

# Sex and Gender integration in the Swiss Medical Curriculum (S&G integration)

Newsletter 7 – July 2024

Dear project partners,

Dear members of the Swiss Gender Health Network,

Dear colleagues,

We cordially invite you to take a few moments to read through this newsletter, hoping that our enthusiasm will be contagious.

Immersed in our tasks to continuously improve equality and equity, the pace at which these issues are being tackled sometimes seems (too) slow. And yet! It is clear that significant changes have already been achieved and are on-going regarding the integration of sex and gender into the medical education since 2020.

At a political level, the response from the Federal Council to the Fehlmann Rielle postulate includes numerous recommendations to improve women's health. In terms of research, submission of 140 (!) projects for the SNSF NRP 83 call has highlighted the broad interest in the topic of gender and health. In terms of education, visibility of our network has increased, providing excellent links between the various people and institutions involved.

Given what has all been achieved, we feel that the time is right to officially launch the Swiss Gender Health Network. The network has been operating informally since 2019 and has managed to gather more than 160 members from all over Switzerland. With its formalisation (election of a committee, definition of statutes), we hope to acquire financial support, allowing us to develop our objectives.

Thank you for your collaboration and your continued support during this adventure: we wish you happy reading!

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NEWS FROM THE **gems**  PLATFORM

Gender  
Education for  
Medicine in  
Switzerland



We will soon be expanding our resources to include education in nursing, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy, stay informed!

The GEMS platform is currently going through a period of stagnation. We need your course materials and support to expand our resources and to increase the platform's visibility and attractiveness.

Please spread the word and contact us if you wish to contribute to the GEMS platform: contact the [moderator](#) at your university or [virginie.schlueter@unisante.ch](mailto:virginie.schlueter@unisante.ch)

## NEWS FROM A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

### National Research Program on Gender Medicine and Health (NRP 83)

NRP 83 was launched simultaneously with three other NRPs. An impressive 140 proposals were submitted, making it the NRP with the highest number of submissions! The total funding requested is 72.8 million, while the project has a budget of 11 million. A total of 389 applicants contributed to the call, 65% of whom were women.

After the first selection, 32 projects were selected. The second evaluation stage will take place in autumn 2024. Ultimately, the Steering Committee will submit its project selection to the Research Council of the Swiss National Science Foundation for the final funding decisions. Start of the research phase is scheduled for the beginning of 2025.

Further information can be found [here](#).

## Postulate [19.3910](#). Women's health: For better consideration of their specificities. The report is now available!

In response to the 2019 postulate from Laurence Fehlmann Rielle, the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) has mandated the Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies in Bern (IZFG) and the Berner Fachhochschule (BFH) in August 2022 to prepare a scientific report. Drawing on this document, the Federal Council has launched its response to the postulate in May 2024. This response outlines many actions and recommendations to improve women's health. Focus lies on six main fields of interest: research, prevention, diagnosis, care, medical education, and professional environment.

You may access the reports here: [DE](#) / [FR](#) / [IT](#)

**Do not miss the presentation of the IZFG report by its authors on 19<sup>th</sup> September at 11am.** See the "Upcoming events" section below.

## Swissuniversities launches a new program: Equity

The program Equity - Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion at all levels of higher education - has a budget of CHF 20 million for 4 years (2025-2028). It aims to strengthen equal opportunities at all levels of higher education. Four action levels have been defined:

1. Operational level: involves measures to strengthen equity at the level of structures, staff and processes.
2. Mandate of services: promotes cooperation projects in research, teaching, initial and continuing training and services.
3. Third mission and School education context: aim to enhance the effectiveness of research and teaching through cooperation projects in these two action areas.
4. Exploiting potential aims to strengthen equal opportunities in terms of access to higher education for people who have fled their own country. This action line is planned and implemented in collaboration with the State Secretary for Migration.

The call for projects has just been launched and **the deadline for submission is 14 October 2024.** Find all information [here](#).

## Update of Swissethics recommendations

Sex and gender differences are often overlooked in research design, study implementation and scientific reporting, as well as in scientific communication in general. This omission limits the possibility to generalize research findings and their applicability to clinical practice, particularly for women but also for men.

