Managerialism in Lithuanian Higher Edcuation

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APIKS Conference „Management and Governance of Higher Education"

August 20-21, 2020

Vilnius, Lithuania

Overview

- Introduction

- Research Questions

- Theoretical Considerations

- Lithuania and the Lithuanian HE System

- Methods

- Findings

- Conclusion

Introduction

- Spread of New Public Management-inspired governmental policies aimed at increasing efficiency in universities in Europe since the 1990s (De Boer et al., 2007)

- Shift from 'collegium' to 'enterprise' (Deem, Hillyard, & Reed, 2007; Enders and de Weert, 2009; Musselin, 2009) = Threat to academic freedom?

➢ Changes in academic work conditions (e.g. temporary contracts, performance reviews, stronger division of labour into teaching, research, and administration)

➢ Main source of academic stress and significant impact on academic work satisfaction (Shin & Jung, 2014)

➢ Source of rising inequalities in academia? (e.g. Carvalho & Machado, 2010; Barry et al. 2012)

Research Questions

1. How has managerialism developed in the Lithuanian higher education system?

2. How do Lithuanian academics perceive the level of managerialism at their higher education institutions?

Theoretical Underpinnings

Governance equalizer (de Boer, Enders, & Schimank, 2007)

- 5 modes of coordination
  - State regulation
  - External guidance
  - **Academic self-governance**
  - **Managerial governance**
  - Competition for resources

Lithuania

- One of three Baltic States, located in Central and Eastern Europe

- Regained independence from the Soviet Union in 1990

- Member of Bologna Process since 1999

- Member of the European Union since 2004

- Size: 65,300 km²

- Population: 2.794 million (2020)

A brief history and key characteristics of the Lithuanian Higher Education System

- Foundation of Vilnius University as one of the oldest universities in Central and Eastern Europe in 1579
- Republic of Lithuania between 1918 and 1940
  - Expansion of higher education, 9 universities in total
- After World War II until 1990
  - Establishment of a Soviet model of HE: separation of teaching and research, state-control of curricula, strong links between HE and the state
- Since 2000 binary system with university- and non-university (college) HE institutions
- Size of the HE system in 2017/2018:
  - 21 universities, 82,345 students, 8,005 academic staff
  - 22 colleges, 35,433 students, 2,579 academic staff

Managerialism in Lithuanian Higher Education

- Several reforms since 2000 Law on Science and Higher Education and most significantly through 2009 Law of Higher Education and Research

  - Changed legal status of universities and increase in institutional autonomy (both organizational and financial) at the expense of the academic oligarchy (Kralikova, 2015; Dobbins & Leisyte, 2014)

  - Increase in power of university boards vis-à-vis the senate in important matters (e.g. strategic planning, budgets, appointment of rectors) (Leisyte, 2018)

  - Terms of employment contracts and remuneration increasingly based on performance indicators

  - Budget cuts and governmental funding of HE increasingly dependent on output-based measures

