



UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Distribution of respondents	2
3	Key findings	4
3.1	Career and professional development	4
3.2	Performance evaluation system	6
3.3	Mentors and role models	7
3.4	Recruitment, selection and promotion	8
3.5	Work-life balance	8
3.6	FFNT activities	9
4	Conclusion	10

1 Introduction

The bi-annual FFNT survey 2015 was aimed to inform FFNT members and the broader UT community about the current situation of gender balance at the UT, career perspectives of female academics at the UT as well as the needs of female academics with regard to the FFNT events. We want to thank all colleagues who took their time to participate in the FFNT 2015 survey. We found the results interesting and beneficial to perform future FFNT strategy and activities.

The FFNT administered an online survey of female academics at the UT to receive feedback on the FFNT activities, to assess the possibilities for career progression of its members and to identify possible issues that FFNT can address in the future. The online survey was administered from 10 February to 2 March 2015. We received answers from 94 respondents (20% of total female academic staff at the UT). The FFNT survey of sub-population of UT academics: Female academics (N = 471).

The report is structured as follows. First, we introduce the distribution of respondents, then describe each of the topics covered in the survey and further answer the three topics: gender balance, career perspective and needs FFNT could address. We conclude by summing up the overall findings and formulating suggestions for improving UT as a gender balanced organization.

2 Distribution of respondents

The distribution of responses varies by career level and by faculty. Ninety-four of 471 academics (20%) participated in the survey. The highest response rate was from PhD candidates, followed by Assistant Professors. In terms of faculties, the lowest response rates were obtained from ITC and CTW, while the rest of the respondents were distributed almost evenly between the other faculties (see Figure 1):

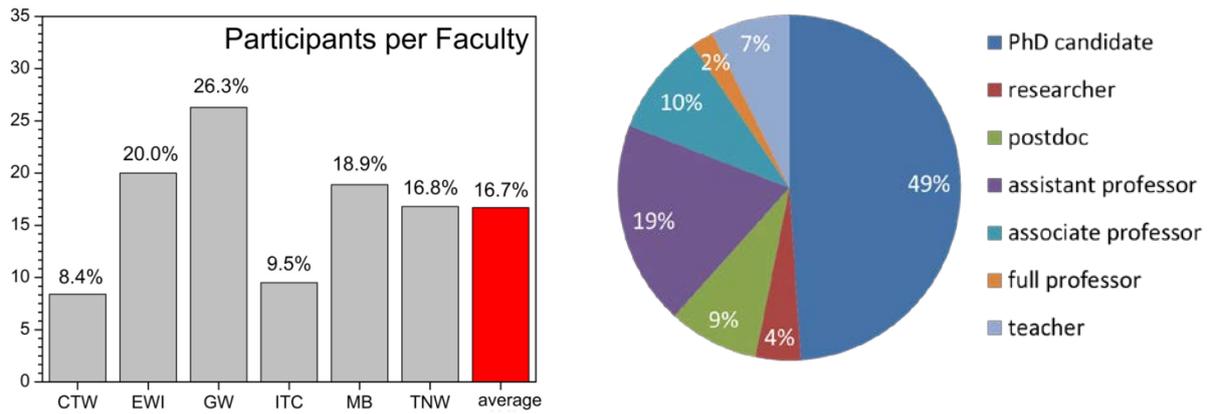


Figure 1. Distribution of the response rate (as percentage of female academics) by faculty (left) and by employment status (right)

PhD candidates are considered to be a separate category while analyzing the results, because many career related issues do not apply to them compared to other academic positions. Therefore, PhD candidates filled in parts of the survey which were tailored to their needs. The PhD candidates in the survey were rather equally distributed according to the stage of their PhD, most of them in the second year (see Figure 2):

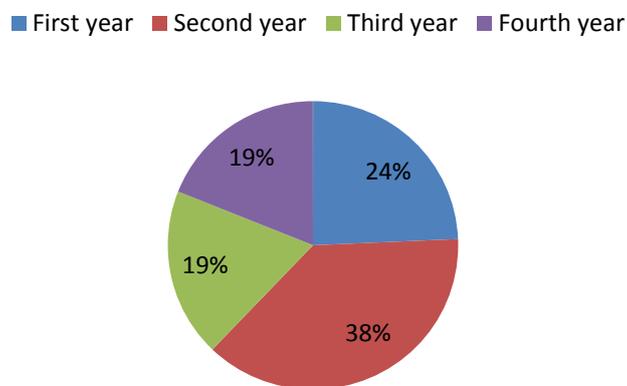


Figure 2. Distribution of the PhD stage among the PhD candidate respondents

The surveyed academics (except for PhD candidates) have worked at the UT on average 7.5 years with the shortest time span of 1 year and longest time span of 25 years. Nearly 60% of our respondents, who are not PhD candidates, have a permanent contract at the UT. In addition, 17% of respondents who are not PhD candidates are on tenure-track positions.

