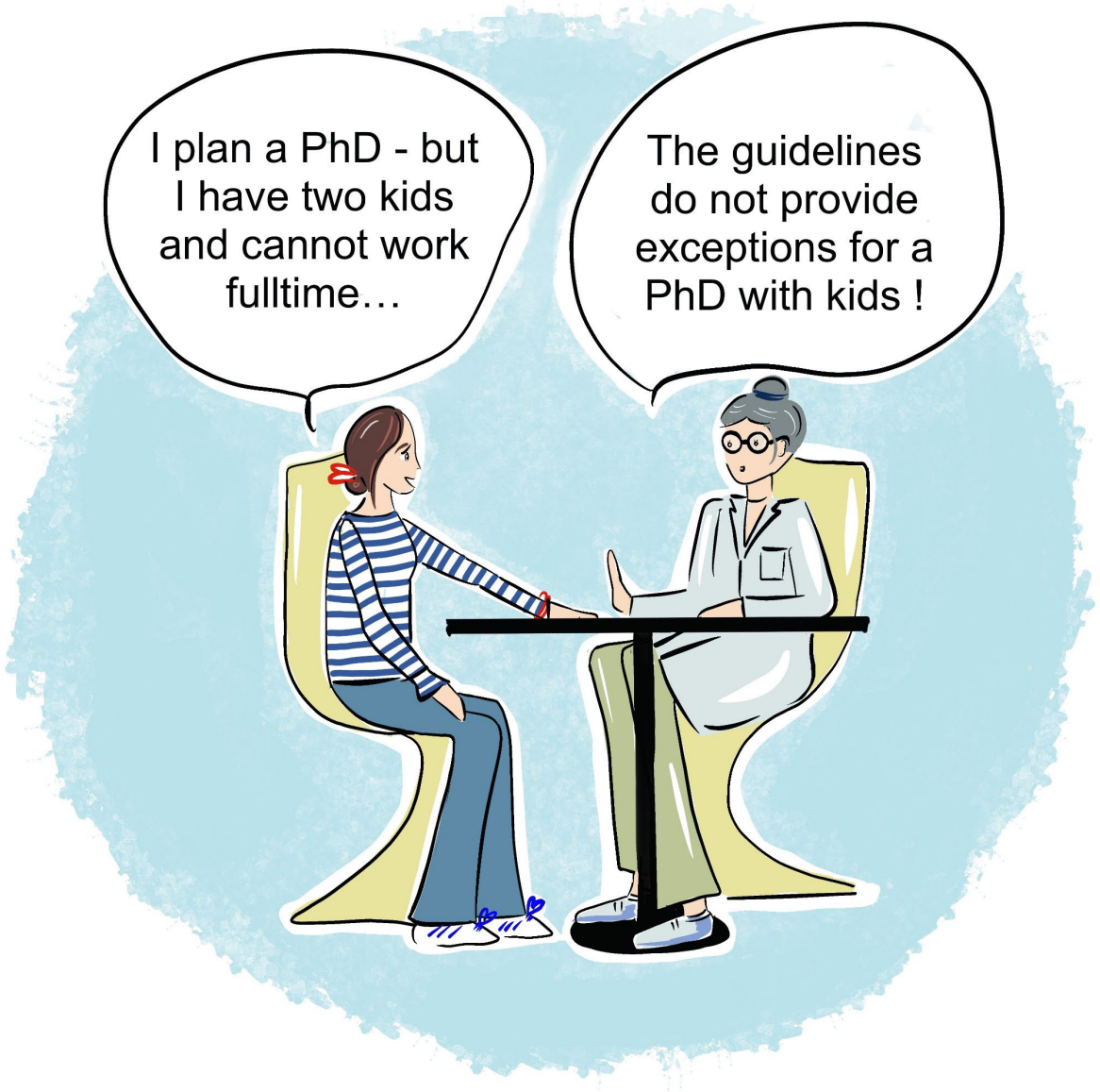


MOTHERHOOD PENALTY

/ˈmʌðərˌhʊd ˈpɛnəlti/

Systematic disadvantages that working mothers face

Economics Nobel Winner Claudia Goldin Highlighted "Motherhood Penalty" For Women


I plan a PhD - but I have two kids and cannot work fulltime…
The guidelines do not provide exceptions for a PhD with kids !