  - Attempts at consolidating the HE system (mergers) (Leisyte et al., 2018)
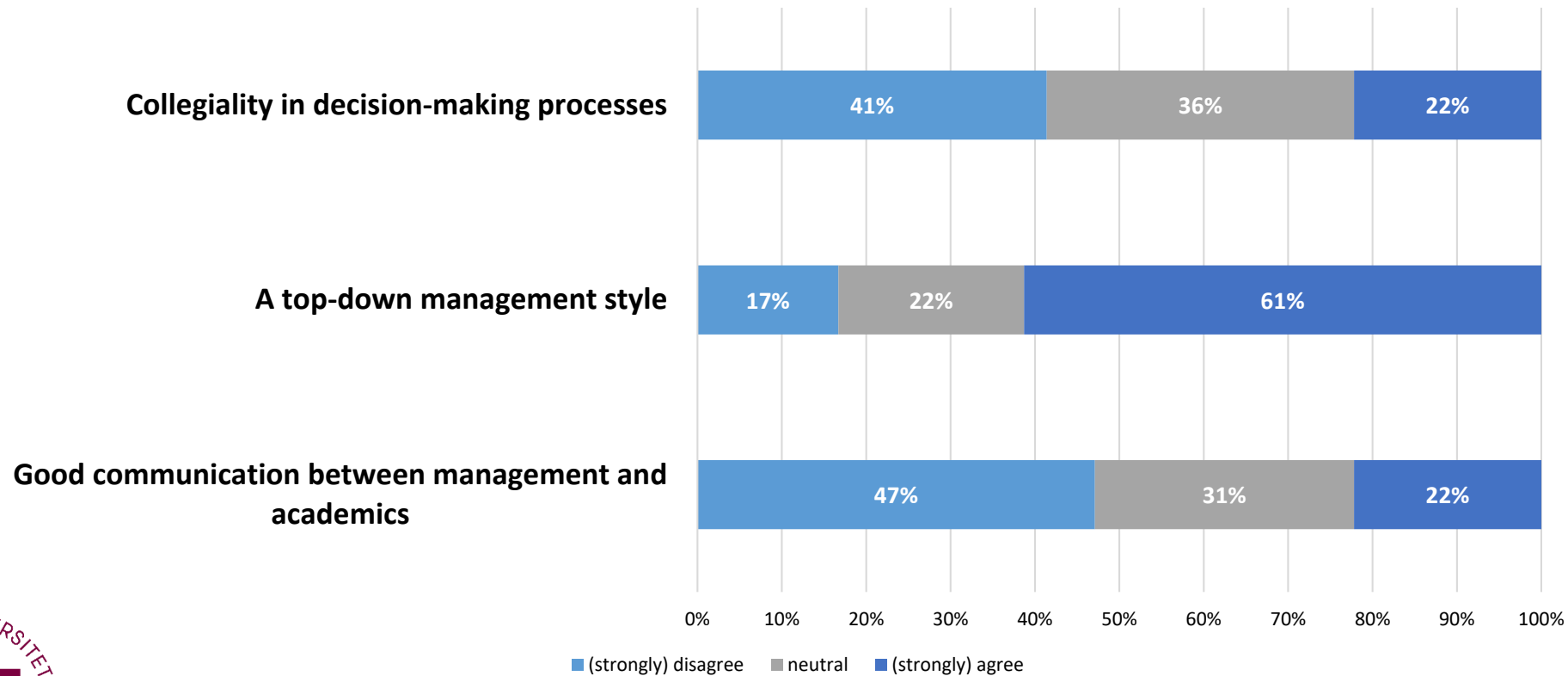
Methods

- Online survey of academics (all career levels and disciplines) at Lithuanian public universities

- Questionnaire translated to and conducted in Lithuanian

- Data collection period: October 10th 2017 – January 4th 2018

- Sample: 10 Lithuanian public universities (employing 7,287 academics)

- Responses: N=389 , 5.3% response rate

- Additive annex to determine level of managerialism (low/high)

  - "Good communication between management and academics"

  - "A Top-Down management style"

