

# Care Responsibilities and Work in Times of Covid-19

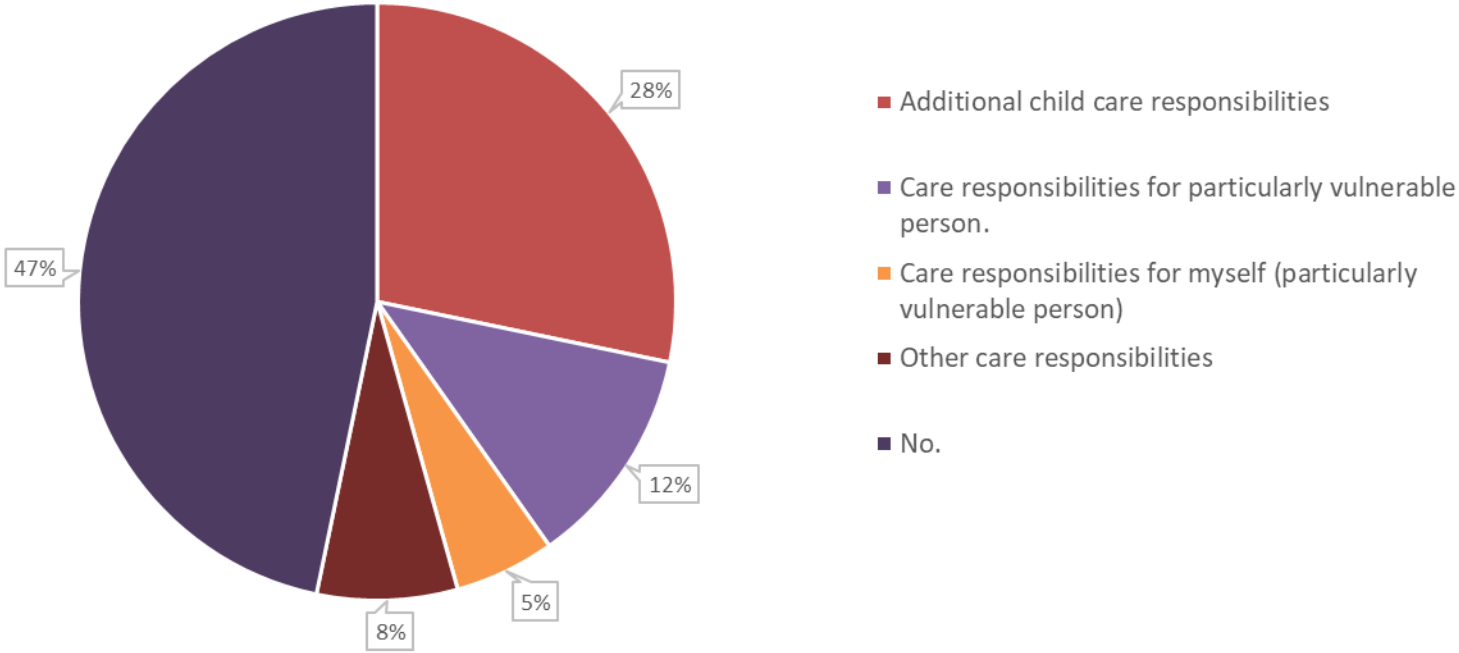
Results from an Employee Survey  
at the Institute of Geography  
University of Bern, Switzerland