3 Key findings

3.1 Career and professional development

This section covers answers to the general questions on type and stage of employment contract, access to career development opportunities as well as the attractiveness of an academic career in itself and at the UT. Two questions were guiding our analysis about the possibilities for career progression. Which factors lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the academic career among female academics at the UT?

- Are female academics encouraged to stay at the UT and which factors are important for them to stay?

3.1.1 Satisfaction

69% of all respondents were clearly positive about the academic career at the UT. Thus satisfaction with the career at the UT overall is rather high among our respondents. However, a closer look at the level of satisfaction with the career and professional development shows that satisfaction can vary strongly among career levels, especially between PhD candidates and other academics (postdocs, lecturers, assistant, associate and full professors (see Table 1):

Table 1. Career and professional development indicators (% agree and strongly agree)

	PhD Candidates	Other academics
My professional development is supported with time and/or finances by my superior	69	43
Academia is an attractive career option for women	47	46
Females have equal access to career development and training opportunities	53	52
I am supported financially to raise my profile externally by attending and presenting at conferences	71	61
I am encouraged to contribute to my department's research seminars	71	51
I am encouraged to apply for research funding	33	59
n	59	35

The most satisfied group of academics seems to be PhD candidates, whereas academics at higher career levels show a below-average level of satisfaction. The least satisfied employment group is that of the lecturers (“docenten”, which are teaching-only positions found in some faculties). If we look at the differences per faculty, we can see that the dissatisfaction with the career at the UT among the 35 respondents at postdoc-professor levels is stronger present among the respondents from GW and MB (now the merged BMS) faculties, while ITC and CTW respondents provide mostly ambivalent answers. When we study the satisfaction with the employment at UT among PhD candidates, we can see ambivalent responses in MB and some ambivalent and unsatisfied opinions in GW. PhD respondents from EWI, CTW and TNW seem to be satisfied with their employment at the UT (see Figure 3).

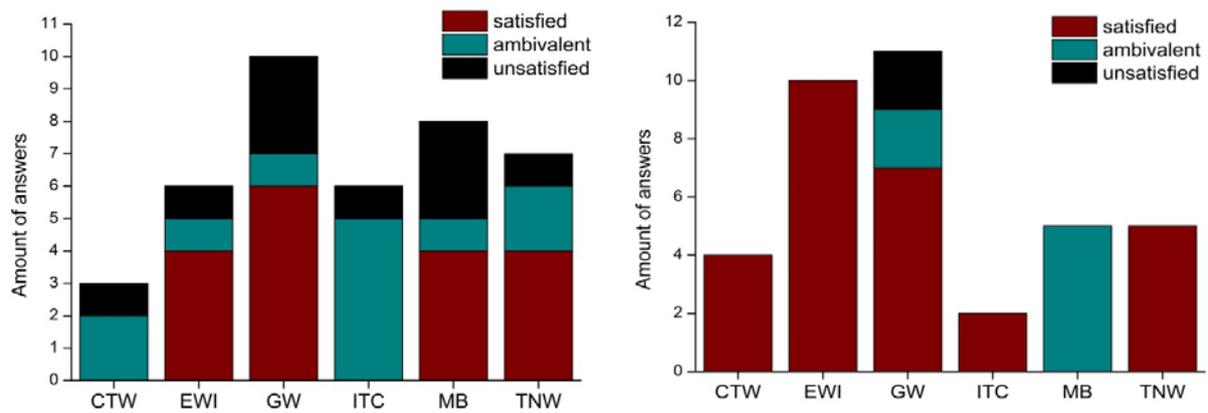


Figure 3. Satisfaction of other female academics with their career at UT (left) and PhD candidates (right)

Further, when looking at the difference between faculties regarding the perception of women academics as minority, we see that this can be found in the responses from TNW, CTW EWI and GW faculties. MB and ITC faculty respondents either were ambivalent or disagreed with this (See Figure 4). When asked about the prospects of promotion – ‘My voice regarding promotion is heard’ – a certain number of academics from each faculty disagreed with this statement. Especially high concentration of this type of answers was found in GW and TNW faculties: seven out of ten respondents from GW faculty and 4 out of 7 TNW respondents disagreed with it. More tellingly- from the few answers in CTW- two were neutral about it and one was negative. This suggest that our respondents’ voice regarding promotion is not necessarily heard in their faculties and that this raises concerns about future career for these female academics (Figure 4).