  - "Collegiality in decision-making processes"
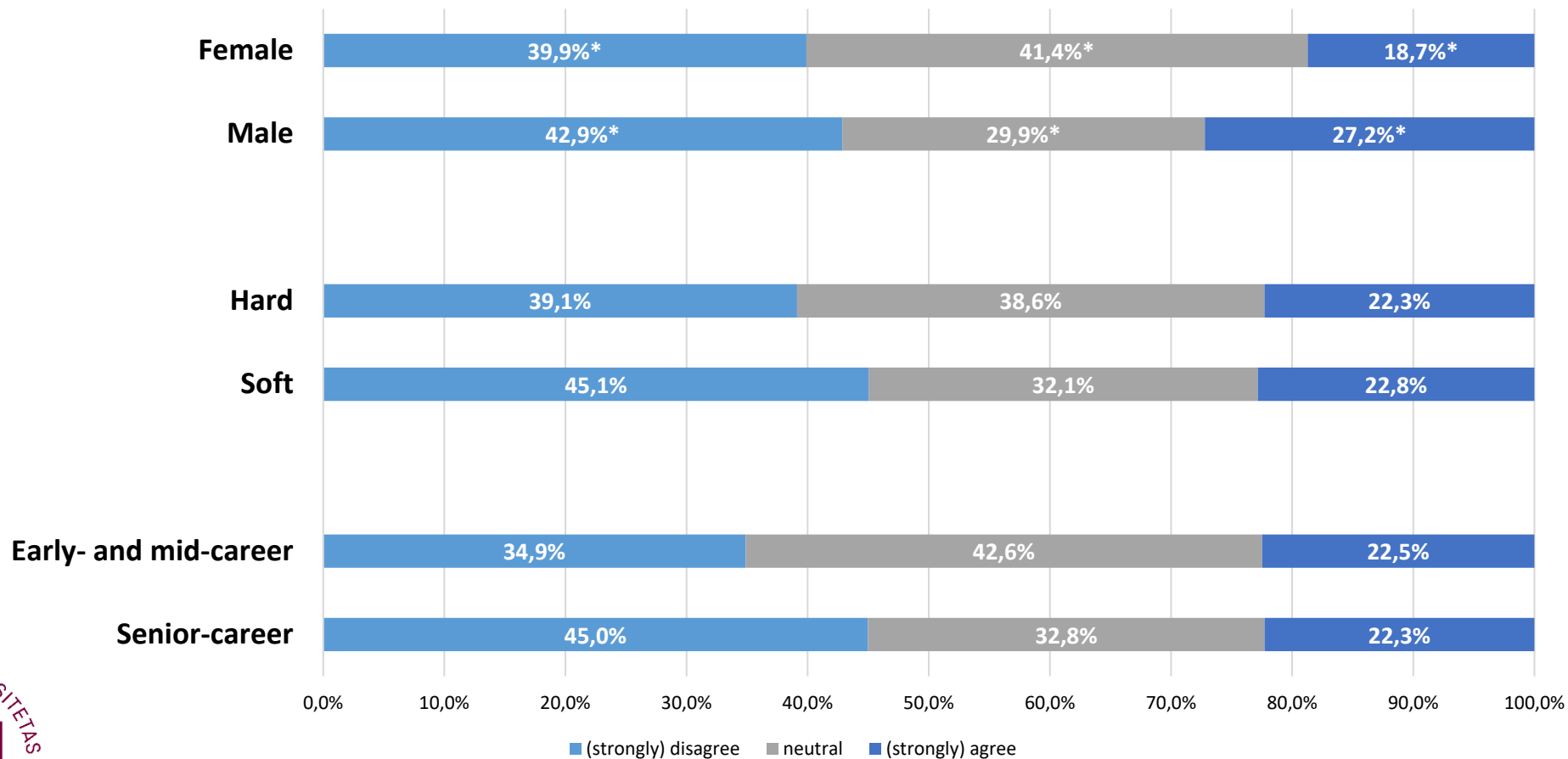
Findings