April 27, 2020

# Survey Methodology

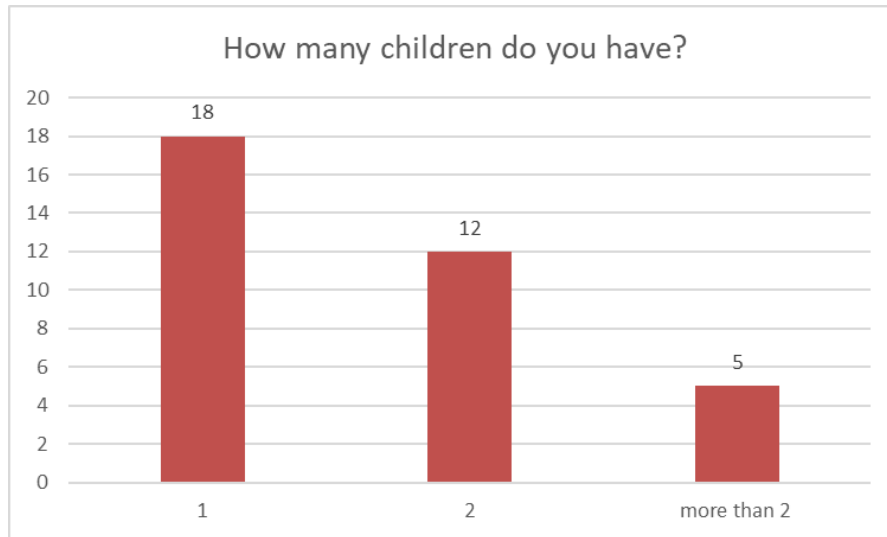
- Idea for and implementation of survey came from GIUB Equal Opportunity Commission
- Survey was sent to all GIUB employees via Email (N=160)
- Release of survey: March 25, 2020
- Survey closed on April 7, 2020
- Survey tool: Ilias
- Open and closed questions regarding Covid-19 and its implications for care responsibilities and work