HOW MANY CHILDREN DO PROFESSORS HAVE?

	Female profe… (with/…	…s)
University of Basel		…a/na)
University of B…		394 (na/na)
Uni…		385 (na/na)
	…na/na)	532 (na/na)

GENDER DATA GAP

/ˈdʒɛndər ˈdeɪtə gæp/

Editorial von SonntagsBlick-Chefredaktor Gieri Cavelty über die Männerdominanz in der Wissenschaft

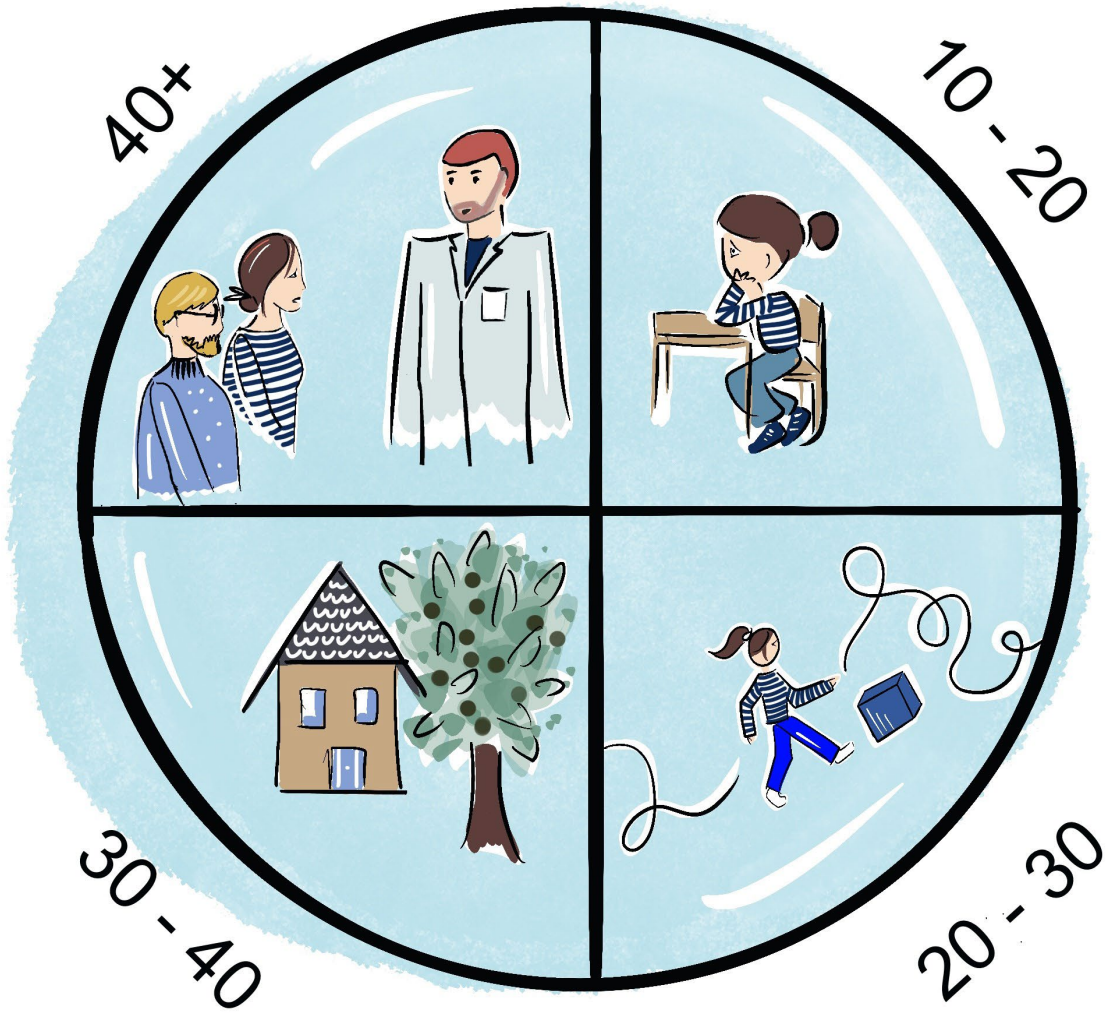
Frau, von Datenlücke verschluckt

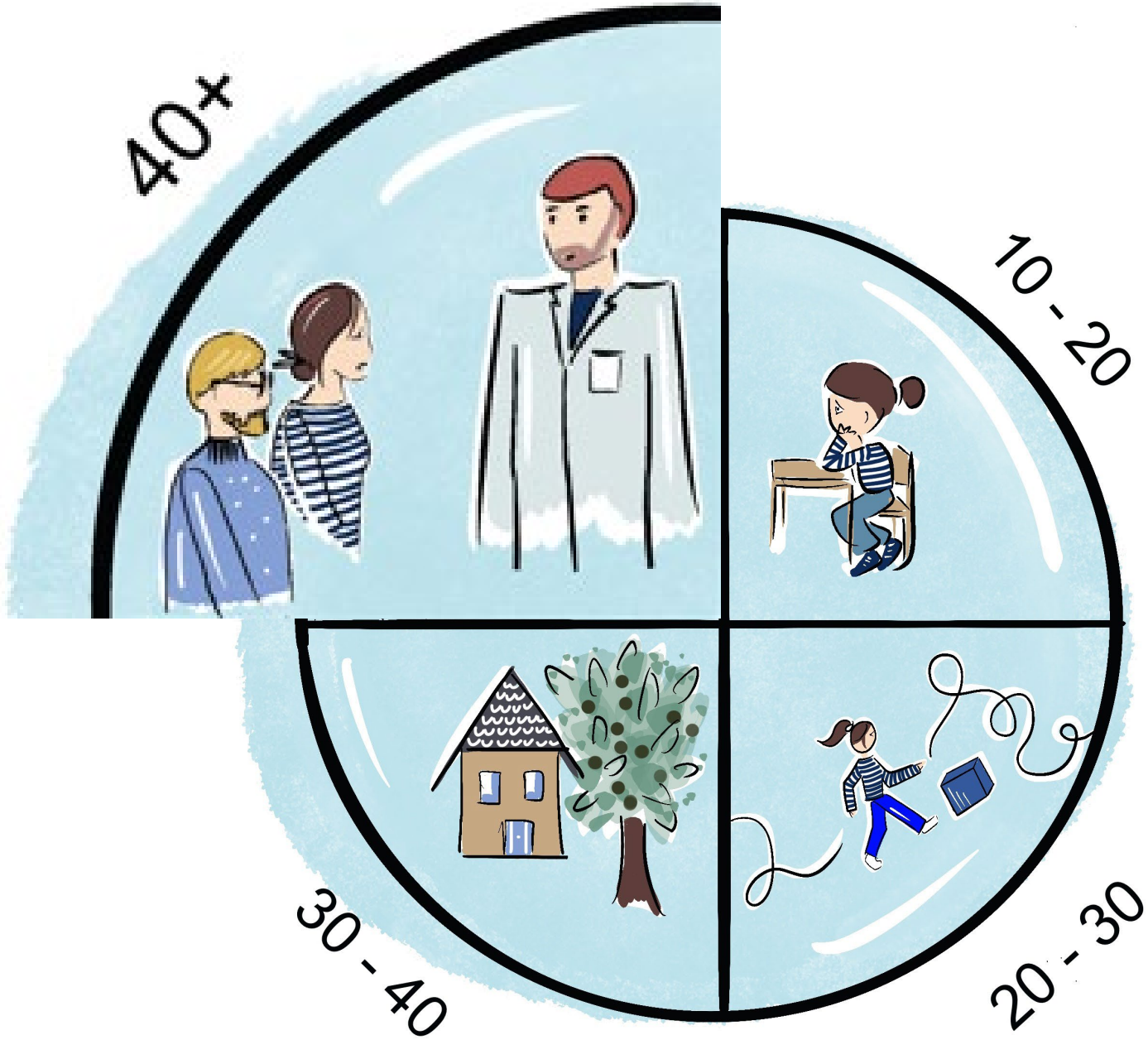
Source: Blick, 29.05.2022, Gieri Cavelty