To improve the situation and promote sex and gender equitable research, swissethics has issued [new recommendations on sex and gender](#) in research involving humans. It contains a checklist to guide researchers in drafting their documents, which will also be used by the members of the Research Ethics Committee to review all protocols and related documents.

## Swiss National Science Foundation: A new vision for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

The EDI vision of the SNSF defines three dimensions in which equality, diversity and inclusion are fostered. They are interdependent and will be pursued in parallel:

- Promotion of equal opportunities through fair and respectful work environments
- Constant improvement of the working culture through a diversity of personnel
- Optimisation of the processes through which knowledge is generated

The SNSF will draw up an action plan for implementation of the EDI vision and the related mandate in the course of 2024. For more information: [here](#)

## News from the "Sex and Gender Integration in the Bachelor Curricula of Nursing, Physiotherapy, and Occupational Therapy" project.

This project, funded by Swissuniversities, aims to raise awareness of sex- and gender-related healthcare issues within these three curricula and to build disciplinary skills that incorporate sex- and gender determinants.

Teaching content and tools are currently being developed. They will be validated by a group of experts and then made available to all the Universities of Applied Sciences involved. Ultimately, the educational content will be accessible to teachers via the GEMS platform.

For more information, please contact [marzia.borojevic@supsi.ch](mailto:marzia.borojevic@supsi.ch)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 10th September 2024. Forum on Sex and Gender in Medical Education, Research and Clinical practice, University of Lucerne, Hall 10.

This one-day of conference marks the end of the swissuniversities funding period and promises to offer insightful exchanges and interactive sessions as well as discussions on future collaboration. There will be keynote lectures, round table talks and workshops dedicated to the integration of gender perspectives in health and medical education as well as implications for practice.

**It is the perfect occasion for us to get together, work together and forge links between the various professionals in Switzerland who are interested in integrating sex and gender within medical education, research and clinical practice.**

- Expert discussions on the essential role of incorporating sex and gender perspectives in health and medical education
- Sharing of experiences between professionals from different disciplines
- Participation in a variety of practical workshops on sex and gender themes (clinical practice, research, teaching, mentoring)
- Networking opportunities with peers to explore future collaborations

**Do not miss this opportunity and register early!** More information and registration: [here](#)

### 10th September 2024. OFFICIAL LAUNCHING of the Swiss gender health network (SGHN)

To date, the SGHN includes 160 members interested in sex and gender issues, coming from all parts of Switzerland. After 4 years of informal activity, it has been decided to formalize the network in form of an association to support the development of new orientations by providing a committee and a strong structure. This will also help gaining visibility, financial support and promote the integration of sex and gender in health.

**The Constituent Assembly will be held on 10 September 2024 at the University of Lucerne, Hall 10, from 5.15pm to 6.30pm**, following the Forum. A remote connection will also be provided.

On this occasion, the Statutes of the association will be voted on and the representatives elected.

**Announce yourself if you wish to stand for election and do not miss this opportunity to contribute to the new association!**

More information : [here](#)

### 12th September 2024. Gendermedizin Tag. ETH Zürich.

Lectures, presentations, and a panel discussion will shed light on this area of medicine, which takes into account the fact that biological and socio-cultural differences between men and women influence health and illness.



As part of the BSc Human Medicine program, this topic will be addressed together with Medbase and discussed with renowned experts from the healthcare and teaching sectors. The event is primarily aimed at students on the ETH Human Medicine programme, specialists at Medbase, external specialists and students of pharmacy, physiotherapy and nursing sciences. It is also open to anyone interested in this field.

More information: [here](#).

### **19th September: Presentation of the IZFG report on Fehlmann Rielle postulate ([19.3910](#)).**

**Health disadvantages for women in the Swiss healthcare system: A Response to the Fehlmann Rielle Postulate.**  
Dr. Christine Bigler, Dr. Tina Büchler and Prof. Dr. Michèle Amacker, Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies, Bern.

IZFG was mandated by FOPH to draw this report to help the Federal Council respond to the Postulate.

