

Supporting the Development of a New Academic Career Framework in Latvia

Information Event Summary

October 2020



Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija



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Background

Academic careers are an essential aspect of higher education policies and practice. High-quality academic work conducted by well-selected, supported, and incentivized academics is a major output of higher education systems. As a result, countries compete in designing efficient human resources (HR) policies that: (i) support national and institutional higher education strategies and their implementation; and (ii) help attract the best and the brightest into the academic profession both locally and globally.

The World Bank is supporting the reform of Latvia's higher education and research system by working with the Latvian Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and other stakeholders to develop a new academic career framework in line with European and international good practice.

A (virtual) information event took place on October 6, 2020 which aimed to inform a broader audience about the project work plan and the starting point for the project; consult with stakeholders on the current academic career system and aspects in need of change; and share transformational experiences of other similar higher education systems which have already reformed their academic career framework. For the consultation process, an online survey was disseminated to participants and remained active for one week after the conclusion of the information event. Twenty-two participants responded to the survey.

This document uses the terms *Moderator*, *Participant*, and *Respondent* in summarizing feedback received by the World Bank team. **Moderator** refers to members of the World Bank team who posed questions to the audience during the information event, based on presentations for the discussions on *Principles*, *Progression Models and Processes*, and *Staff Categories*. **Participant** refers to higher education stakeholders in Latvia who attended the virtual event. **Respondent** refers to individuals who completed the online survey.

This document is structured in three sections according to the sessions on *Principles*, *Progression Models and Processes*, and *Staff Categories*. Each section outlines a summary of the presentation at the information event, main messages from the ensuing discussion, participants' questions emerging from the discussion, and survey responses.

The World Bank team appreciates the insights of participants and respondents throughout this process.

Stakeholder Discussions

Discussion 1: Principles

Presentation Summary

The main strategic goals of higher education and science should be considered when planning a Career Framework; conversely, human resources (HR) policies, political context, and administrative as well as legal frameworks should be considered when defining new higher education and science policies.

Discussion Summary

Flexibility in Recruitment: During this discussion, initial comments focused on flexibility in recruiting candidates for academic positions. One participant raised the issue that exists in certain fields—such as art and design—where practitioners are highly skilled, and enquired about examples of policies which would help to ensure that academic staff in those fields are top performers outside of the academic setting. Further, the participant stressed the importance of being able to fast-track recruitment efforts in these fields, in contrast to more traditional fields where the criteria for academic staff often requires many years of research and publication.

In response, moderators highlighted the importance of the question and provided examples of flexibility in recruitment efforts, reframing the discussion from the field-specific examples of art and design to academic career tasks of research and teaching. Flexibility would allow for multiple entry points into—and exit points from—academic careers rather than a single point of entry and exit, allowing for greater mobility between sectors (e.g. private sector and academia) throughout one’s career. These examples included different categories of professors—where differences would be reflected in the position’s title—such as Professor of Practice and Professor of Industry. A similar approach could be used for the participant’s examples of the art and design fields.

Tenure Track: Another participant commented on the need to align tenure track—if introduced in Latvia—to the research aspect of academic careers. Further, the participant noted that the progression of an individual [staff’s] research program, from its emergence to independence to formation of a group to leadership. In response, moderators noted that that this comment raised the question about the nature of tenure track i.e. whether tenure track should be developed mainly for research-based functions and, as such, tenure would primarily exist as research-based positions. Overall, moderators noted that this discussion, based on participants’ comments, introduced two levels of consideration: the individual level, flexibility within the promotion scheme, and achieving a balance in flexibility; and transparency criteria which are more universal (which would also require achieving a balance in teaching and research).

International Successes: One participant inquired about Finland’s reforms and whether its aims were achieved. Moderators noted that overall successes include greater transparency, predictability, and fewer position titles. However, the tenure-track model was applied differently at different institutions, there is still no legislation on tenure track and, except, for Aalto University, there was no extra funding available for tenured-track positions. Thus, an easy transition between sectors during one’s career has not yet been achieved.

Transitioning between/from Teaching and/to Research: The Finnish experience raises important (intermediate) outcomes for Latvia to consider around fairness i.e. criteria that require academic staff to conduct more research while simultaneously being given more administrative and teaching responsibilities. It also raises several other questions which should be taken into account when devising HR models and frameworks, such as the mechanisms for research funding, the (re)distribution of administrative tasks and the relative weight given to teaching relative to research.

