

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

Newsletter 8 – March 2025

Dear project partners,
Dear members of the Swiss Society for Gender Health,
Dear colleagues,

We are pleased to share with you the final newsletter from the *Sex and Gender Integration in the Swiss Medical Curriculum* project, funded by swissuniversities. As planned, the project's funding ended on December 31, 2024. This edition provides an overview of key results, along with current and upcoming events.

While the conclusion of swissuniversities' financial support brings new challenges regarding funding for project coordination, communication, and GEMS platform updates, we remain fully committed to sustaining and strengthening the trust and collaborations we have built. Solutions are being actively explored, and we will keep you informed of any developments. In any case, communication will continue via the Swiss Society for Gender Health.

Happy reading!

History of the Project

In 2019, the integration of sex and gender(S&G) dimensions into PROFILES - the national learning objectives framework for all medical faculties - was a positive signal that opened new perspectives. However, achieving these objectives remained a significant challenge. Few professionals were available to teach these topics, no chair in gender and medicine existed to lead the way, and inter-university collaborations were nearly non-existent.

A previous initiative supported by the Federal Office for Public Health had helped establish a national network for integrating S&G into research, but it did not survive once funding ended.

During a meeting between the universities of Lausanne and Basel, we decided to launch an informal network by identifying individuals interested in collaborating. On December 5, 2019, 27 people from across Switzerland gathered in Bern, providing an initial overview of ongoing university initiatives. And just like that, the *Swiss Gender Health Network* was born!

This network brought together professionals from various backgrounds (physicians, nurses, sociologists, historians, researchers, students, etc.), from different fields of practice and research (medical specialties, gender studies, public health, clinical epidemiology, etc.), and from different departments (clinical care, education, research, equality offices, deans' offices, etc.). From the beginning, all these individuals shared a common motivation: advancing medical and societal issues related to S&G, with a key priority—undergraduate education.

Thus, when swissuniversities launched a call for projects in 2020, it was only natural to submit a joint application for a project with an interprofessional perspective. The proposal was accepted, and the project to integrate S&G into medical education began.

After four years of development and implementation, we are proud of the results. We have established a framework for medical education: the [Core Curriculum](#). A platform is available to disseminate

information and, most importantly, to host and share teaching materials among educators: the [GEMS Platform](#). Additionally, we have created a national network bringing together over 250 professionals from across Switzerland, which has now been formalized as the [Swiss Society for Gender Health](#).

During these four years, representatives of all project partners have had the opportunity to learn from each other and exchange experiences at regular meetings and events and the links have become strong.

Beyond these major achievements, numerous initiatives have also been successfully implemented in domains listed below.

Education

- Strengthened collaborations between all medical faculties and with interprofessional partners such as SUPSI, ZHAW and HESSO.
- Presentation of the project at the Swiss Institute for Medical Education (SIWF/ISFM) to discuss the integration of S&G into postgraduate medical training.

Policy

- Presentation of S&G specificities in health at the 2021 Women's Session, leading to their inclusion in priorities presented to the Federal Parliament. Three years later, the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) adopted the theme of gender and medicine and launched a new National Research Program: NRP 83 [Gender Medicine and Health](#), with a budget of 9.6 mio CHF.
- Contribution to the [Report](#) responding to Postulate 19.3190 by Ms. Fehlmann Rielle (Women's Health: Towards Better Consideration of Their Specificities), with several project partners involved in its development.

Research

- Drafting an advocacy letter to the SNSF to reinforce S&G integration in research, signed by 31 project partners. The SNSF is now implementing an [Equality-Diversity-Inclusion vision](#).
- Mobilization of SGHN members to create a new national research program on sex, gender, and health, contributing to the success of NRP 83.
- [Integration of S&G in international research guidelines](#) (CIOMS), with SGHN members participating in the consultation process.

Ethics

- Contribution of project partners to the drafting of swissethics' Recommendations for sex- and gender-appropriate research (SAGER-swissethics guidelines: <https://swissethics.ch/en/themen/gender-sensitive-research>, the development of which was described in a publication in Swiss Medical Weekly <https://doi.org/10.57187/s.4051>).

NEWS FROM THE S&G INTEGRATION PROJECT

❖ The GEMS platform



Gender
Education for
Medicine in
Switzerland



The GEMS platform has been enriched by new contributions and the number of visits to the platform continues to rise. 4589 visits were recorded in 2024.

There are now **36** resources in German, **28** in French and **11** in English, covering the influence of sex and gender in a wide range of disciplines. Spread the word and contact us if you wish to contribute. You may contact the [moderator](#) at your university or virginie.schlueter@unisante.ch

❖ Forum on Sex and Gender in Medical education, Research and Clinical practice

In September 2024, we organised a great closing event at the University of Lucerne to present the project's outcomes and offer an opportunity to meet and network. The Forum included a whole day of conferences and workshops dedicated to the integration of gender perspectives in health and medical education. More than 120 health professionals from different language regions took part in the event, which provided an opportunity to strengthen networks and exchange ideas.