# Do you currently face additional care responsibilities due to the current Corona situation?

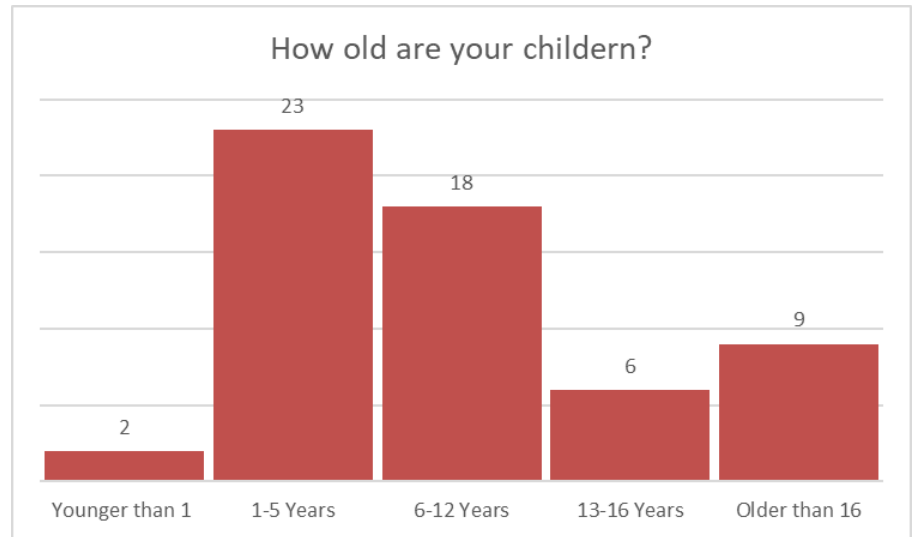


N =92

# Additional Child Care Responsibilities



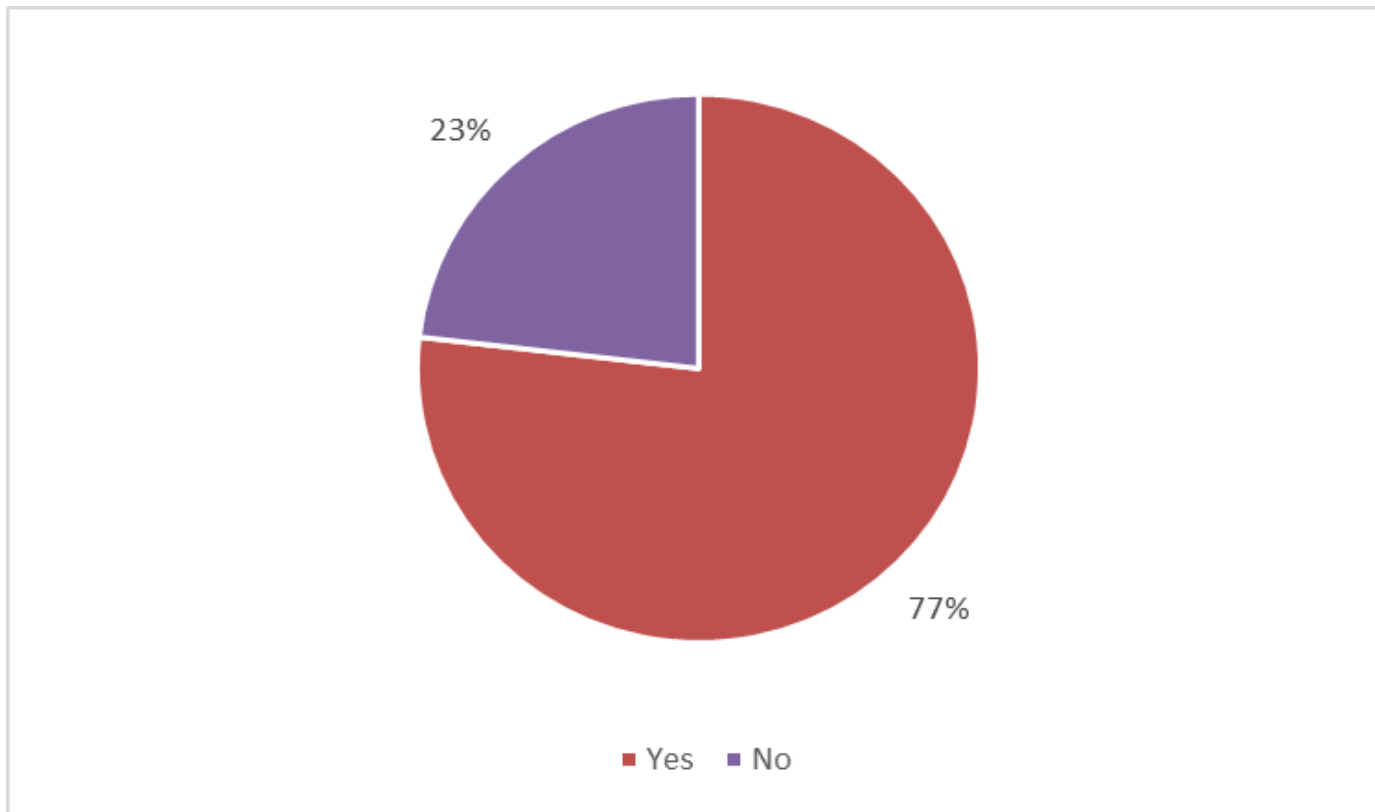
N =35



N =58

*The majority of children of GIUB employees are under 12 years old!*

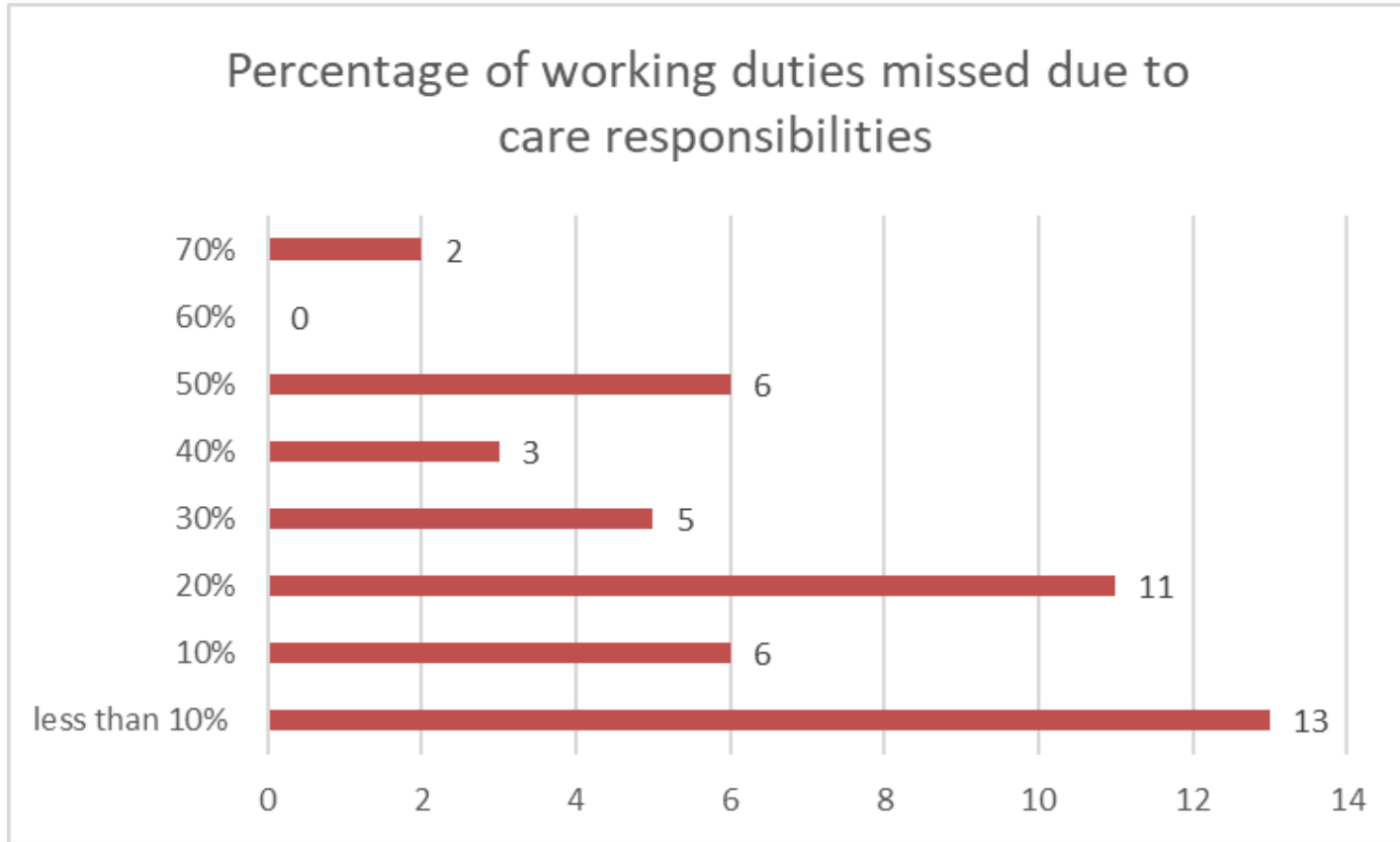
# Can you share the care responsibilities with a partner or another person?



N =82

*The majority has a supporting partner, but 23% do not!*

# How do these new care responsibilities affect the daily hours you are able to work?



N = 46

# How does this affect your administrative or academic tasks?

## **Work environment / infrastructure**

- Problems due to lacking infrastructure at home (laboratory, software, desk) (4)

## **Working time**

- Shifting working times to early morning, evening, weekends (9)
- Not able to work as much as usual (3)
- Longer or more working days (2)
- Take holidays due to care responsibilities (1)
- Not able to work at all (1)

# How does this affect your administrative or academic tasks?

## **Work load**

- Increased work load (digital teaching, more organisational tasks ) (3)
- Increased work load when it is all over (1)

## **Work content**

- Less time for own research or preparing proposals / scholarships (5)
- Postponing tasks that are not urgent (5)
- Teaching tasks are being prioritized (3)



# How does this affect your administrative or academic tasks?

## **Quality of Work**

- Being less effective & productive (8)
- Being interrupted frequently (4)

## **Emotional Wellbeing**

- General distress due to the current situation (isolation, insecurities) (5)

# Feared negative consequences for academic qualification due to additional care responsibilities caused by the current corona situation

- Delay / negative impacts on field work (8)
- Delay in research outcomes (7)
- Expiring scholarships / financing (4)
- Less publications 3
- Missing deadlines for project applications 3
- Cancelled conferences 1
- Increased workload later this year 1
- Insufficient quality of research outcome 1
- Less exchange / mentoring by colleagues 1
- Postponed mobility projects 1

