



Max Weber Programme International Conference

Academic Careers in the Social Sciences & Humanities National Comparisons and Opportunities

**30 November 2007
Villa la Fonte, Florence**

Currently the higher education system is undergoing thorough changes in most European countries. This is not least due to the Bologna Process, which aims at the creation of a homogeneous higher education landscape in Europe. However, even though many governments have introduced reforms to make the academic workplace more attractive and counter the brain drain from the continent to the Anglo-Saxon countries, academic careers still vary greatly between countries.

Navigating in the different national academic systems and the myriads of available funding and grant systems is not an easy task. Yet, more accessible knowledge on the various academic structures and career prospects is in high demand, not the least due to the increasing mobility of scholars. To meet this need, the conference explores the academic career options of young PhD holders, focusing mainly on the disciplines of Economics, History, Law, and Social and Political Science.

Conference Programme

- 9.00 **Welcome: Academic Careers in the 'European Research and Higher Education Area' and the 'MWP Academic Careers Observatory' initiative**
Ramon Marimon, Director of the Max Weber Programme

Session 1. The Academic Market in Europe and the US

Despite the increasing internationalisation of academia, academic career possibilities differ greatly from country to country. Whereas many continental European countries have the reputation of being closed and unattractive, the United Kingdom and the United States, above all, attract academics from many nationalities. In this session, we would like to obtain a clearer view of the national differences in order to explain the (un)attractiveness of certain countries. At the same time, we would like to address the implications of the internationalisation of academia on the national systems and analyse to what extent national governments try to improve the situation for young academics.

Chair: *Arnout Mertens*, Academic Careers Observatory, Max Weber Programme

- 9.30 **The Attractions and Distractions of an Academic Career in the UK, and How to be Competitive in the UK Academic Job Market**
Frances Meegan, Careers Advisor, LSE Career Service
- 9.55 **Academic Careers in Spain**
José Gines Mora, Director Centre for the Study of Higher Education Management (CEGES), Valencia University of Technology
- 10.20 **Career Structure and Barriers for Young Researchers in Scandinavia**
Kamma Langberg, Danish Centre for Research Analysis, University of Aarhus, Denmark
- 10.45 **Questions & Discussion**
- 11.10 **Coffee Break**

Chair: *Heather Jones*, Max Weber Fellow

- 11.30 **Academic Cultures and Career Paths in the US: Facts, Trends, and Opportunities**
Daniel Denecke, Council of Graduate Schools, Washington
- 11.55 **The Academic Profession in the Social Sciences in France: Towards a Change of the Rules of the Game?**
Frédéric Sawicki, Director, Lille Center for Politics and Administration
- 12.20 **Academic Careers in Italy**
Daniele Checchi, Dean of the School of Political Sciences, Department of Economics, University of Milan

12.45 Status of Women in the Economics Academic Profession
Lisa M. Lynch, William L. Clayton Professor of International Economic Affairs, The Fletcher School, Tufts University, Fernand Braudel Senior Fellow, EUI, and Chair of the European Economic Association Committee on the Status of Women in the Economic Profession

12.55 Questions and Discussion

13.10 – 14.30 LUNCH

Session 2. Postdoc and Funding Options

In recent years, it has become ever more normal to spend one or more years as a postdoctoral researcher before obtaining the first real academic job. In some cases, new PhD holders even find themselves trapped in temporary postdoctoral research or teaching positions. In this session, we want to analyse the opportunities and challenges of postdoctoral researchers.

Chair: Giesela Rühl, Max Weber Fellow

14.30 The Rise of the Post-Doc as Principal Investigator?
Chris Armbruster, Founder and Executive Director, Research Network 1989

14.55 Funding Opportunities for Postdoctoral Fellows at the European Level
Alain Peyraube, Scientific Director of the Ile-de-France region at the CNRS, Paris. Member of the ERC, Scientific Council

15.20 Questions

15.40 Coffee Break

16.00 ROUNDTABLE: National Funding Possibilities

Chair: Andreas Frijdal, Head of Academic Service, EUI

Each presenter will give a 10 minutes overview of the funding opportunities for academics in his/her country, and will touch upon the accessibility to funding for foreign candidates.