The success of the event demonstrated the relevance of continuing to hold such meetings.

❖ The Swiss Society for Gender Health is born

After 4 years of informal activity, the Swiss Gender Health Network which accompanied the project from its outset has officially become the **Swiss Society for Gender Health (SSGH)**.

The Constituent Assembly took place on September 10, 2024, at the University of Lucerne. The Articles of Association were adopted and the Committee, composed of 15 individuals from diverse backgrounds, was elected.

Co-presidents: Dr. sc. Enriqueta Vallejo-Yagüe (Pharmacoepidemiologist and clinical researcher, University Bern) and Dr. med. Jeanne Moor (Researcher and attending physician, University Hospital Bern)

Secretary: Dr. med. Virginie Schlüter (Project manager, Unisanté, Lausanne)

Treasurer: Dr. med. Jeanne Barbier (Cheffe de clinique adj, Hôpital de Fribourg)

Vice-president media: Lidia Zabala (MSc Health Sciences, digital marketing & events)

Over the next few months, the SSGH will focus on establishing the LinkedIn page (followed by a homepage), organizing events, and planning a congress. If you receive this newsletter, you will soon be contacted to register as a member and we're counting on your support!

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and find out more [here](#) (Articles and the list of Committee member)

For any question, please contact virginie.schlueter@unisante.ch

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

The project, led by [SUPSI](#) and funded by swissuniversities, aimed to integrate sex and gender considerations into the curricula of nursing, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy in collaboration with ZHAW and HES-SO. It sought to bridge educational gaps and equip healthcare professionals with the knowledge to provide gender-sensitive care.

A [scoping review](#) and a [survey](#) of 170 lecturers revealed fragmented integration of these topics, with nursing receiving more attention than physiotherapy or occupational therapy. Experts highlighted the need for clearer definitions and effective teaching strategies, such as role-playing and small-group discussions, to enhance learning.

To address these gaps, learning materials on LGBTQIA+ health, social justice, intersectionality, and sexual harassment were developed and shared via the GEMS platform. Additionally, new content, including a clinical assessment in cardiology based on a master's thesis in nursing sciences, was planned.

Efforts were also made to expand awareness within the UAS community through sensitisation activities, ensuring the long-term integration of sex and gender considerations in healthcare education and fostering a more inclusive approach to patient care.

❖ Closing conference of the P-7 program « Diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities in the development of higher education institutions (2021-2024)»

The P-7 program funded 29 projects over 4 years, including ours. The conference held in Bern, provided an opportunity to present the various experiences and knowledge acquired and to discuss the implementation of measures in the context of higher education.

A summary of the closing conference is available [in German](#) / [in French](#)

A closing report on the [P7 program](#) is available [in German](#) and [in French](#). On page 42, find an interview about our S&G integration project.

❖ Joint Congress of the Swiss Pain Society and the Swiss Gender Health Network

In November 2024, we co-organised our first congress on [Sex and Gender disparities in pain](#), in Aarau. More than 150 professionals attended the event. The program offered a gender approach in a variety of clinical settings which clearly opened up new perspectives and visions for many colleagues.

NEWS FROM A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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

The Research Council has granted 19 projects for a total budget of 9.6 Mio CHF, to foster research in gender medicine and health. They have started in January 2025.

Find details on the 19 projects [here](#).

❖ Draft 2027 budget relief package

In January, the Federal Council adopted a [draft 2027 budget reduction](#) plan and opened the consultation procedure until 5 May 2025. The education, research and innovation (ERI) sector will be heavily affected by the planned cuts, as **the Federal Council is proposing to make savings of more than CHF 460 million a year** in this area. These savings will affect initial and continuing education, universities and the institutions responsible for promoting research and innovation.

The SNSF and its ERI partners have taken a stand against this and are urging the Federal Council to abandon the planned budget cuts. To find out more: [here](#)

In this context, the call for projects under the [Equity programme](#), for which we had planned to apply for funding to continue the S&G integration project, has been suspended due to the lack of a guarantee of funding beyond 2025.

❖ Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) cuts to equity and HIV programmes

The cost-cutting measures adopted by the Federal Council and Parliament will lead to cuts in the FOPH of **CHF 11 million per year from 2026**, affecting various FOPH units that have made a key contribution to strengthening public health. Those include prevention in healthcare and health equity. They will affect the implementation of various national strategies such as the Love Life campaign.

Find out more [here](#).

❖ 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.