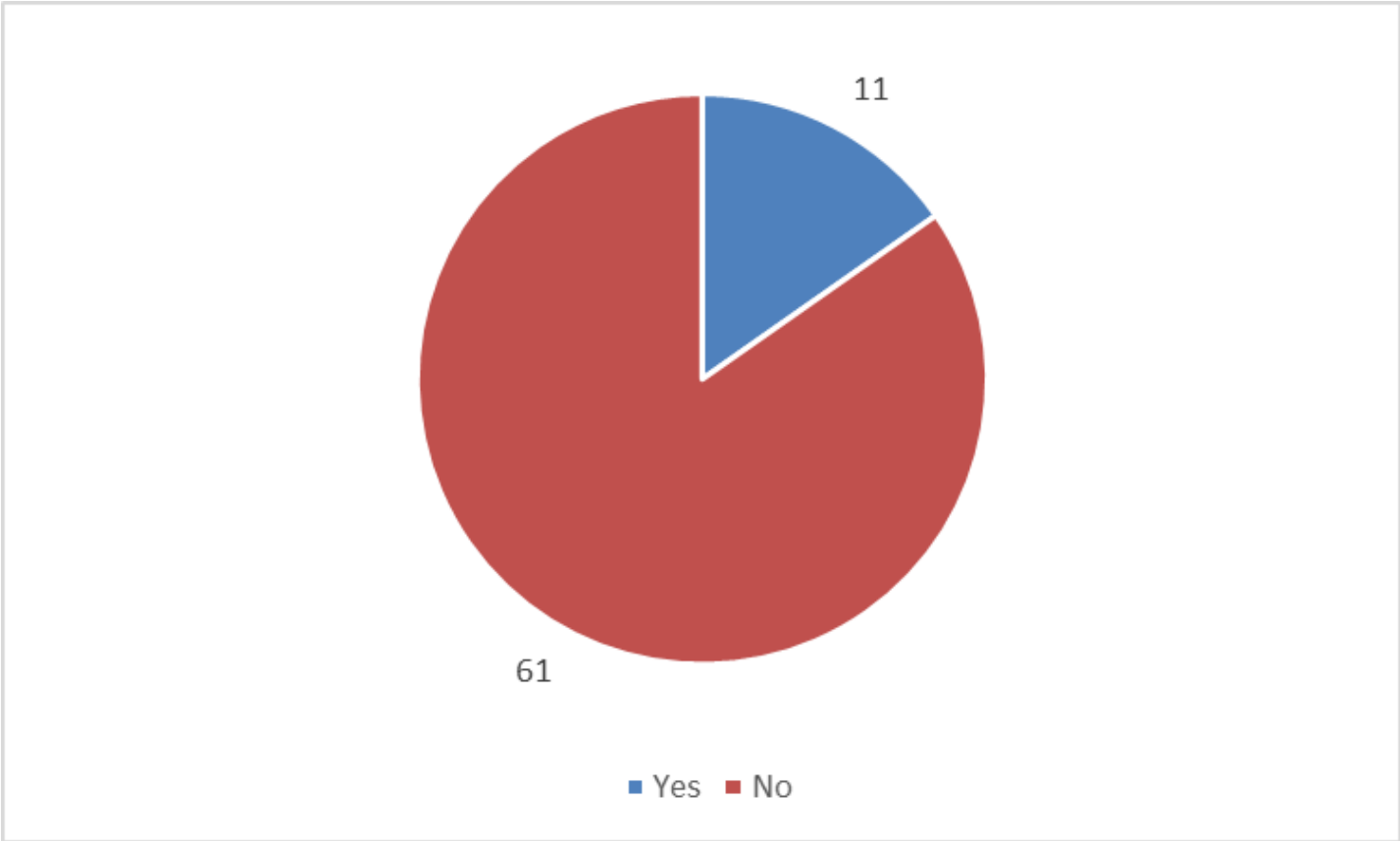
# How could the GIUB support you in your current situation?

- Being aware and understanding that (6)
  - tasks need more time to be accomplished
  - expectations regarding outputs should be lowered
  - deadlines should be extended
- Provide extra research time after the crisis which includes prolonging contracts and financial support (6)
- Reduction of working hours (5)
- Provision of infrastructure & equipment (e.g. IT) (5)
- Financial support in the current situation (5)