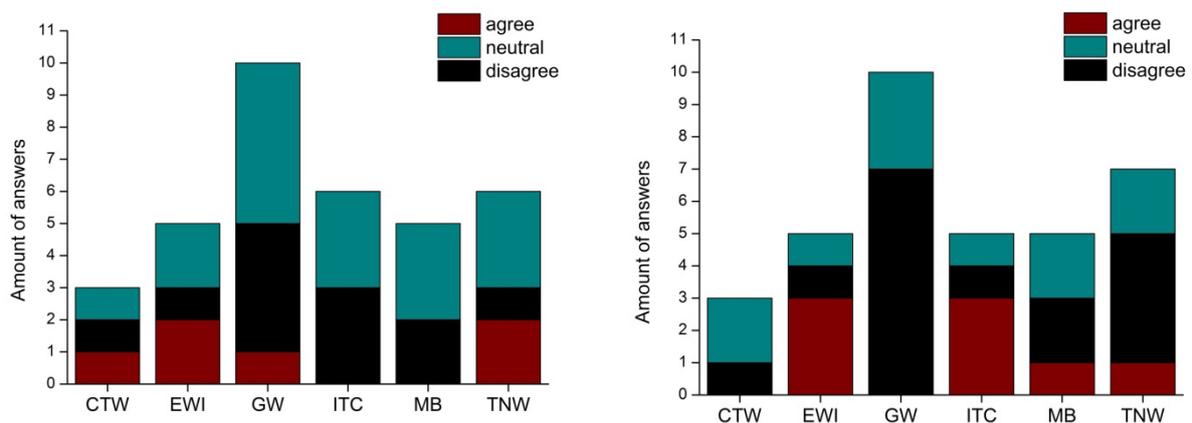


Figure 4. In my department females are seen as a rare species, academics n=34 (left); “... My voice regarding promotion is heard, academics n=34” (right).

In the open questions we asked to indicated the main reasons for satisfaction as well as dissatisfaction. As noted earlier, the majority of respondents are quite satisfied with their employment at the UT. As seen from the open answers, the main reasons for satisfaction between PhD students and other academics among our respondents with the career at UT include:

- Good career perspectives and good payment;
- academic freedom and independence;
- strong internal support by other groups at UT and from supervisors;
- acknowledgement within the research group;
- time and opportunities for personal development;
- manager with an open and supporting management style;
- focus on interdisciplinary and applied research;
- interaction with students;
- permanent contract and mentorship program.

At the same time, PhD candidates and other academics also noted a number of reasons for dissatisfaction with the career at UT, including:

- Little opportunity to be promoted;
- Insecurity about the future, i.e. temporary contracts,
- Extremely high teaching load,
- No opportunities for academic development;
- The shark-tank effect - 'elbow factory';
- Poor internal collaboration;
- Hardly any support by management of own department;
- The lack of constructive scientific management on collaboration and direction on departmental level; Administration is overcomplicated;
- UT does not take into consideration pregnancy leave (no contract extension for pregnancy leave while working on externally funded projects).

Some of our respondents are following tenure track at the UT. They seem to express additional concerns, including:

- 'First, promotion criteria were ambiguous, that was bad. Now they are more clear with the UFO and the TT criteria, but now there seems to be just one very narrowly determined path to go. No temporary side-steps allowed, no changes of direction possible.';
- Unclear and changing tenure-track criteria,
- lack of support;
- My line of research is little valued by my superior;

3.1.2 Willingness to leave

Further we were interested in respondents plan to leave the UT and what are the reasons for that. As shown in Figure 5 only a few academics have not thought of leaving the UT out of 35 academic respondents. Despite the high overall level of satisfaction, approximately half (50.4%) of the

academic respondents except for PhD candidates indicate that they would be willing to leave the UT for another employer. This is particularly high among researchers and professors (see Figure 5).

When asked about the reasons to leave, the respondents indicated that content of current job, no future for their academic career at UT, managerial decisions at the UT, too high teaching load, no permanent positions, no acknowledgement, valuing raising money more than research and high uncertainty are among the key factors of willing to leave this university. Other factors mentioned included exploring new opportunities and promotion to full professor.