RISK AVOIDANCE

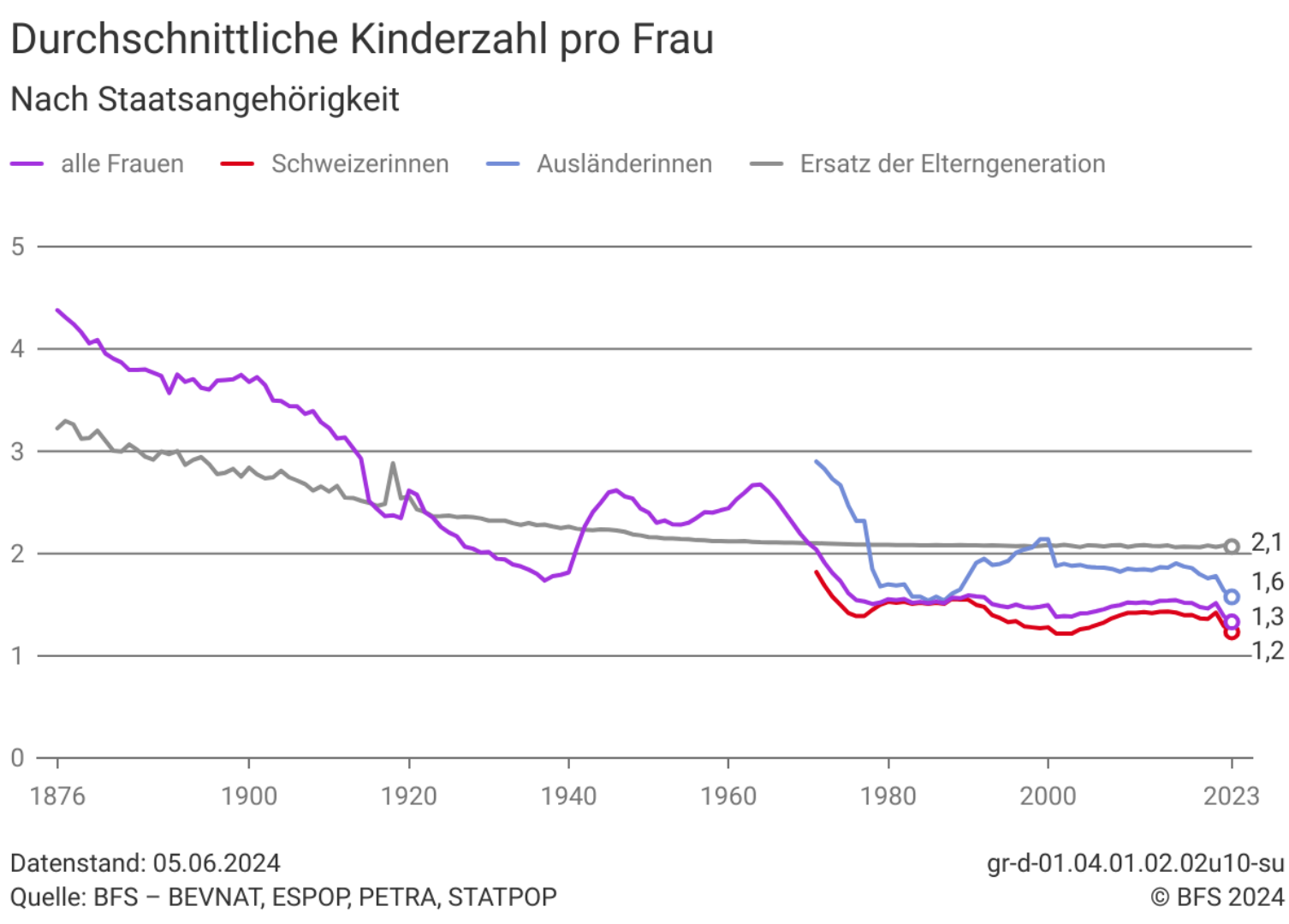
/rɪsk əˈvɔɪdəns/

avoiding actions or situations that could lead to potential harm or loss.