Take this opportunity to hear the authors of the report present their key findings and recommendations on how to improve taking into account women's specificities!

[Join the Webex meeting](#)

**Join the meeting from the meeting link**

<https://chuv.webex.com/chuv/j.php?MTID=m4f7de57fd785708e4654dedd5936849d>

More information [here](#)

### **7th & 8th November 2024. Closing conference of the Program P-7 “Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunities in University Development (2021-2024)” – Kornhausforum, Bern**

The closing conference of the P-7 program will be opened on Thursday by swissuniversities with a focus on global perspectives.

Firstly, the political and institutional importance of the program will be highlighted.

The next part, "Transferring knowledge - dismantling barriers", is organized by the Think Tank Gender & Diversity - Forum of Swiss Universities, which will present the results and lessons learned from the P-7 projects before a discussion in different formats and from an intersectional perspective. The focus will be on the issue of the sustainable implementation of newly-generated knowledge and the elimination of the various barriers that hinder access to higher education and the pursuit of careers in teaching and research.

Program and information here : [DE](#) / [FR](#)

### **14th & 15th November 2024. Sex and gender disparities in pain. Kurs- und Kulturhaus, Aarau**

This is the **first conference to be organized in association with the Swiss Gender Health Network and the Swiss Pain Society**. As part of this congress, we invite you to share the latest knowledge on S&G in pain, in the presence of national and international experts from various disciplines. Together, we aim to reflect on the influence of S&G on pain and explore ways to integrate S&G dimensions in practice, research and teaching to improve patient care.

Abstract submission for poster presentations on Thursday and Friday is now open! Deadline for submission is July 30th.

More information and registration: [here](#)

## 20th November 2024. Women and Gender in Global Health. Swiss TPH Winter Symposium, Allschwil.

The importance of gender in global health is widely acknowledged and extends beyond women's health issues to global health equity. How can we address equity gaps and integrate gender considerations into policy, research and public health initiatives? We invite you to join experts from academia, public administration, international organizations, and the private sector as we share insights and brainstorm innovative solutions to improve the health and well-being of women around the globe.

More information soon under [www.swisstph.ch/events](http://www.swisstph.ch/events)

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## MORE ON SEX AND GENDER INITIATIVES

### Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in Sex and Gender-specific Medicine

The CAS in Sex and Gender-specific medicine reaches out to doctors and researchers alike on how sex and gender interact throughout life. All modules can be booked individually!

**For details on how to apply, check the website:** [www.gender-medicine.ch](http://www.gender-medicine.ch) or contact Vanessa Banz directly: [vanessa.banz@insel.ch](mailto:vanessa.banz@insel.ch)

### Press, media

To review the press requests received by the different institutions taking part into the project.

- **University of Zurich's** media interventions, can be accessed [here](#)
- **Health and Gender Unit, Unisanté**, Lausanne [here](#)
- **University of Geneva** [here](#)
- **University of Luzern** [here](#)

### Selection of scientific publications

**The prestigious journal Cell has produced a special issue dedicated to sex and gender.**

The journal *Cell* presents an [interdisciplinary focus issue on sex and gender in science](#). The issue explores the evolution of science's approach to understanding sex and gender—and how more accurate, precise, and inclusive approaches can lead to more rigorous scientific research.

It centers the voices of sex and gender minorities, historically excluded from scientific conversations about sex and gender. More [here](#)

### Articles from the project partners

[Reflexivity and positionality applied to medical practice: a study on implicit gender bias with medical students in a Swiss university.](#) Arena, F., Geiser, E., Auer, S. et al. *Int J Equity Health* **23**, 132 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-024-02222-3>.

[Impact of sex on clinical outcome in early Multiple Sclerosis.](#) Gottwald NS, Asseger S, Chien C, Brasanac J, Nauman AT, Rust R, Schmitz-Hübsch T, Strobl JB, Ruprecht K, Paul F, Regitz-Zagrosek V, Gold SM, Sperber PS. *Mult Scler Relat Disord.* 2024 Jun 29;88:105749. doi: 10.1016/j.msard.2024.105749. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38959589 **Free article.**

[Médecine et genre. Où sont les hommes ?](#) June 26th 2024 edition of the « Revue Médicale Suisse » on Gender and Medicine (in French): <https://www.revmed.ch/revue-medicale-suisse/2024/revue-medicale-suisse-880>.