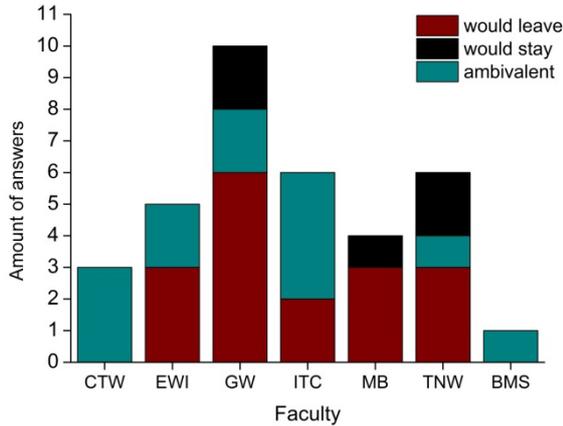


Figure 5. Willingness to leave UT for another employer, academics n=35.

3.2 Performance Evaluation System

The answers to the questions regarding the appraisal system at the UT have shown that 88% of the respondents are evaluated at least once per year. 40% of respondents think that the appraisal indicators match their job description – and this holds both for PhD candidates and for other academics. Thus, the majority of respondents think that the job description does not completely match the appraisal indicators. Further we see that 41% of other academic respondents think that the requirements for positive job appraisal are clear and 42% are satisfied with this appraisal system. This consistent response regarding the appraisal system coming from other academics is alarming, as the findings imply that the system requirements are not very clear and majority of other academics are not satisfied with it (Table 2).

Table 2. Evaluation of the appraisal system at the UT.

	PhD candidates	Other academics
The tasks listed in my job description match the appraisal indicators	40%	40%
Clear requirements for positive job appraisal	56%	41%
Satisfied with the current appraisal system	49%	42%
n	56	34

Further, 65% of other academics who participated in our survey think that evaluation procedures do not lead towards concrete steps and plan for promotion, which can explain why a rather high percentage of these academics are willing to leave the UT (see Figure 6).

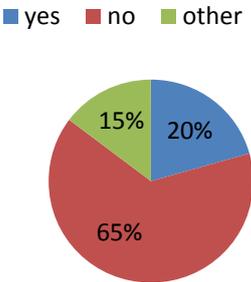


Figure 6. Evaluation leads towards concrete steps and plan for promotion.

3.3 Mentors and Role Models

Both other academics and PhD candidates have been asked in this section whether female academic role models are available in their work environment and to what extent they benefit from mentors in their career progression. Respondent’s reactions to questions on mentors and role models indicate that improvement is needed. Most female academics lack a strong female role model in their immediate work environment and the benefit they get from mentors in career progression is fairly low (PhD students seem to profit more from mentorship in their career development) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Availability of mentors and role models (% agree and strongly agree).

	PhD candidates	Other academics
I have strong female academic role models I can follow	15	20,6
The female role models are accessible in my daily work	12	14,7
I strongly benefit from my mentors in my career progression	18	31,4
I want to become a mentor for other female academics	13	50,0
n	43	34

3.4 Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

Satisfaction with the recruitment and promotion policies at the UT was the central topic of interest in this section. We asked the respondents to provide their opinion on a number of issues regarding recruitment, selection and promotion. Less than half of all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the posed statements which indicates that they were not very positive about recruitment and promotion aspects of their careers at the UT. (see Table 4):

Table 4. Recruitment, selection and promotion statements (% agree and strongly agree)

	PhD candidates	Other academics
The university's recruitment and promotion policies are fair to female academics	N/A	20
I have a clear view on what is expected of me in order to be promoted	48,84	39,96
My voice regarding my promotion needs is heard and acted upon in my faculty	9,51	17,15
The dedication of the department head for equal opportunities is demonstrated	42,85	20,59
Sufficient guidance and feedback are provided for potential candidates for promotion	42,86	14,7
Individual's contributions to teaching and administration are recognized, valued and rewarded for promotion	N/A	11,76
In my department females are seen as "rare species"	18,61	22,85
n	56	34

As shown in Table 4, The highest percentage of respondents agree (48,84% PhD candidates and 39,96% other academics) with the statement that they have a clear view what is expected in order to be promoted. The second highest agreement percentage is r to the statement about the dedication of the department head for equal opportunities (42.85% and 20.59% respectively). At the same time, this shows that more than half of department heads of our respondents do not exhibit dedication for equal opportunities. The lowest agreement is found with the statements regarding the concrete practices of promotion (9.51% and 17.15% respectively) and for other academics – only 11.76% agree that individual’s contributions to teaching and administration are recognized, valued and rewarded for promotion. The latter findings are really disturbing as they indicate that even when the department heads are dedicated to equal opportunities, the perception is that achievements are not rewarded by promotions.. Even more disturbing is the finding that often individual’s contributions to teaching and administration are not recognized and not valued for promotion –as these activities usually take up a significant amount of time from a regular academic portfolio at assistant- and associate professor levels.