40+
10 - 20
30 - 40
20 - 30


40+
10 - 20
30 - 40
20 - 30

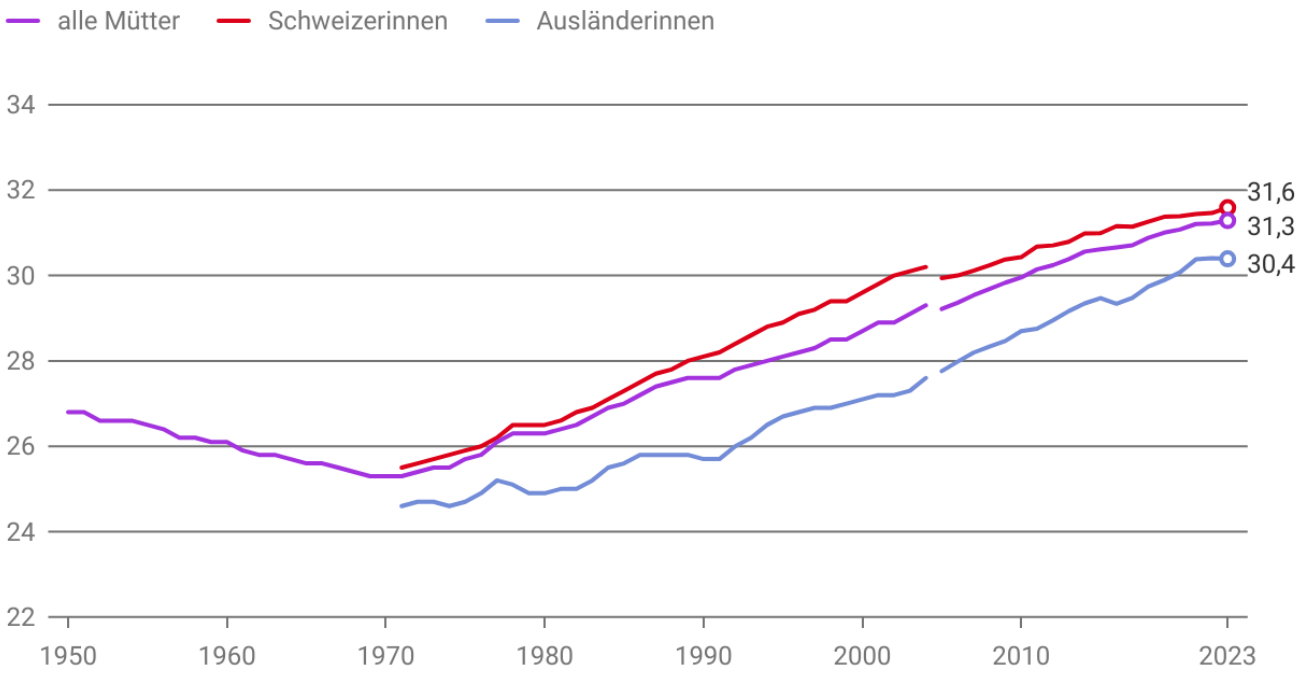
FERTILITY RATE



MATERNAL AGE AT FIRST BIRTH

Durchschnittsalter der Frauen bei Geburt des ersten Kindes

Nach Staatsangehörigkeit



Bruch in der Reihe: Bis 2004 stand nur das Durchschnittsalter verheirateter Frauen bei Geburt des ersten Kindes zur Verfügung. Ab 2005 ist das Durschnittsalter aller Frauen bei Geburt des ersten Kindes, unabhängig von ihrem Zivilstand, dargestellt.