France (*Frédéric Sawicki*), Germany (*Chris Armbruster*), UK (*Frances Meegan*), Spain/Southern Europe (*José Gines Mora*), Scandinavia/Northern Europe (*Kamma Langberg*), US (*Daniel Denecke*)

17.00 Discussion/Questions/Roundup
The floor will be opened for general discussion and questions with the roundtable

18.00 Reception

Conference Speakers

Chris Armbruster, Founder and Executive Director, Research Network 1989

Daniele Checchi, Dean of the School of Political Sciences, Department of Economics, University of Milan

Daniel Denecke, Council of Graduate Schools, Washington

Andreas Frijdal, Head of Academic Service, EUI

Heather Jones, Max Weber Fellow

Kamma Langberg, Danish Centre for Research Analysis, University of Aarhus, Denmark

Lisa M. Lynch, William L. Clayton Professor of International Economic Affairs The Fletcher School, Tufts University, Fernand Braudel Senior Fellow, EUI, and Chair of the European Economic Association Committee on the Status of Women in the Economic Profession

Ramon Marimon, Director of the Max Weber Programme

Frances Meegan, Careers Advisor, LSE Career Service

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José Gines Mora, Director Centre for the Study of Higher Education Management (CEGES), Valencia University of Technology

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Frédéric Sawicki, Director, Lille Center for Politics and Administration

Conference Abstracts

The Attractions and Distractions of an Academic Career in the UK, and How to be Competitive in the UK Academic Job Market

Frances Meegan, Careers Advisor, LSE Career Service

There are two main career streams for those working in academia in the UK, i.e. lecturing (research & teaching) and research (solely or predominately research focused). The majority of those working in the lecturing track, where the career structure is roughly: Lecturer A-B (36%); Senior Lecturer-Reader (16%); Professor (9%), are on permanent contracts and 75% are aged 40+. The majority of those working in the research track are on fixed term contracts and 33% are aged under 30, and 80% are less than 40 years old. In the UK, 64% of academics are employed in research & teaching positions and 28% are working in research only roles.

Since 1992, higher education institutions in the UK have been experiencing significant change; conferment of university status on polytechnics; growing student numbers; growing numbers of overseas students; changes in funding arrangements, including the introduction of student fees for undergraduates in England; a greater emphasis on quality control and accountability, e.g. RAE, TAE, QAA; and ever growing pressure to produce top quality research outputs. This has not surprisingly had an impact on academics working in the sector. While the opportunity to use initiative, teaching and research continue to be regarded as satisfying aspects of the job, dissatisfaction is evident with pay, opportunities for promotion, the level of administrative work and working hours. The dissatisfaction with pay relates to comparisons with other UK professionals. However, in comparison with the 'real' salaries of academics in other countries, the UK sits below only the USA. Opportunities for promotion are greater in the old universities, where 31% of positions are at the senior lecturer grade and 25% at the professorial grade, the corresponding figures for the new universities are 5% and 22%. Other differences between the new and old universities will be discussed.

While there has been a gradual and continuing improvement in the working conditions for academic researchers on fixed term contracts this varies from university to university and in general these roles provide less job security and access to promotion opportunities than are available to academics on permanent contracts. The main areas of job and career satisfaction reported by academic researchers are flexibility, freedom from teaching and administration and consequently the greater time available to focus on producing publications. Around 34% on the research only career track report their intention to stay within it over the longer term. Following the Robert's report in 2002 there have been a range of national and institution-based initiatives to improve the level of personal, professional and career management training and development provided to PhD students and academic researchers in the UK. The UK Research Councils have recently announced a £15m contract to develop a national programme (along the lines of the UK Grad Programme for PhDs) for academic researchers. The ratio of UK to foreign academic staff is 3:1; more non-UK staff are employed in the old universities. In fact, notwithstanding the right of EEA nationals to work in the UK, UK HEIs (especially the pre-1992 universities) are probably amongst the most willing UK employers to seek work permits where these are required for new recruits. There are 13,000 graduates each year from UK PhD programmes (56% UK nationals, 12% EU and 32% non-EU). This includes 1,300 social science PhDs, and their reported employment rate is over 84% (only UK nationals surveyed). Their unemployment rate is under 3% (which compares well with undergraduates, 6% and masters, 4%). In the UK approximately 50% of social sciences PhDs take up an academic role on graduating. These are split 32% Lectureships (research & teaching) and 15% research only positions. There are no specific figures for those taking up 'career bridging' postdoctoral fellowship positions.