3.5 Work-life balance

We were also interested in how UT academic women combine different academic tasks and how they manage to balance work and life. We asked them to respond to a range of questions and here we report the responses (agree and strongly agree) in percentages. As indicated in Table 5, the compatibility of family and work remains an important issue for female academics at the UT. Most other female academics have stated to work overtime during weekends and evenings, they prefer less work related travel and they think that lack of childcare is an obstacle to their career. Both PhD candidates and other academics report they have flexible working hours, which is in line with the traditional academic career work pattern. Moreover, nearly 74% of all respondents think that a career break is a jeopardy for future career prospects. Further, none of other academics and only 9.76 % of PhD candidates, upon hiring, see UT as providing opportunities for the partner's employment. This points directly to the absence of dual career policy and practice at the university. Another worrying indication is that parental leave seems to be ignored when measuring scientific output (only 7% PhD candidates and 12% other academic respondents agreed that their superiors take into account parental leave). This finding needs to inform heads of departments as well as human resource managers about the urgency of revising the criteria for promotion in terms of taking into account parental leave (see Table 5).

Table 5. Work-life balance (% agree and strongly agree)

	PhD candidates	Other academics
The workload between teaching and research is balanced in my current position	61,9	29,41
I have flexible working hours now	95,35	80
I have to work overtime during evenings and weekends	44,86	71,43
I have compromised my career for the sake of my partner's career	7,14	5,71
I prefer less work related travel	12,2	73,53
I think that a career break for women can damage their future career prospects	73,81	73,53
The UT provides opportunities upon hiring also for my partner's employment	9,76	0
Lack of adequate child-care is an obstacle to my career	14,28	32,36
My superior considers parental leave when measuring my scientific output	7,32	11,76
n	43	35

3.6 FFNT activities

In this section we asked the respondents about their involvement in the FFNT activities as a member, and their wishes and needs for future FFNT activities. 51,4 % of other academics were members of the FFNT and 25.6% of PhD candidates were members of the FFNT (See Figure 11). 44.2% PhD candidates indicated they have never participated in the FFNT activities as a member, while 25.7% of senior academics have never participated in our activities.

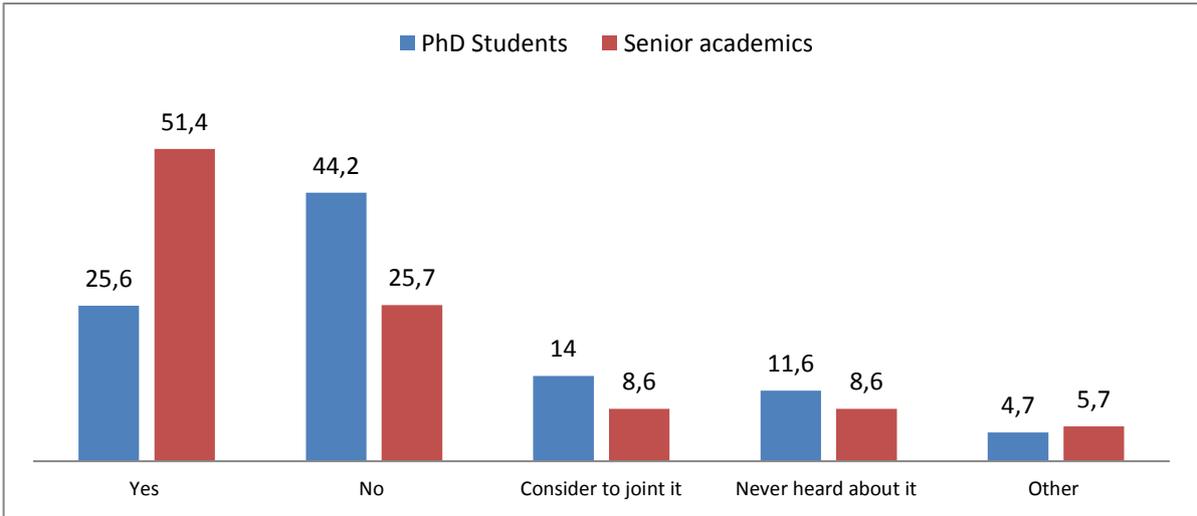


Figure 11. Distribution of respondents regarding current and possible membership in FFNT