Academic perceptions of managerialism at Lithuanian universities

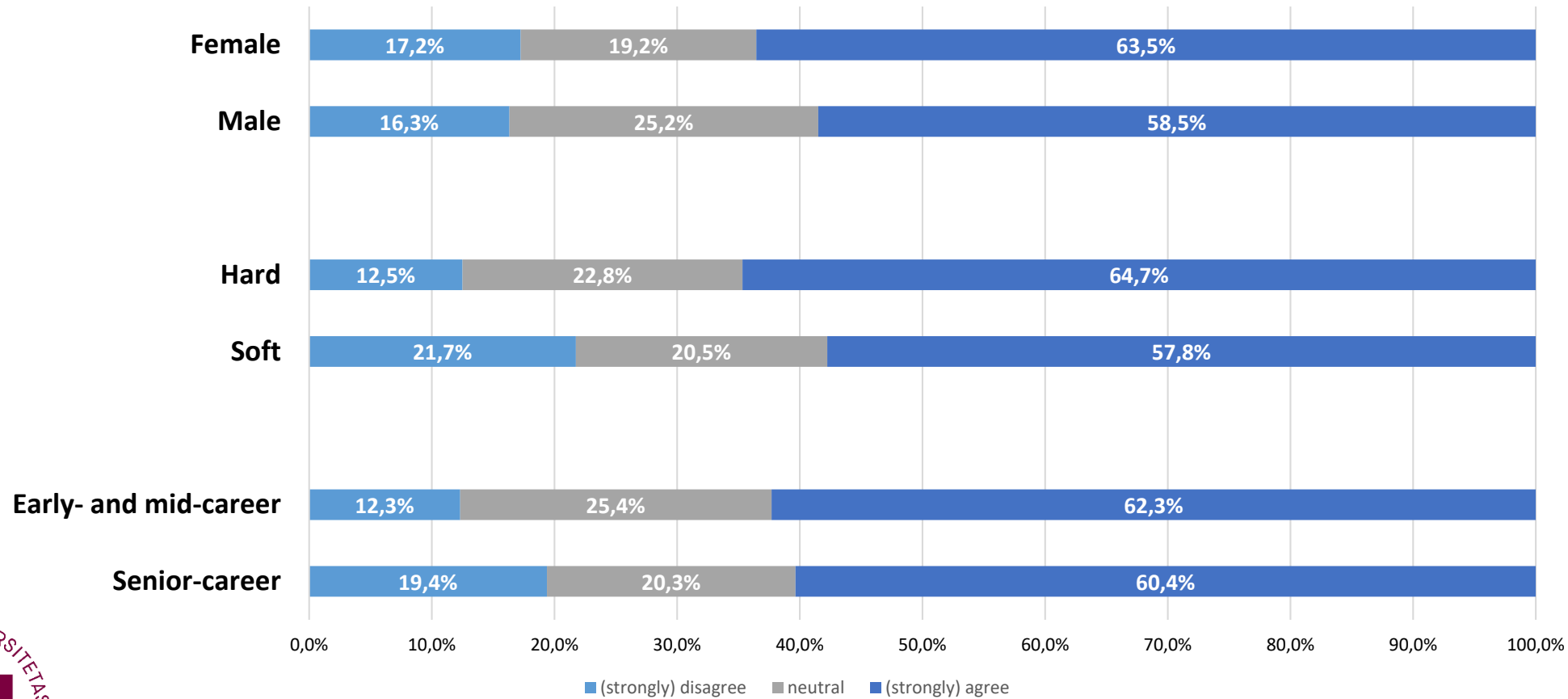## Academics' perceptions of their universities' characteristics

Collegiality

Academics' perceptions of collegiality in decision-making processes

	(strongly) disagree	neutral	(strongly) agree
Female	39,9%*	41,4%*	18,7%*
Male	42,9%*	29,9%*	27,2%*
Hard	39,1%	38,6%	22,3%
Soft	45,1%	32,1%	22,8%
Early- and mid-career	34,9%	42,6%	22,5%
Senior-career	45,0%	32,8%	22,3%

■ (strongly) disagree ■ neutral ■ (strongly) agree

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Top-down Management

Academics' perceptions of top-down management at their institution

	(strongly) disagree	neutral	(strongly) agree
Female	17,2%	19,2%	63,5%
Male	16,3%	25,2%	58,5%
Hard	12,5%	22,8%	64,7%
Soft	21,7%	20,5%	57,8%
Early- and mid-career	12,3%	25,4%	62,3%
Senior-career	19,4%	20,3%	60,4%

