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# Attracting more women to academic leadership positions – the AKKA programme

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# Positive dimensions

- Initiated and funded by the University
- Support from University: vice-chancellor, faculty deans and department heads – recommended the programme,
- Led by an academically recognized person (professor) with leadership experiences and an administrator from HR responsible for gender equality issues
- Free hands to design the programme
- Competences that could be achieved and developed in focus, NOT personal characteristics or gender stereotypes
- The overall concept of the programme: leadership can be learned – no one is "born" leader



# Obstacles – and solutions

- Resistance to the gender perspective by some male participants – lack of knowledge
- Solutions:
- Strengthen the gender profile in the program – more knowledge
- Gender - a part of the pedagogic design, a “web” not just a main “thread” – integrated in all parts
- No “negotiations” about the gender perspective
- Introductory lecture in gender studies, course book, the participants had to motivate why they wanted to attend a gender program, ground rules



# The relevance of the gender dimension

- Leadership programmes rarely have a gender perspective
  - AKKA could serve as a model
- (Academic) leadership is still constructed as stereotypical male – this is discussed in AKKA
- Academic culture (gender regime) is discriminating women
  - it is shown in the AKKA projects



# Concrete benefits

Increased the **proportion of women** in leading positions – including top positions (1 deputy vice chancellor, 4 deans, 2 vice/pro deans...

- Increased gender awareness in academic leaders – both women and men – **agents of change, active breakers**
- Provided **methods** to manage resistance towards gender issues in academia
- Helped **highlight** women as potential leaders – visibility
- Helped make more women **AND** men interested in taking on a **leadership role**
- Helped establish **networks** and collaborations for mutual support
- Put women as **possible leaders** on the agenda

