

Conference review: ‘Sorry out of Gender. The Future is Diverse’

From 7 to 9 November 2024, Hanover became the centre of gender and diversity research in sports science. Around 100 participants from all over Germany as well as Austria, Switzerland, Norway and the Netherlands travelled to Hanover to address current issues in gender and diversity research from a sports education and sports sociology perspective. The event, which was organised in cooperation with the LandesSportBund Niedersachsen, offered a challenging academic programme with a wide range of practical sporting perspectives and intensive discussions.

Inspiring presentations and a sustainable panel discussion

With 15 specialist presentations, a 90-minute poster session and two high-calibre keynotes, the conference provided an inspiring framework for current research and new ideas. The panel discussion on Saturday morning at the LandesSportBund Niedersachsen proved to be a particularly successful format. Building on the keynote speech by Dr Birgit Braumüller (German Sport University Cologne) with current figures on homophobia and trans-hostility in European popular sport, experts from academia, sports associations and clubs discussed the challenges and opportunities of diversity in sport, which resulted in various needs for action as well as concrete demands. The combination of theoretical approaches with practical experience was particularly inspiring and will remain a lasting memory for many participants.

New committees and a breath of fresh air

The conference not only provided space for scientific exchange, but also for structural changes. For example, the inaugural meeting of the dvs ad-hoc committee ‘Gender Equality in Sports Science’ took place in hybrid form, with Prof Dr Anne K. Reimers appointed as its chair. A new spokesperson was elected at the general meeting of the dvs Commission for Gender and Diversity Research. Particularly noteworthy is the election of new member Annika Schwark as spokesperson for scientists in the qualification phase. Another strong signal of the commitment of our institute to the professional association.



General meeting of the dvs Gender and Diversity Research Commission with newly elected spokesperson council consisting of Dr Karolin Heckemeyer, Dr Fabienne Bartsch and Annika Schwark (1st row right)

Qualifiers' workshop: space for content-related discussions and networking

Even before the official start of the conference, a workshop for researchers in the qualification phase took place on 6 and 7 November. Under the leadership of Annika Schwark, supported by the two mentors Prof Dr Judith Frohn and Prof Dr Tina Nobis, the workshop offered 16 participants the opportunity to gain an insight into two doctoral projects and discuss various aspects. In addition, there was a round table discussion on the topic of 'Power relations in the academic context/supervision situations' and various formats focussed on sharing ideas and networking with each other.

Science meets practice: a model for success

Overall, both the workshop and the annual conference impressively demonstrated how important it is to dovetail science and practice in order to promote diversity and inclusion in sport. The cooperation with the LandesSportBund Niedersachsen as part of the Bundesnetzwerktagung queerer Sportvereine (BuNT) not only enabled an interdisciplinary exchange, but also emphasised the relevance of an intersectional perspective in sports science gender and diversity research in order to promote diversity and equal participation in sport.

A clear signal in favour of diversity

The message of the conference was clear: sport and its future is diverse and has the task of becoming even more inclusive. Gender and diversity research in sport science can play a central role in this. With its varied programme, new impulses, enriching discussions and intensive networking, 'Sorry out of Gender. The Future is Diverse' was a complete success.

(Translated by DeepL)