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**Abstract**

Concern continues to be expressed over women's difficulties in advancing their careers as academic scientists. Though some sciences may be numerically "feminised", few women reach the upper echelons of science. Scant attention has been paid to issues of the progression of women from non-traditional backgrounds, such as those from ethnic minorities, who may be particularly disadvantaged. What research there is indicates a variation between the sciences in terms of women's careers and patterns that are replicated globally. Explanations are now focusing on how the scientific culture itself acts as a barrier to women rather than on the notion that women themselves lack the requisite skills. The Athena Project is a policy response to this issue. Future research and policy needs to look more closely at differences between the sciences, how women from diverse backgrounds experience the academic labour market and epistemological connections between employment and engagement with the scientific agenda. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)