Datenstand: 05.06.2024
Quelle: BFS – BEVNAT, ESPOP, PETRA, STATPOP

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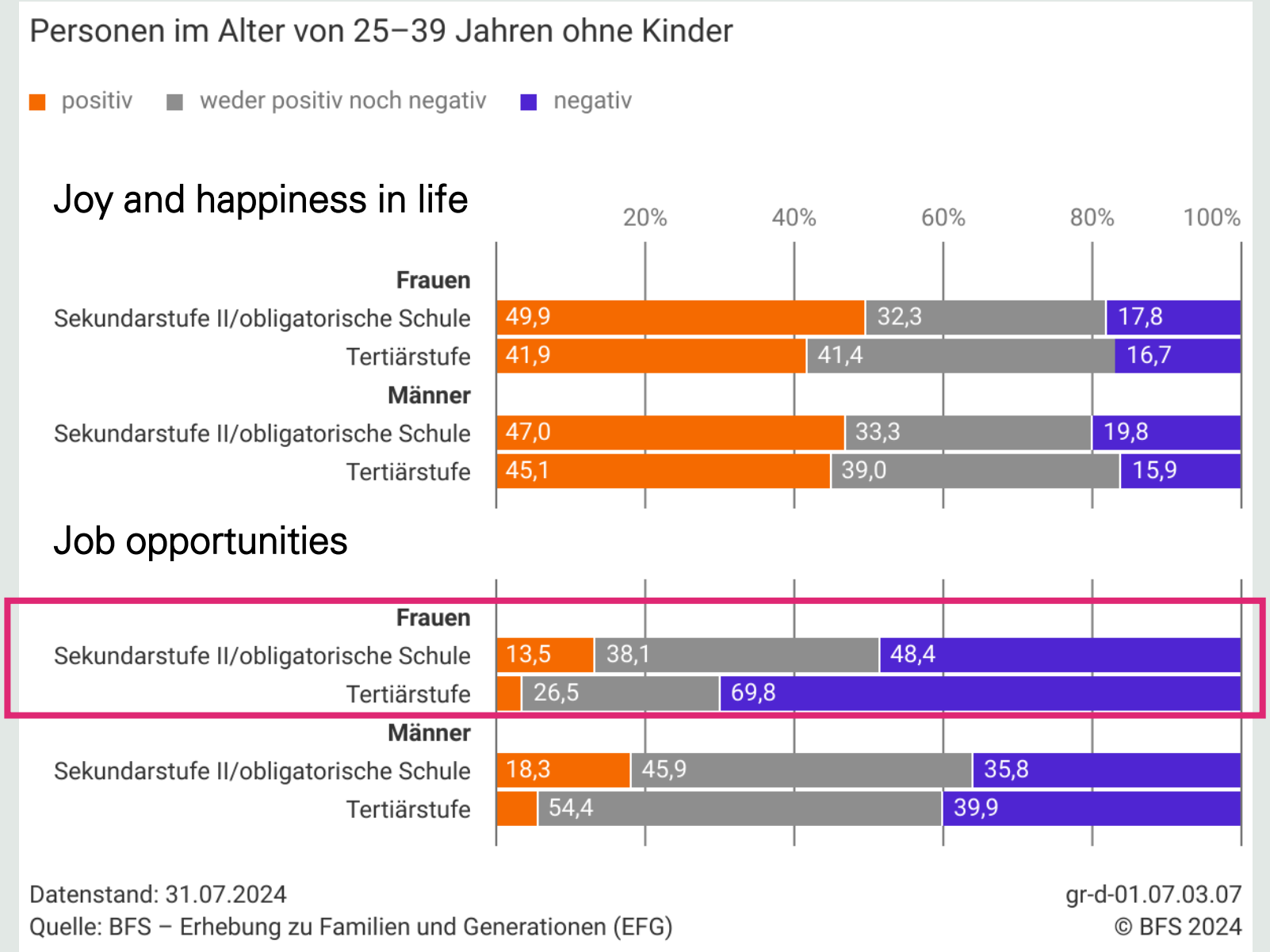
HOW WOULD THE BIRTH OF A CHILD AFFECT...



MENTAL LOAD

/ˈmɛntəl ləʊd/

Invisible labour involved in managing a household and a family, typically on women’s shoulders

DOPPELBELASTET UND UNTERBEZAHLT?
jetzt streikts!
FRAUENSTREIK
14.6.19
WWW.SYNA.CH/FRAUENSTREIK
syna
2006 = 4 %
Hut = 9 %
2126 = 50 %
NOW
Kleiner