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Communication

Academics' perception of good communication between management
and academics

	(strongly) disagree	neutral	(strongly) agree
Female	45,9%	33,8%	20,3%
Male	48,6%	25,7%	25,7%
Hard	44,1%	31,4%	24,5%
Soft	52,8%	28,8%	18,4%
Early- and mid-career	50,8%	32,6%	16,7%
Senior-career	45,0%	29,4%	25,5%
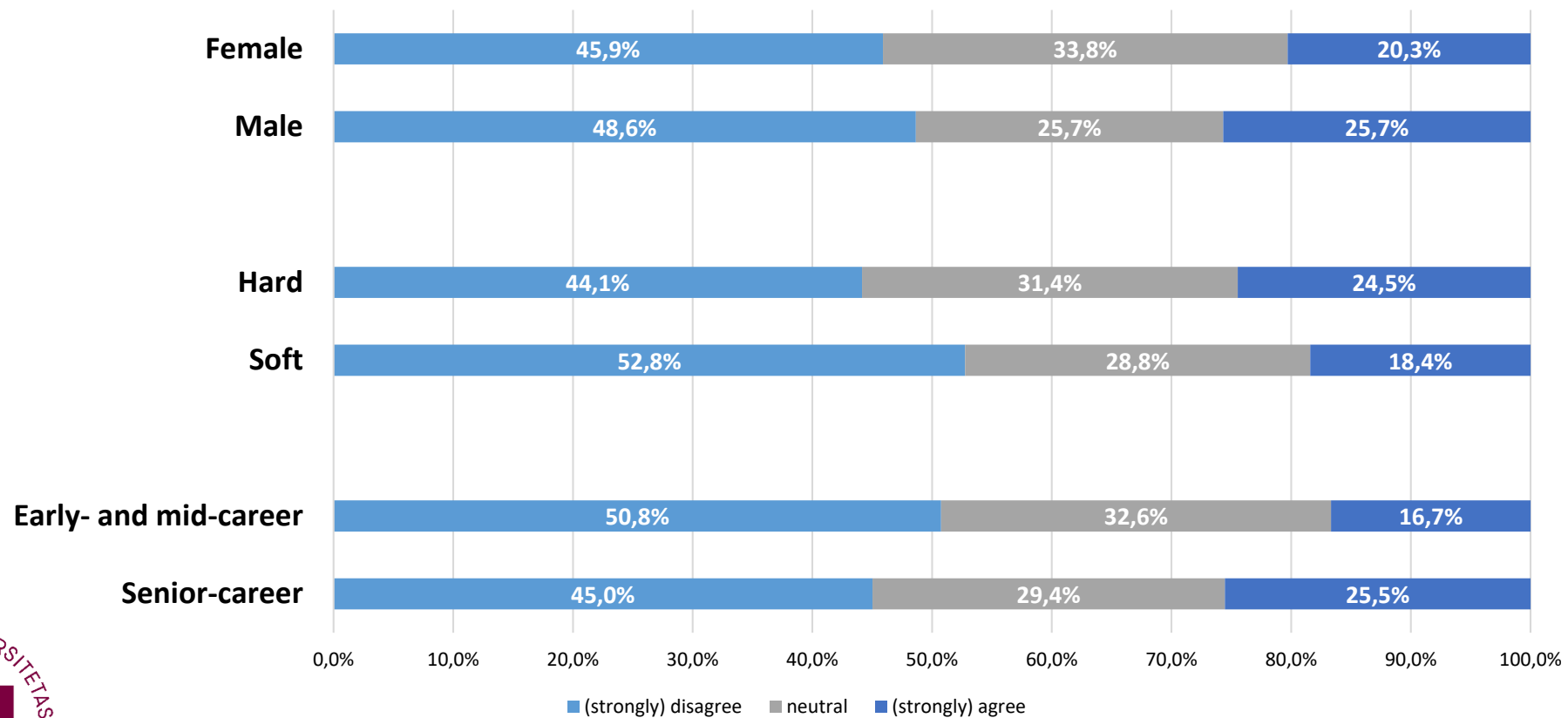
*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Academic perceptions of managerialism at Lithuanian universities by strata