Registration are now open for next session starting in April 2025. All modules can be booked individually!

Check the website: www.gender-medicine.ch or contact Vanessa Banz: vanessa.banz@insel.ch

❖ Call for applications for the Brigitte Schnegg Prize of the Swiss Association for Gender Studies

Have you produced outstanding academic work in the field of Gender Studies in Switzerland which contributes to socio-political analysis and change? Then take a chance!

Deadline for submission: 31 May 2025. Find all information [here](#)

❖ The new SAGER-swissethics recommendations

To improve Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) protocols, new recommendations were issued by swissethics: <https://swissethics.ch/en/themen/gender-sensitive-research>

Thank you for contributing to their distribution and use!

❖ SAGER Guidelines Course

Would you like to know more about integrating sex and gender into research? Take the [online course](#) developed by the Elsevier Researcher Academy and GENDRO, which offers in-depth training.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Don't forget to check out the [latest news on GEMS](#) and let us know about any events you'd like to publicize!

- 21 March 2025, Bern. [Female empowerment in Life Sciences \(FELS\) Research Day](#). Enhancing excellence in research.
- 19 June 2025, Zürich and hybrid. [Geschlechterspezifische Aspekte in der Sportmedizin](#). Medical women Switzerland.
- 1er septembre 2025, HETSL - Lausanne. [Soutenir la relève féminine dans les hautes écoles : défis et opportunités](#).
- 8 - 9 September 2025, Basel. [8th conference of the Swiss Association for Gender Studies](#).
- 25 October 2025, ETH Zurich. [Gendermedizin-Tag](#).

MORE ON SEX AND GENDER INITIATIVES

❖ Sex differences in drug treatment

Janusmed Sex and Gender offers an [online database](#) developed in Sweden that collects information on sex differences in drug treatment. The website is primarily aimed for physicians prescribing drugs but is open and freely available for everyone to use.

For more information, please contact linnea.karlsson-lind@regionstockholm.se

❖ Do you have bias?

Take a test provided by the [Project Implicit](#) and find out now!

PRESS, MEDIA, JOURNALS

❖ SPECTRA magazine focuses on gender

The magazine publishes four newsletters a year on topics covered by the FOPH.

Don't miss February 2025 issue [143 on Sex and gender in medicine and health](#) and check out this very interesting **interview with Prof. Carolin Lerchenmüller**, which sums up the influence of sex and gender in various disciplines.

Other articles look at sex and gender in dementia, endometriosis, mental health, drug development and discrimination against transgender people.

❖ Review the press requests

- **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 by the project's partners

[Why gender and sex matter in infectious disease modelling: A conceptual framework](#). Auderset D, Riou J, Carole Clair C, Matthieu Perreau M, Yolanda Mueller Y, Schwarz J. SSM - Population Health, Vol. 30, 2025, 101775, ISSN 2352-8273, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2025.101775>

[Improving sex and gender equity in research protocols: the new SAGER-swissethics recommendations](#). Gayet-Ageron A, Clair C, Schwarz J, Michaud P-A at all. Swiss Med Wkly. 2024;154:4051. DOI: 10.57187/s.4051

[Gender Bias in AI's Perception of Cardiovascular Risk](#). Achtari M, Salihu A, Muller O, Abbé E, Clair C, Schwarz J, Fournier S. J Med Internet Res 2024;26:e54242. doi: [10.2196/54242](#) PMID: [39437384](#) PMCID: [11538872](#)

[L'incohérence du sexe](#). Clair, C. *Rev Med Suisse*, Vol. 20, no. 891, 2024, pp. 1908–1908. <https://doi.org/10.53738/REVMED.2024.20.891.1908>

[Sex differences in symptoms following the administration of BNT162b2 mRNA COVID-19 vaccine in children below 5 years of age in Germany \(CoVacU5\): a retrospective cohort study](#). Moor J, Toepfner N, von Meißner WCG, Berner R, Moor MB, Kublickiene K, Strumann C, Chao CM. Biol Sex Differ. 2024 Sep 26;15(1):74. doi: [10.1186/s13293-024-00651-x](#).

[Sex-specific association of cardiovascular drug doses with adverse outcomes in atrial fibrillation](#). Moor J, Kuhne M, Moschovitis G, Kobza R, Netzer S, Auricchio A, Beer JH, Bonati L, Reichlin T, Conen D, Osswald S, Rodondi N, Clair C, Baumgartner C, Aubert CE. Open Heart. 2024 Aug 12;11(2):e002720. doi: [10.1136/openhrt-2024-002720](#).

Thank you for your interest!

Please pass the newsletter on to anyone you think might be interested, and don't hesitate to contact us if you have any comments or questions: virginie.schlueter@unisanté.ch

Access to the previous newsletter [here](#)