Moderators added that, although bibliometrics have been the main mechanism for evaluating researchers, there has been a groundswell of changes focused on research assessments focused on quality and impact, rather than research quantity. European countries such as Finland, the Netherlands, and Norway were cited as examples.

Integrating the Career Framework: One participant commented that integrating the new Career Framework into the local (Latvian) and regional (European) labor markets is a significant challenge which also presents an opportunity to integrate research and teaching. The participant noted that Latvia's institutions produce good research and a Career Framework would allow for leveraging the skills of top-performing researchers in the country. In addition, the participant expressed the need to attract European talent into the Latvian higher education system.

Regarding this response, moderators identified some of the labor market challenges that place the Latvian education system at a disadvantage in terms of attracting external talent, specifically the language barrier.

Moderators also added that mobility should include support for Latvian researchers who can gain experience externally and return to the country in the future.

Long-term/Short-term Contract Duration: One participant requested data to allow for comparing Latvia with other countries, such as the Finnish case study presented. The participant noted that within their university, the majority of academic staff are employed on (short-term) project-based funding. As such, the participant inquired about achieving a balance that fosters long-term commitments from professors that allows them to be more engaged in teaching while ensuring competition among scientists/researchers.

Participants' Questions

- In high-skill labor markets, how can policymakers strengthen the career path and skills match for both practitioners and academics in fields such as art and design to attract the best candidates?
- How would a new academic career framework (or model within an institution) support the transition from teaching toward more research-oriented staff competencies?
- What is the ratio/balance between Finnish academic-staff who are employed on long-term contracts (tenure-track equivalent positions) and short-term (project-based) contracts?

Survey Questions

- *How should the new Career Framework be integrated into Latvia's labor market for a highly skilled labor force?*
- *How should the new Career Framework be integrated into the European/international labor market for a highly skilled labor force?*
- *How should the new Career Framework fit into the current legal steering—administrative law, higher education legislation, and labor law—of higher education and science?*
- *How should the new Career Framework fit into the current political steering (including employers and unions) of higher education and science?*
- *How should the new Career Framework fit into the current financial steering of higher education and science?*

Integrating the Career Framework into the labor market(s): Survey respondents held the view that a consultation process is needed to integrate the proposed career framework into the labor market(s). Integrating the career framework would mean that it is embedded across the higher education sector in human resource policies, the political agenda, as well as administrative and legal frameworks.

Other respondents believed that both institutional and sectoral changes are needed to allow for the new career framework to be integrated. Regarding institutional changes, survey respondents advocated for more institutional autonomy in Latvia, which would allow universities and research institutions to determine staff selection more freely. Proposed sectoral changes focused on enhancing the attractiveness of academic positions by awarding more competitive salaries, improving transparency, and adopting a clear progression model. Enhancing the attractiveness of the profession in Latvia would also appeal to international candidates. In contrast, it is worth noting that although several respondents identified the need to enhance the attractiveness of academic professions in Latvia by introducing new benefits or improving existing ones, one respondent stated that academic staff are often unable to utilize critical existing benefits such as a (six-month) sabbatical due to administrative barriers in their current roles.

Implementing the majority of proposed institutional and sectoral changes would require additional funding for higher education and research, which survey respondents acknowledged.

Legal, Political, and Financial Steering of the new Career Framework: In determining how the new career framework should fit into existing legal, political, and financial systems, survey respondents highlighted the challenges which would constrain successes in each of these broadly defined systems.

Regarding **legal steering**—which was presented as encompassing administrative law, higher education legislation, and the labor law—respondents appeared to collectively agree on implementing minor changes and amendments to existing documents rather than comprehensive undertakings such as new laws and legislation (for higher education and science). Some respondents also noted that there are interconnected considerations such as the attractiveness of the profession and institutional autonomy which, if addressed effectively, could more easily facilitate changes to the legislative and regulatory underpinnings that apply to higher education and science.

There was disagreement on how the new career framework should fit into the existing **political steering** in Latvia. However, some respondents stressed the necessary role of unions in any consultation process. Respondents also noted that academic staff, universities, and research institutions should be given sufficient time to adapt to changes emerging from a new career framework. Further, respondents suggested that without a transition period, established research groups—and research in Latvia by extension—are likely to face adverse consequences, particularly for staff who are employed simultaneously at a university and a research institute.

