

## Physicians in Interwar Czechoslovakia: Gender Aspects

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### Abstract

How many women studied medicine in the interwar period? How successful were they? What were their professional careers? Answers to these questions are quite different from expected. My research analyses data of 564 medical students, enrolled in 1920 at the Charles University. 21,3% of the cohort members were female, which is more than the University average (17,6%). 264 of those students graduated at Charles University. Women were as successful as men. The earliest graduate was female - Anna Herschberg (later victim of holocaust). As fresh medical doctors, women were supposed to become general practitioners, pediatricians or gynaecologists. But they broke all the expectations, mostly refused the career of GPs (unlike men) and chose other specialties, mainly dentistry. It was a wise decision. After finishing 1-year specialization course they were allowed to establish a private office. Being a dentist was an expert job without any obligation of night guards. Thus it was family-friendly. But we cannot omit certain inequalities. There were no female public health officials and only a few female official GPs (paid by the state). Of the 40 official GPs in this cohort, only 3 were female, which is less than 9%.

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