We learnt that more than half of respondents would be interested in join FFNT organized lectures (about 2 hours) which provide new knowledge, 74% of respondents would be interested in workshops of a half a day, e.g. on *assertiveness*, *presentation skills*, and *networking*. Around one third of respondents would be interested in half-day social activities such as *painting* or *fashion*. Some respondents have also mentioned activities like *mentoring* and *network meetings*. Only 6,2% were not interested in any activity (See Figure 12).

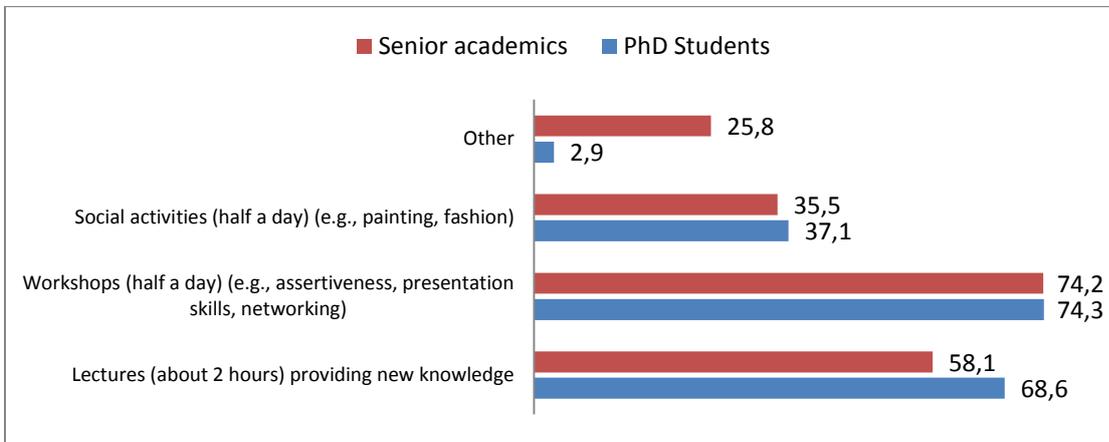


Figure 12. Different types of activities respondents would like to join (%).

4 Conclusion

The findings of the FFNT survey 2015 lead us to the following conclusions:

- Overall academic staff is satisfied with UT working environment, although it varies between the faculties and seniority levels (esp. high among PhD candidates)

- The most satisfied group of academics seems to be PhD candidates, whereas academics at higher career levels show a lower level of satisfaction.
- Main reasons for satisfaction include interdisciplinary work at university, academic freedom, good professional development opportunities, international focus.
- Main reasons for dissatisfaction include high competition, limited promotion opportunities, high teaching loads, insecurity of temporary contracts, lack of management support and complicated administration.
- The answers to the questions regarding the appraisal system at the UT have shown that 88% of PhD candidates and other academics are evaluated at least once a year. Most of them agree with the evaluation criteria, although they are concerned that some requirements are unclear. 65% of other academics think that evaluation procedures do not lead towards concrete steps and plan for promotion. Most of respondents report that their superiors do not take into account the parental leave when measuring their scientific output. This seems to coincide with the view that a career break (which is likely to happen when taking parental leave) will damage career prospects.
- Respondent's reactions to questions on mentors and role models indicate that improvement is needed in this area. Most female academics do not have a female role model in their immediate work environment and the benefit they get from mentors in career progression is fairly low (PhD candidates seem to profit more from mentorship in their career development).
- Only a minority of other academics perceive the guidance for promotion and appreciation for individual contributions as sufficient.
- Most other female academics have stated to work overtime during weekends and evenings and to work flexible hours. Also in case of other academics it appears that in their view UT provides limited opportunities upon hiring also for partner's employment.
- The main reasons to consider leaving the UT include dissatisfaction with the opportunities provided and with the management, no future for academic development, uncertainty, and too much teaching.
- FFNT is asked to organize lectures, workshops and social events especially with the focus on role models, assertiveness, public speaking, awareness of different types of career paths.