Finally, survey respondents agreed widely that there are shortcomings in existing **financial steering** mechanisms which would pose challenges for the new career framework. However, several reasons were cited as to the source of these shortcomings. Some respondents believed that higher education and science are underfunded and, as such, systemwide reforms that aim to introduce a new career framework would not succeed without strong commitments from Latvia (and the European Union) to increase funding levels for higher education and research.

Other respondents focused less on the amount/level of funding and, instead, stressed that financial *regulations*—at the national and regional level—are the constraints which would adversely affect financial steering for a new career framework. In addition, some respondents were less optimistic about the possibility to improve the financial system for higher education and science vis-à-vis the career framework by noting that financial steering reacts slowly in Latvia, if at all.

Discussion 2: Progression Models and Processes

Presentation Summary

The basic mechanisms for career progression are (a) through an application process for an open vacancy, (b) promotion, or (c) the tenure track. The Career Models based on open vacancies are called vacancy-based models, and the Career Models based on promotions are called career-based models. The entrance points have two significant variants. In the **career-based model**, the entrance happens through an application process to the first step of a career. In the **vacancy-based model**, the entrance to a career is possible, at least in theory, from each career step. The third career variant, the **tenure-track model**, combines the two pure variants. It is based on open vacancies while allowing a possible progression through promotions for some of the positions.

Discussion Summary

Constitutional Court's Ruling: Participants opened the discussion for the session on Progression Models and Processes by referencing the constitutional ruling that effectively voids the six-year term for associate professors and professors. This ruling potentially places the need to follow the rule of law at odds with new reforms being proposed. Further, it is possible to assert that one interpretation of the ruling may lead to the terms of employment of certain individuals being extended indefinitely provided that s/he has not yet fulfilled the six-year duration of employment (which existed under the law prior to the court ruling). As such, these individuals would effectively be employed in a system that is similar to tenure track i.e. employment without term-limits or competition. Relatedly, institutions face internal pressure to evaluate

their staff and propose performance improvement interventions since term-limits would no longer apply as a result of the ruling.

The Finnish context could serve as an example of the implications regarding the uncertainty emerging from constitutional court rulings. Finland's legislation does not include the tenure-track concept and the associated trial period for this concept. One recommendation, based on an evaluation of the Finnish system, proposed the creation of a national framework that legally recognized tenure-track (and the trial period for this type of employment in higher education).

Finally, the constitutional court's ruling likely created unintended consequences regarding the status of academic staff in teaching and research. Based on the ruling, *Associate Professors* and *Professors* become permanent, while (senior) researchers would remain subject to the re-election process after six years. However, in Latvia, many academic staff perform both teaching and research duties. As such, an individual who performs both teaching and research would have tenure as a professor, but not as a researcher.

(Three-Step) Tenure-Track Model: One participant concurred with one Finnish tenure-track model that was presented which included *Assistant Professor*, *Associate Professor*, and *Professor*. However, a different duration was proposed of 3-6 years (with flexibility), rather than a fixed 5-year requirement under the Finnish model at Tampere University. In addition, the participant proposed basic requirements that are needed to incentivize tenure-track professors and ensure their continued engagement in research and teaching. These incentives would help to protect higher education institutions in extreme cases of disengaged tenure-track staff.

Moderators noted that attempts to design systems should aim to identify perverse incentives which have the potential to undermine proposed tenure-track models. One example was provided of a university, which had three sets of requirements for promotion: teaching, research and university service. The last category led to the creation of a plethora of committees that slowed down the decision-making process in the university.

Administrative Positions: One participant noted that a proposed tenure-track model for Latvia should account for the possibility that academic staff who serve in administrative and management roles (such as deans) would be less likely to conduct/publish high-quality research due to the workload and nature of their administrative positions.

Moderators noted that it is possible, due to flexibility in designing the tenure-track model based on good international practices, to create separate management-focused roles as part of a Career Framework. However, moderators also pointed out that it is not clear whether these roles should be included in tenure-track models, since it is possible that individuals who serve in management/administrative roles for an extended period may no longer have strong ties to their research and teaching fields.