# How could the GIUB support you in your current situation?

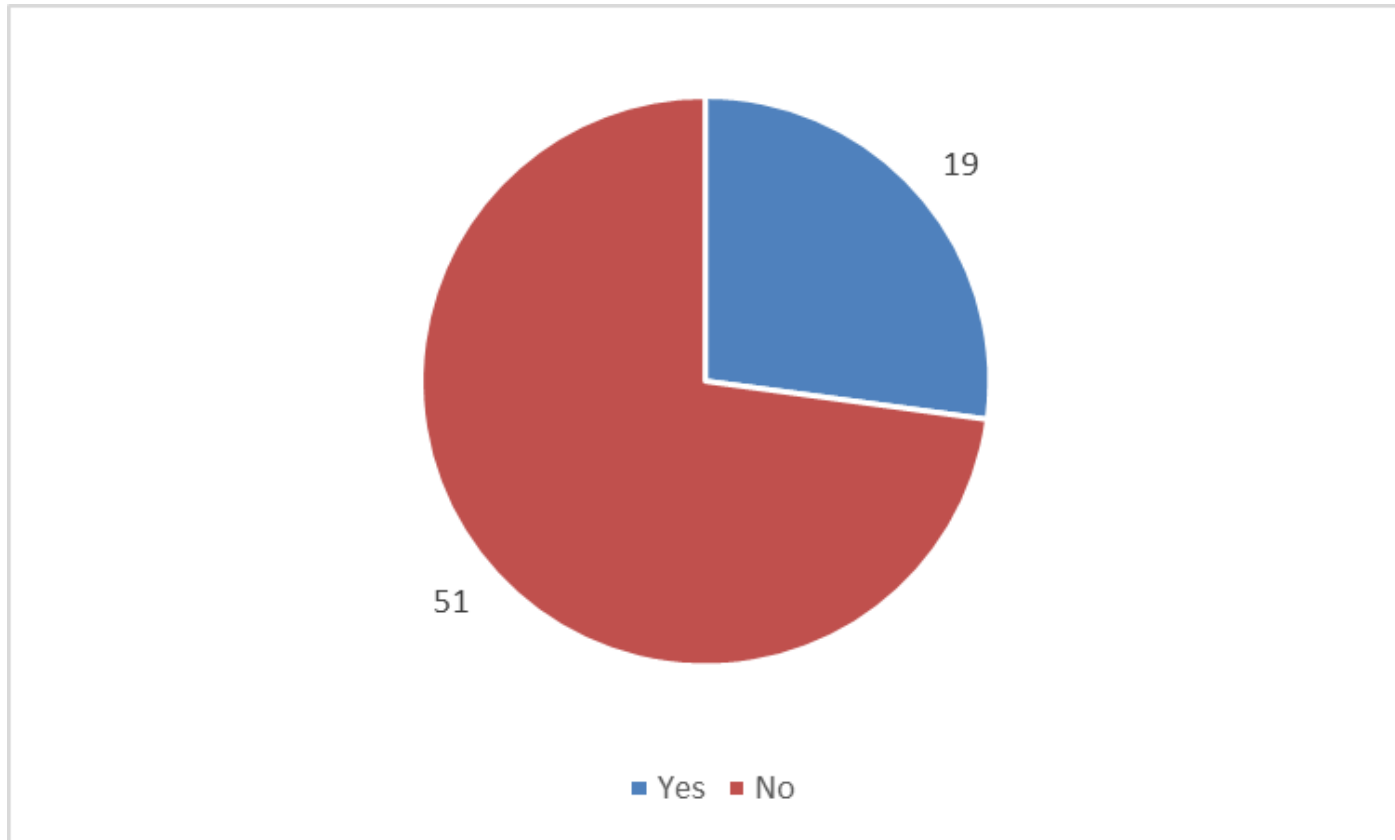
- Support for the homeoffice situation / share coping strategies (2)
- Reduction of the number and duration of online meetings (2)
- Restructure governance structures (IL&IR) and distribute tasks among professors (1)
- Being aware and take into consideration the academic disadvantage of employees with additional care responsibilities (work progress / publications) (1)
- Distribute additional staff points to hire support staff (1)
- Instruct team leaders to be flexible regarding deadlines and schedules (and to define new deadlines and work schedules accordingly) (1)

# Could financial support help you in your current situation?



N = 72

**Would you be interested to participate in an Online-Meeting with other GIUB employees to exchange experiences and ideas how to handle the current situation?**

