RIPE Meeting Gender Statistics – 2022 Edition

RIPE Diversity Efforts

- Lack of diversity in the RIPE community is clear.
- People in the community were discussing this for a while.
  - RIPE PC, working group chairs, RIPE NCC staff, and other interested individuals.
- RIPE Diversity Task Force started at RIPE 74 (May 2017).
- Number of initiatives started.

COVID-19

- So that happened.
- It sucks.
- A lot.
- Anyway, no face to face meetings for a while...

Virtual RIPE Meetings

- It’s free!
- Pretty good remote participation tool (Meetecho).
- Sadly a direct translation of physical meetings.
  - Sitting in online meetings for 6 hours a day sucks.
- What can we learn about diversity from remote meetings?

Data Gathering

- “Attendees list” published for 82 (of 83) RIPE meetings.
- Scrape the RIPE website to get names of attendees.
  - And sometimes locations!
- Run names through generize.io REST API.
  - Gives a probability that a given person is a woman.
  - Bit name massaging (people I knew or could find on the Internet).
- Imperfect, but this allows us to see trends!

Things I Did Not Do

- Compare with self-reported data.
  - In the past I did this with IETF and RIPE data, to verify that the trends matched.
- Look at other communities.
  - In the past other communities had interest (ICANN, APNIC, IETF, and so on).
- Look at other types of measurements.
  - Presentations, participation on mailing lists, leadership, and so on.
  - Look at age, country, religion, education, and so on.
- Compare with "the industry".
  - Which industry? Network operators? Programmers? IT managers?
  - Which data sources?
- Tools published in GitHub. Researchers with interest please go for it!
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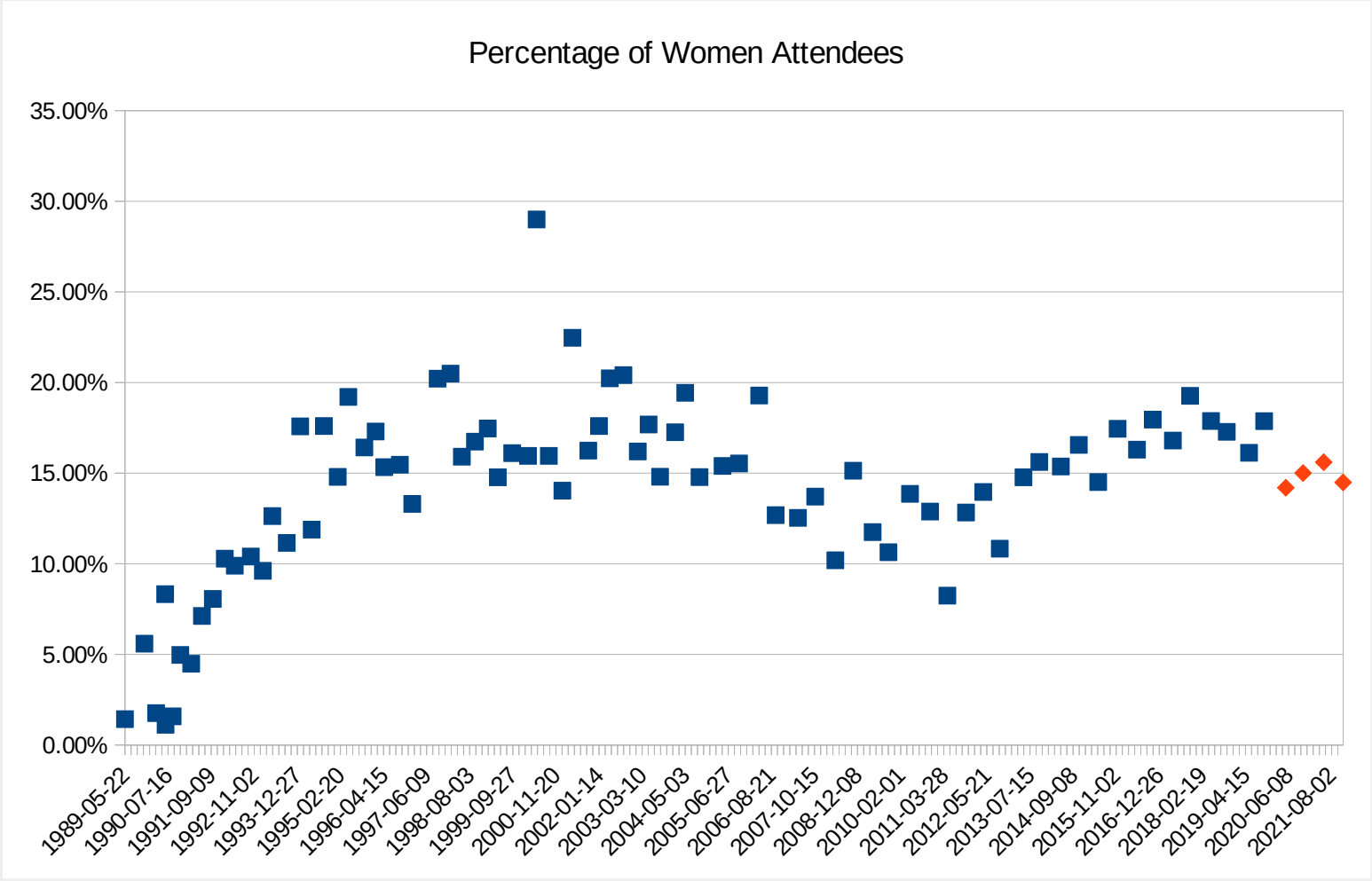
Results: Chart



