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Principal Investigators of Individual Projects (IPs)

■ IP1 (Germany)

Forms of Professionalisation in Higher Education
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■ IP2 (Austria)

Governance and the Academic Profession
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■ IP3 (Croatia)

The Academic Profession and Societal Expectations:
Challenges for University, Civic Mission
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■ IP4 (Ireland)

Professionalisation of the Academic Profession
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■ IP5 (Romania)

The Academic Profession and the Governance
of Quality Assurance and Quality Development
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■ IP6 (Switzerland)

Academics' Recruitment: Institutional
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EUROAC

The Academic Profession in Europe: Responses to Societal Challenges

A Research Project within the EuroHESC Programme

EuroHESC Higher Education and Social Change

EuroHESC is a programme of interdisciplinary comparative research.

Its aim is to interpret and explain the relationships between contemporary socio-economic changes and transformations and the changes and transformations occurring within higher education institutions and academia.

The larger questions concern:

- The relationship between higher education and the creation and development of knowledge societies.
- The relationship between organisational change of higher education institutions and changes in programs, agendas and advances.
- The relationship of higher education to processes of globalisation (e.g. migration patterns and the impact of new technologies).

The EuroHESC Programme Comprises four Collaborative Research Projects (CRPs)

<p>RHESI Re-Structuring HE and Scientific Innovation: consequences of changes in authority relations for the organisation and direction of research</p> <p>Project Leader: Prof. Uwe Schimank, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Bremen, Germany</p> <p>Countries: CH, DE, NL, SE; UK (AP)</p>	<p>EUROAC The Academic Profession in Europe: Responses to societal challenges</p> <p>Project Leader: Prof. Ulrich Teichler, International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel (INCHER-Kassel), University of Kassel, Germany</p> <p>Countries: AT, CH, DE, HR, IE, RO; FI, PL (AP)</p>	<p>CINHEKS Change in Networks, Higher Education and Knowledge Societies</p> <p>Project Leader: Prof. Jussi Välimaa, Institute for Educational Research, University of Jyväskylä, Finland</p> <p>Countries: DE, FI, PT, UK, USA; JP (AP)</p>	<p>TRUE Transforming Universities in Europe: Governance, Organisational change and the HE landscape</p> <p>Project Leader: Prof. Ivar Bleiklie, Dept. of Administration and Organisation Theory, University of Bergen, Norway</p> <p>Countries: CH, DE, FR, IT, NL, NO, PT; UK (AP)</p>
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For more information see:

<http://www.esf.org/activities/eurocores/running-programmes/eurohesc/eurohesc-projects.html>

EUROAC The Academic Profession in Europe: Responses to Societal Challenges

Duration: October 2009 – March 2012

Project Description

The aim of this Collaborative Research Project (CRP) is to understand how the academic profession (AP) perceives, interprets and “digests” recent changes in its societal environment and in the organisational fabric of higher education systems and institutions. EUROAC consists of projects from seven European countries (AT, CH, DE, HR, IE, PL, RO), co-operating with each other. Attention is paid to the increasing emphasis on relevance of knowledge, diversification and internationalisation.

Research Questions

- Relevance of Knowledge: How do academics perceive and interpret the new conceptualisation of relevance in knowledge production? What challenges do they note with regard to the (re-) definition of their own status, role and career?
- Diversification: How does the AP react to the growing variety of functions and diversification according to rankings and profiles? Do these trends foster new divisions of work, segmented career paths and changing professional identities within and beyond the traditional core of the AP?
- Internationalisation: How do academics deal with growing international cooperation and competition? How does the AP perceive itself as being affected by these changes beyond a mere increase in international activities?

EUROAC intends to address the ways in which the AP perceives and handles these major societal challenges, but also, how the AP responds to the corresponding challenges in the organisational fabric of the HE system and the institutions. Those processes will be analysed in an international comparison and on the basis of three issues:

- The impact of new forms of governance and increased evaluation on the role of academics and their conditions of work.
- New employment conditions and changing academic career settings.
- New forms of professionalisation in HE institutions: Do concepts like knowledge society and globalization change academics’ perceptions and interpretations of knowledge production in HE?

Methods

The study consists of a questionnaire survey of the academic profession complemented by interviews.

The questionnaire survey is based on the 2007 international survey on the “Changing Academic Profession” (CAP). Including the CAP data from those European countries not involved in EUROAC will result in a EUROAC dataset, comprising 12 countries. This will produce the largest and most systematic European dataset on the academic profession that has ever been generated.

The second mode of inquiry are semi-structured interviews taking into account differences among disciplines, types of HE institutions and career stages of the academics. The interviews will focus on perceptions of institutional governance, changes of academic careers and new forms of professionalisation among various groups of actors in higher education institutions.

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