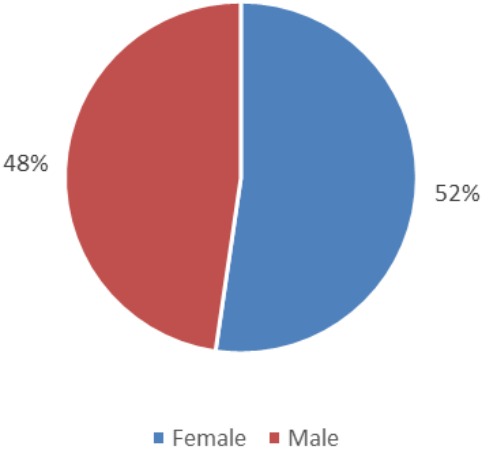


N = 70

Locations where people currently live & work



Gender of participants



# Recommendations from GIUB Equal Opportunity Commission

- GIUB directors are aware of additional work demands and shifts in working hours as well as the implications of the crisis for the health of GIUB admin and technical staff. This will be addressed in a timely manner and in the MAG.
- GIUB Unit Leaders need to be aware of additional work demands and shifts in working hours of unit members and they talk about this regularly. This will be addressed in a timely manner and in the MAG.
- GIUB needs to explore implications of Covid-19 situation for “Zeiterfassung”: Additional care demands must not accumulate as minus hours, rules of the university should be adhered to (bezahlter Kurzurlaub, etc.)
- GIUB recommends the following regarding Covid-19 and individual careers:
  - Covid-19 should be reported as a career break on CVs
  - GIUB does take Covid-19 into account in evaluations (applications, letter of support, letter of reference)
  - GIUB supports student needs (e.g. Note in KSL about Covid-19 semester)
- GIUB starts and institutionalizes proactive communication about best practices regarding online teaching, advising, fieldwork, research, etc. during this crisis
- GIUB supports the Better Science initiative. This means to focus and support the positive implications of Covid-19, e.g. new routines (online meetings, setting priorities, slowing down) should be established over the long-run.

AND

- Establish a “Punkte-Pool” for supporting researchers
- Elicit financial requests for post-Covid-19 child care



# Punkte-Pool & Massnahmen

- Punkte-Pool
  - Pool personnel resources (Punkte) to support PhD and Post Docs who are critically affected by Covid-19
  - Resources should allow short extensions of their employment
  - Pool is created through voluntary contributions by GIUB units
- Massnahmen
  - Utilize financial resources of Gleichstellungskommission
  - Around CHF 2.000 are still available
  - Solicit applications for financial support for child care
  - To make up for lost time during lockdown
  - Have financial resources available until late fall

# Additional support & links

## Plattform «unibe@home»

- Zusammen mit der [SUB](#) hat die Abteilung für Gleichstellung die Austauschplattform «unibe@home» auf Ilias eingerichtet. Studierende, Dozierende, Forschende und Mitarbeitende können sich vernetzen, Probleme austauschen, Tipps geben und Unterstützung anbieten und in Anspruch nehmen. Das Forum ist für alle Uni-Angehörigen zugänglich und die Beiträge sind für alle sichtbar. Mit der Plattform wollen wir Transparenz schaffen und das gegenseitige Verständnis in dieser Ausnahmesituation fördern.
- [Zur Plattform](#)

## «Homeoffice im Ausnahmezustand»

- Die Universität Bern bemüht sich, der aktuellen ausserordentlichen Situation Rechnung zu tragen und anerkennt, dass studierende und arbeitende Eltern und Uniangehörige mit Betreuungspflichten ihr Arbeitspensum wegen der Pandemie nicht im üblichen Mass leisten können. Auf der Infowebseite zu Vereinbarkeit an der Universität Bern finden Sie alle Informationen zu den aktuell geltenden Regeln sowie weiterführende Links.
- [www.vereinbarkeit.unibe.ch](http://www.vereinbarkeit.unibe.ch) > Homeoffice

## Quarantänetipps der Gendercampus Redaktion

- Der Gendercampus kuratiert eine Liste mit Links zu Angeboten und Lesetipps. Auch Informationen zu mentaler Gesundheit sind verlinkt.
- [www.gendercampus.ch](http://www.gendercampus.ch) > Covid19

# *Thanks!*

A heartfelt THANK YOU to all the GIUB employees who filled out the survey.

## **GIUB Equal Opportunity Commission:**

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