Level of managerialism as perceived by academics
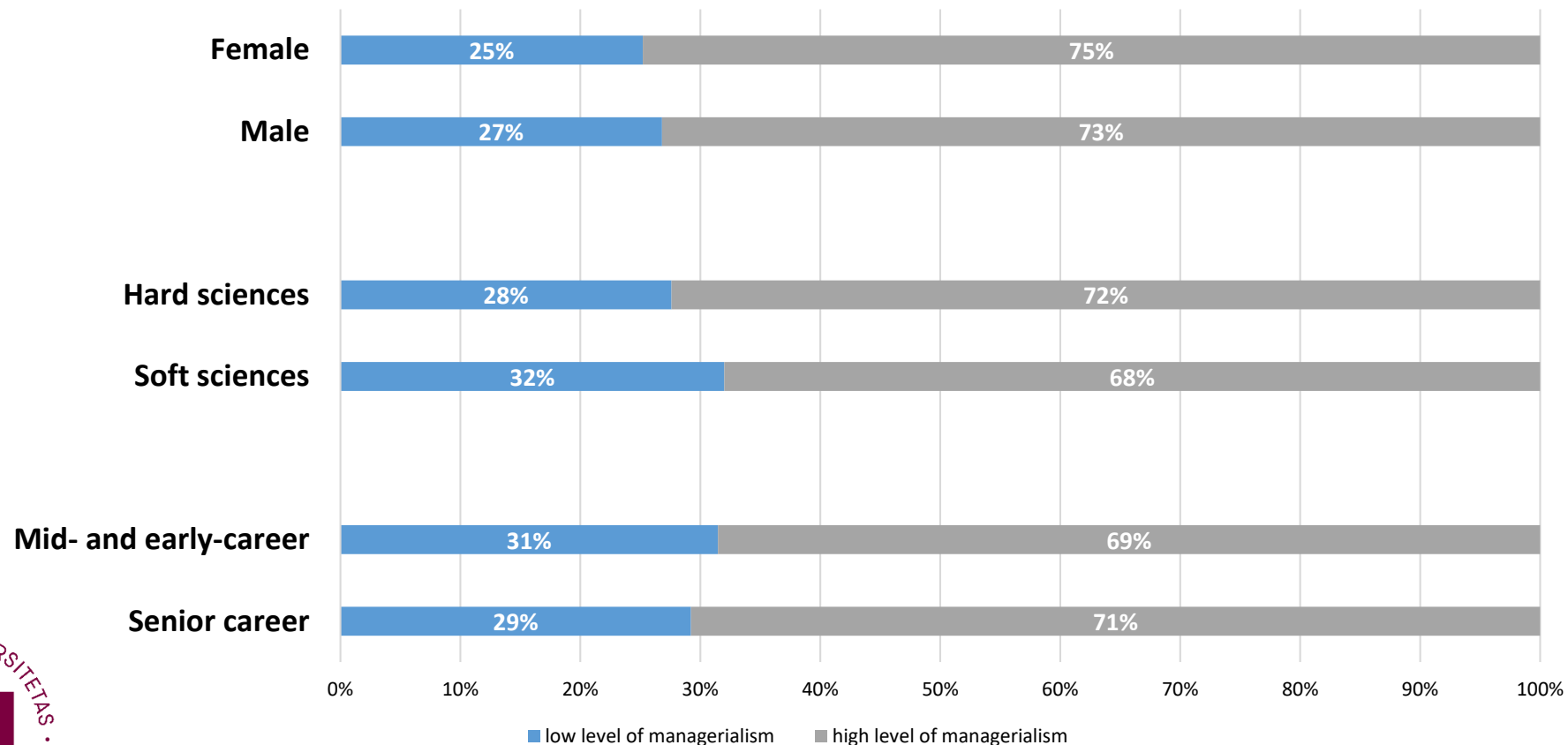
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Conclusion

- Lithuanian academics perceive their higher education institutions as rather managerial (70% high managerialism versus 30% low managerialism)

  - Clear minority (22%) thinks that there is collegiality in decision-making and good communication between managers and academics (= academic self-governance)

  - Majority (61%) thinks that there is a top-down management style (= managerial governance)

- Only small differences by gender, discipline, and career-level

  - Only significant difference: Women perceive decision-making processes as significantly less collegial than men

➢ Study confirms convergence towards a market-oriented paradigm

➢ Further research needed on effects on academic work

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Thank you for your attention
and looking forward to your questions
and to the discussion!