
Women in the Chemical Sciences

What we know, don't know and need to know
about women in the chemical sciences, and
why we want to know it

**Status and Participation of Women in STEM Disciplines and
Careers**

The National Academies 4 April 2011



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Why?

- Progress of women chemists lags behind that of men *worldwide*
 - Access
 - Pay
 - Promotion
 - Leadership
- Global competitiveness
- Embedding of chemistry into other disciplines, work settings
- Recruitment, retention, advancement

Importance of Data

- Understanding origins
 - Comparisons across countries, cultures
 - Robust, reliable
 - Policy-making
 - Program creation
 - Leadership development
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Percent Women Receiving Degrees in Chemistry, 2008

Country	Undergrad	Doctorate	Faculty
US	50	39	
UK	50	40	12
Germany	40	38	11

Career Choices

	Percent Men		Percent Women	
	1 st yr	3 rd yr	1 st yr	3 rd yr
Planning career in chem	73	86	85	79
Planning research in chem	61	59	72	37
Planning academic career	44	36	51	33

One woman's musings

"The world of academia is a very tough one, with real funding problems. Particularly as a woman, this really puts me off it. As well as the long hours required, necessity to travel to conferences regularly as group leader, the battle for funding would not go well with hopes to have children one day."

United Kingdom

Challenges

- **Lack of disaggregation**
 - Physical sciences, not disciplines
- **Non-uniform definitions, taxonomies**
- **Absence of data**
 - Work sectors
 - Outcomes for programs

Future Outlook

- **Expand data collection**
 - Types
 - Countries
- **Cross-national comparisons, contrasts, similarities**
 - In the chemical sciences
 - Across the three disciplines