Results: Table

Meeting	Date	City	Men	Unknown	Women	% Women
RIPE 72	2016-05-23	Copenhagen	560.82	2	109.18	16.30%
RIPE 73	2016-10-24	Madrid	511.13	5	111.87	17.96%
RIPE 74	2017-05-08	Budapest	524.99	5	106.01	16.80%
RIPE 75	2017-10-22	Dubai	385.91	7	92.09	19.27%
RIPE 76	2018-05-14	Marseille	620	18	135	17.88%
RIPE 77	2018-10-15	Amsterdam	656.79	16	137.21	17.28%
RIPE 78	2019-05-20	Reykjavík	613.98	24	118.02	16.12%
RIPE 79	2019-10-14	Rotterdam	629.11	9	136.89	17.87%
RIPE 80	2020-05-12		1676.67	39	277.33	***14.19%***
RIPE 81	2020-10-27		1019.11	22	179.89	***15.00%***
RIPE 82	2021-05-17		978.99	28	181.01	***15.60%***
RIPE 83	2021-11-22		929.49	30	157.51	***14.49%***

Analysis I: Are the Results are Wrong?

- Maybe lots of registered people didn't actually attend?
  - Or not so much?
  - But why would that result in a smaller portion of women?
- Maybe people used pseudonyms?
  - But why would that result in a smaller portion of women?
- Higher portion of names that cannot be classified?
  - Yes, but…

Analysis II: Were Our Assumptions Wrong?

- Presumed a lot of barriers for women to participate.
- The barriers for a virtual RIPE meeting were super low!
  - Childcare wasn't an issue.
  - Approval to attend should have been easy (seniority, and so on).
  - Or just attend while doing your day job!
  - Less chance of either micro-aggressions or macro-aggressions.
- Is something else going on?

Analysis III: Were Our Assumptions Right?

- Maybe COVID-19 made the barriers for women worse
  - Children not at school - responsibility falling more to women?
  - Easy access might have meant workers recommended RIPE… to workers just like them?
  - Women do not necessarily feel safer online.

Analysis IV: Did We Regress to the Mean?

- Maybe RIPE was doing *better* than the industry at large?
- Easy attendance meant participants looked less diverse?
  - Just like the tech industry….

That’s It!

- Code & data online:

  https://github.com/shane-kerr/ripemtggender