Although postdoctoral fellowships are often research focused and by their nature subject to fixed term contracts, the inherent expectation in many of them, is that they will lead, by their conclusion, to a successful Lectureship application. Increasingly, within the UK system whether a postdoc is: for one, two or three years; funded by a research council, university or trust; focused on publications originating from the PhD and/or the start-up of a new piece of research, it is seen as a way to add value to the postdoctoral CV and become more competitive in the academic market place.

Notwithstanding the variety and rate of change referred to above, the primary requirements for academic positions in the UK are still: research record and potential; publication record and potential; teaching and supervisory experience (for any post involving teaching); exposure to, or experience of, applying for research funding; and within the lecturing career stream in particular, a willingness to contribute to departmental development and administration. The relative importance of each of these will change depending on career stage and job level, as will the depth and variety of experience required in each. It is possible for a soon to submit or just graduated PhD to be successful in their application for a Lecturer position (usually level A) or a Research Officer role, but this is usually on the basis of the value they had added to their CV during their PhD and how well this is presented in their application package and selection interview. A key factor will also be the quality of the academic references they receive.

Academic Careers in Spain

José Gines Mora, Director Centre for the Study of Higher Education Management (CEGES), Valencia University of Technology

We present and analyze the situation of academic staff in Spanish universities. The current situation of academics is the result of fast changes happened in the eighties due to both the legal reforms and the remarkable growth of the higher education system. From the early 1980's, Spanish universities have enjoyed a very dynamic situation that can be considered in general as very positive for both the quality of the system and for the working conditions of academic staff. Nevertheless, new conflicts have recently appeared. Both people governing universities and academic staff are accustomed to a situation where growth was the norm, and more academic positions were always available or foreseen. This situation has changed dramatically with the stability in the number of students, and the landscape of higher education institutions is shifting very quickly. At the moment, more positions are not necessary if academic staff policies do not change, abandoning the general rule that closely relates academic staff numbers to the number of lectures delivered. On the other hand, a relatively young population occupies most of the professorships, and vacancies due to retirement are very scarce. The consequence is the existence of a growing group of young people, with very high qualifications, that cannot opt to tenured positions if the current structure of academic personnel is not changed soon. This situation is becoming a severe problem, and great concern is arising among experts and in governmental circles.

We can summarize the results of our analysis stating that working conditions of tenured staff could be considered reasonable. Generally speaking, tenured academic staff, with a civil servant status, feels comfortable in their positions. Nevertheless, the situation of non-tenured academic staff is rather less positive. Whereas non-tenured positions were considered only a provisional situation, no conflicts came up among non-tenured academic staff. However, the more saturated the system is becoming, the more problematic the situation is for this group.

About the speaker: José-Ginés Mora is Director of the Centre for the Study of Higher Education Management (CEGES) at the Valencia University of Technology. He is Deputy-Chair of the Governing Board of the Institutional Higher Education Programme (IMHE) of the OECD, former President of the EAIR (the European Higher Education Society), and ex-member of the Steering Committee of ENQA. He is associate editor of Tertiary Education and Management and member of the Editorial Boards of Higher Education Policy, Higher Education in

Europe and Higher Education Management and Policy, and ex-Joint Editor of the European Journal of Education. His research is focused on Higher Education. He is author of two hundred and ten publications on these subjects. He has worked as advisor for higher education matters for several governments and international agencies (EC, WB, OECD).

Career Structure and Barriers for Young Researchers in Scandinavia

Kamma Langberg, Danish Centre for Research Analysis, University of Aarhus, Denmark

The presentation will include data from the Scandinavian countries: Denmark, Norway and Sweden, but analysis are based on Danish data. The official appointment structure in the Scandinavian Countries will be presented together with some more practical advice. In the presentation the labour market for (young) university researchers in Scandinavia is analyzed to determine whether the university researchers have a tenure track system, gender discrimination in positions, wages and mobility rates, and still have a segmented labour market with wage differences.