[Sex differences in the SOFA score of ICU patients with sepsis or septic shock: a nationwide analysis.](#) Zimmermann T, Kaufmann P, Amacher SA, Sutter R, Loosen G, Merdji H, Helms J, Todorov A, Gebert P, Regitz-Zagrosek V, Gebhard C, Singer M, Siegemund M, Gebhard CE; Swiss ICU Trial group. *Crit Care.* 2024 Jun 27;28(1):209. doi: 10.1186/s13054-024-04996-y. PMID: 38937819 **Free PMC article.**

[Recipient donor sex combinations in solid organ transplantation and impact on clinical outcome: A scoping review.](#) Magyar CTJ, Gretener CP, Baldi P, Storni F, Kim-Fuchs C, Candinas D, Berzigotti A, Knecht M, Beldi G, Hirzel C, Sidler D, Reineke D, Banz V. (2024) Clin Transplant. 2024 May;38(5):e15312. doi: 10.1111/ctr.15312.PMID: 38678586.

[Gender/Sex Disparities in the COVID-19 Cascade From Testing to Mortality: An Intersectional Analysis of Swiss Surveillance Data.](#) Auderset D, Amiguet M, Clair C, Pittet V, Riou J, Schwarz J, Mueller Y, (2024). Int J Public Health, 21 May 2024. Volume 69 - 2024 <https://doi.org/10.3389/ijph.2024.1607063>.

[Removing barriers to address sex differences in anticancer drug toxicity.](#) Özdemir BC. Nat Rev Cancer. 2024 Mar;24(3):161-162. doi: 10.1038/s41568-023-00651-w. PMID: 38057354 No abstract available.

[Exploring the gender difference in type 2 diabetes incidence in a Swiss cohort using latent class analysis: an intersectional approach.](#) Barbier, Jeanne & Amiguet, Michael & Vaucher, Julien & Lasserre, Aurélie & Clair, Carole & Schwarz, Joëlle. (2024). BMJ Public Health. 2. e000472. 10.1136/bmjph-2023-000472.

[Impact of sex and gender on post-COVID-19 syndrome, Switzerland, 2020.](#) Gebhard CE, Sütsch C, Gebert P, Gysi B, Bengs S, Todorov A, Deforth M, Buehler PK, Meisel A, Schuepbach RA, Zinkernagel AS, Brugger SD, Acevedo C, Patriki D, Wiggli B, Beer JH, Friedl A, Twerenbold R, Kuster GM, Pargger H, Tschudin-Sutter S, Schefold JC, Spinetti T, Henze C, Pasqualini M, Sager DF, Mayrhofer L, Grieder M, Tontsch J, Franzeck FC, Wendel Garcia PD, Hofmaenner DA, Scheier T, Bartussek J, Haider A, Grämer M, Mikail N, Rossi A, Zellweger N, Opić P, Portmann A, von Känel R, Pazhenkottil AP, Messerli M, Buechel RR, Kaufmann PA, Treyer V, Siegemund M, Held U, Regitz-Zagrosek V, Gebhard C. Euro Surveill. 2024 Jan;29(2):2300200. doi: 10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2024.29.2.2300200.PMID: 38214079 **Free PMC article.**

[Awareness of the impact of sex and gender in the disease risk and outcomes in hematology and medical oncology-a survey of Swiss clinicians.](#) Darphin X, Moor J, da Silva CE, Richters A, Özdemir BC. Cancer Rep (Hoboken). 2024 Feb;7(2):e1961. doi: 10.1002/cnr2.1961. Epub 2024 Jan 23. PMID: 38258483 **Free PMC article.**

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Thank you for your interest in the S&G Integration project.

We wish you a pleasant, relaxing, productive, fruitful, curious, happy and healthy summer!

If you have any questions or comments, please contact [virginie.schlueter@unisante.ch](mailto:virginie.schlueter@unisante.ch)

Access to the previous newsletter [here](#)