MICROAGRESSION

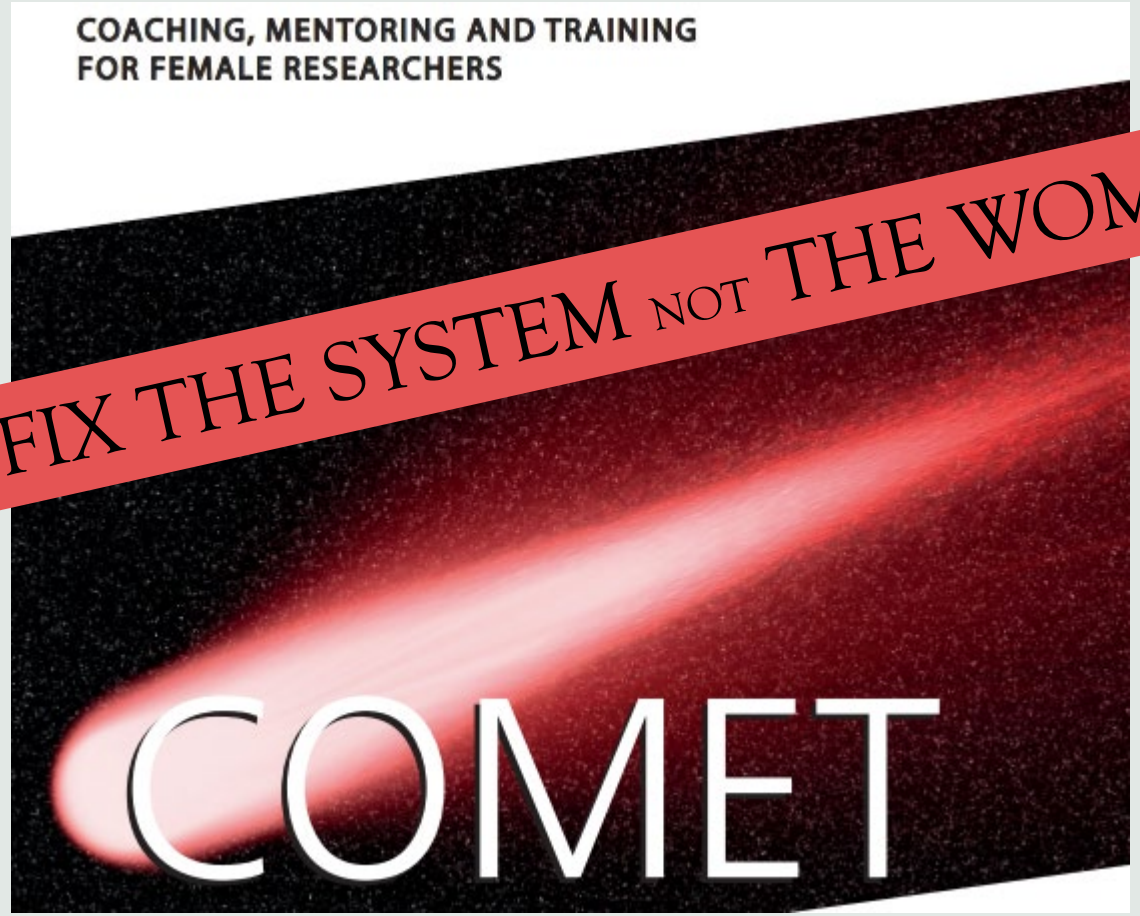
/ˌmaɪkroʊəˈgrɛʃən/

subtle, often unintentional comment or action that conveys bias or discrimination

I got a fellowship!
You? Really? I did not expect that…

CONCLUSION

WHAT SUPPORT DO WOMEN NEED?



FIX THE SYSTEM NOT THE WOMEN

MENTORSHIP

Developmental partnership in which knowledge, experience, skills and information are shared to foster the mentee's professional development

SPONSORSHIP

A person in a position of influence and power (access to networks and resources) who actively supports the career of a sponsee

LAUDATIO

During the PhD, Marcel was not only a Mentor in the Role of the Co-Referee but became more and more a Sponsor who actively supported my career path after the PhD.

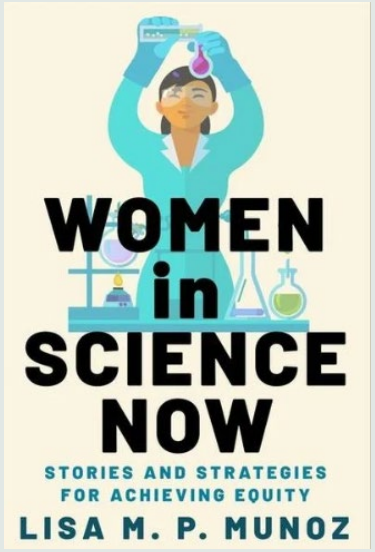
THANK YOU

Illustrations: Gabrielle Ceppi-Kleinert, gabrielleno55.jimdofree.com

The female academia project – send us your experiences (sketch), and we draw it for you!

vera.mitter@bfh.ch und gabrielle.ceppi@sunrise.ch

Further:



Podcast:

#ichbinHannah
#MatildaEffekt
#ichbinReyen