One result of the analysis is that the expected direct career path or pipeline from assistant professor to associate professor, i.e., a closed tenure track system does not exist in Denmark. A large number of researchers enter the Danish university sector at associate or full professor level without former employment in the Government research sector (in the previous 6 years), i.e., come from research institutions in other countries, R&D-departments in the private sector or from non-research-jobs. This indicates a relative high interaction with other (research) environments. A second result is that gender has some impact on the inflow to the research sector, i.e., creating gender specific career paths when sectors outside the universities are taken into account.

Academic Cultures and Career Paths in the US: Facts, Trends, and Opportunities

Daniel Denecke, Council of Graduate Schools, Washington

International students comprise a large and growing portion of the US graduate enterprise, and collaborations between U.S. universities and institutions from other countries are developing at an accelerated pace. In this environment, the opportunities for international faculty at U.S. higher education institutions will likely increase. This presentation will address trends in the US market for social science and humanities scholars and strategies for marketing yourself, typical roles and responsibilities expected of US faculty, the tenure and promotion process, and financial aspects of US academic careers in the humanities and social science fields.

About the speaker: Daniel D. Denecke is Director of Best Practices at the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS). He received his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University and has served as faculty member at the University of Maryland, College Park and Georgetown University.

Dr. Denecke is co-author of the publication *Ph.D. Completion and Attrition* (2004), which reviews recent empirical studies on the topic, discusses the institutional factors that contribute to graduate-degree completion, and outlines salutary interventions and next steps for improving completion rates in graduate education. Dr. Denecke is currently directing the CGS Ph.D. Completion Project. Prior to working on this project, he managed the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program at CGS. In this capacity, he has worked extensively with graduate deans, faculty, and program directors to promote and institutionalize professional development programs for doctoral students aspiring to faculty positions. Dr. Denecke's personal research focuses on pedagogy, literature, and the rise of social science in nineteenth-century Britain.

The Academic Profession in the Social Sciences in France: Towards a Change of the Rules of the Game?

Frédéric Sawicki, Director, Lille Center for Politics and Administration

To describe the actual French academic job market in the social sciences is rather difficult, because this market is probably going to undergo deep changes in the coming years. The government just adopted a law strengthening the autonomy of the universities. Therefore, the market might become more open than it has been so far. Before analysing the possible changes, I shall describe the situation such as it prevails until today and I shall deliver information about the procedures of recruitment, wages and careers.

Three main features characterize the French system:

1. The existence of two types of strongly diverging careers: on the one hand an academic career at a university (which is the most frequent one in the social sciences), on the other hand a research career in a research institution.
2. Academics and researchers in their very great majority are civil servants or have a status that comes close to the one of civil servant. Temporary contracts are exceptions. In France, secondary education teachers (professeurs agrégés) and PhD students have become used to face the strong growth of the number of students during the last twenty years.
3. Recruitment procedures, which are long and complicated, are being controlled by commissions that are composed by (elected) academic staff who all belong to the discipline of the vacant job. The higher academic authorities have no influence. The various academic disciplines therefore manage their jobs by themselves, all together at the national level (by holding the monopoly on bestowing the right to people to apply for jobs at the universities in his/her discipline) and at the local level.

To summarise, these three combined features enhance an internal recruitment (only well-known candidates are being selected) and discourage the recruitment of PhD holders who have studied abroad. This situation is reinforced by the fact that the number of jobs is not increasing, whereas the number of doctors in the humanities and social sciences grows.

The Rise of the Post-Doc as Principal Investigator?

Chris Armbruster, Founder and Executive Director, Research Network 1989

1. I will Summarise the highlights from the report "*The Rise of the Post-Docs as Principal Investigator? How PhDs and Post-Docs May Advance Their Career and Knowledge Claims in the new Europe of Knowledge*" (2006). The summary is intended to give an overview of the enabling and constraining conditions for post-docs as they emerge in the European Area of Research. The full report is available for a free download at: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=891041>

The European Research Area and the European Higher Education Area are still under construction. Their foundations, however, are visible and already affect what the next generation of researchers can and cannot do. While it is unclear when, and to what standard, construction will be completed, the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers clarify the expectations of policy makers and major stakeholders. One significant scenario is the rise of the post-doc as principal investigator. This would signal profound change in the governance and funding of research since hitherto the post-doc has been understood primarily as an assistant (to a professor's chair or on a research project).

This report considers the new knowledge and skills PhDs and Post-Docs need to acquire to advance their career and projects more independently – in science and engineering as well as the social sciences and humanities. Potential changes in funding and status are discussed as well as changing relations with supervisors and mentors. Because of European flagship awards for post-docs as well as mobility fellowships, a significant number of post-docs are already principal investigators. Details of these flagship post-doc awards and fellowship are outlined. The report then discusses what doctoral students and post-docs might do individually and collectively to follow in the footsteps of the pioneers.

2. I will outline and explain why I think that post-docs primarily need to be aware of the following issues:

- a) How their performance will be evaluated and measured over time by selection committees that are looking at their applications as they move towards principal investigator status and tenure;
- b) What post-docs need to do themselves in terms of career planning (mentors, publications, service, visibility) and research programme development (funding, collaborators);
- c) That peers are much more important than post-docs often think – i.e. research collaborations may enable post-doc researchers to leverage joint awards as coprincipal investigators; or, else, a principal investigator forms a team with other younger investigators.

Funding Opportunities for Postdoctoral Fellows at the European Level

Alain Peyraube, Scientific Director of the Ile-de-France region at the CNRS, Paris. Member of the ERC, Scientific Council

My paper will discuss the funding opportunities for postdoctoral fellows within the 7th Framework programme of the EU (2007-2013) with an overall budget of 50.52 billion euros. The four specific programmes (Cooperation, Ideas, Personnel, Capacities) will be presented, with a special focus on the “Ideas” programme better known as the ERC (European Research Council).

ERC is the first pan-European funding agency for frontier research. Funding is directed to individual teams and projects selected solely on the criteria of excellence. It operates according to the principles of scientific excellence, autonomy, efficiency and transparency. The content of proposals and funding areas are science-driven and « bottom-up ». Individual grants are allowed. There is no requirement for multinational projects. Grant allocations are flexible, light and portable. Finally, grants are open to researchers of any nationality who would like to locate their research activity in any EU Member State (EU-27) as well as any associated country.

Two schemes are to be distinguished within ERC: (i) ERC Starting Grants, supporting excellent early stage independent investigators (2-9 years since completion of PhD); (ii) ERC Advanced Grants, supporting investigators at all subsequent stages. 250 to 300 projects will be funded for Year 1 [2007], only for the Starting Grants scheme. The average grants will be between 100,000 and 400,000 euros per year for a period of up to 5 years. Following the first call of proposals, 9,167 projects were submitted: 4,408 in Physical Sciences and Engineering (48.1%), 3,396 in Life Sciences and Medicine (37%), 1,363 in Humanities and Social Sciences [HSS] (14.9%).

The evaluation is conducted in two stages: a first stage consisting of an evaluation of an outline proposal of four pages maximum by the panel members without any involvement of remote referees; a second stage during which the full proposals (maximum 10 pages) are examined by remote referees and during which all candidates having passed the first stage are interviewed by the panel members.

Five panels are in operation for HSS:

SH-1 Individuals and organizations: Economics, management, demography, geography, urban and environmental studies – 379 projects were submitted in this panel, out of the 1,363 proposals for the entire HSS;

SH-2 Institutions, behaviour, values and beliefs: Anthropology, sociology, political science, law, communication, social studies of science and technology – 355 / 1,363;

SH-3 The human mind and its complexity: Cognition, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, and education – 349 / 1363;

SH-4 Cultures and cultural diversity: Literature, visual and performing arts, music and cultural studies – 130 / 1363;

SH-5 The study of the past and cultural artefacts: Memory, history and archaeology – 150 / 1363.

Advice for young scholars seeking funding from ERC will be given.

Lastly, a brief report will be given on the funding opportunities offered by the French ANR (Agence Nationale de la Recherche) for postdoctoral fellows.