Establishing Tenure-Track in Latvia: Competition was cited by one participant as an advantage of the existing approach to academic careers in Latvia. However, drawbacks of the existing system are linked to limits in being able to engage in both long-term research, as well as the lack of commitment to a specific institution. As such, the participant advocated for achieving balance in (competition-based) contracts as well as permanent positions. Another participant supported the implementation of a flexible tenure-track model in Latvia.

Establishing a tenure-track model in Latvia, according to another participant, would enhance academic freedom, supporting universities' efforts to fulfill their mission for Latvian society.

The discussion continued with support for a tenure-track model in Latvia provided that related positions focused primarily on research. One participant asserted that a strong focus on research was needed if the model were introduced due to many years of suboptimal funding for research across Latvia's HEIs which resulted in academic staff having significant teaching workloads to compensate for the shortfall in research funding. As such, the tenure-track model is viewed as a policy that could rebalance the (existing) disconnect that favored teaching at the expense of research [Addendum to this comment by the participant: teaching and research should be integrated under the tenure-track model, but the teaching load should be reasonably limited given the shortage of staff for teaching duties; during COVID-19, for example, the teaching load has increased, worsening the staff shortage].

Participants' Questions

- What are the criteria/components which would constitute the workload of academic staff?

Survey Summary

Survey Questions

- *What are the purposes and aims for establishing a tenure track as part of the Career Framework in Latvia?*
- *Who are the key stakeholders in planning, implementing, and assessing the tenure-track system in Latvia?*
- *How many steps should the tenure-track model have?*
- *What will be the main recruitment method for professors in the future?*
- *What would be an ideal length (or range) of a tenure period in Latvian institutions?*
- *How and when should the assessment be done and by whom?*

Establishing Tenure-Track: It appears that some respondents were not familiar with the tenure-track concept prior to the event. However, participants who responded to the survey—following the event—endorsed tenure-track as part of the career framework in Latvia, under the assumption that its advent would: provide stability and job security for staff; increase funding for higher education institutions; and attract and retain top performers in academic careers and research. Some respondents noted that the benefits of tenure-track are likely to cascade into other aspects of higher education, specifically by developing groups of professors who, in turn, would promote strategic specializations in understaffed fields.

Regarding the duration of tenure, several responses were provided which noted that the duration would depend on the starting point of one's career in the academic system. For example, one respondent suggested that the tenure-track period—if an individual started at the *Research Assistant* level up to *Professor*—would last between 19 and 25 years. Other estimates were as low as 3-4 years which is shorter in duration than the existing election-based system (although respondents collectively supported a recruitment approach of open competition for professors in the future). As such, it is likely that respondents did not understand the formulation of the question in the survey.

Assessment: Respondents suggested that assessments could adopt traditional evaluation methods that exist across academia for institutional quality assurance and published research such as peer review—both internal and external—which would be applied to academic careers. However, respondents offered a range of frequencies for performing assessments of candidates for tenure track positions: as low as four years and, on average, every six years. Some respondents proposed a multi-step process for the assessment whereby, an unsuccessful assessment would imply the availability of a (pending) position that could be open to other candidates.

Discussion 3: Staff Categories

Presentation Summary

The basic building blocks of an Academic Career Framework are the staff categories. The most typical boundaries between the staff categories refer to the following categorizations: between administrative and support staff, and academic staff; between research-oriented and teaching-oriented positions; based on qualifications; based on institutional types; permanent and fixed-term positions; part-time or full-time positions; and salaried and non-salaried (for example, scholarship) positions.

Discussion Summary

Categories in Latvia: Participants opened the discussion on Staff Categories by gauging the feasibility of creating two sets of positions in Latvia for academic staff. This comment is linked to the respective mission(s) of HEIs in Latvia: some institutions employ many practitioners who are active in their various fields and, as such, non-teaching duties do not only refer to research, but may also refer to active engagement in fields such as medicine and art. As such, some academic staff could perform a combination of teaching, research, and clinical or industry tasks. Participants also raised the possibility of a tenure-track being designed to complement the existing system of teaching and research responsibilities.

Similarly, one participant proposed flexible titles (which would also be narrowed relative to the current titles) to reflect the differences in workloads for staff. At the Assistant Professor level, there could be a single track for teaching, and another for research. In the latter case, the proposed category would be Research-based Assistant Professor. The subsequent categories would account for a combination of teaching, research, and industry practice responsibilities (where applicable).

Regarding the overall framework, participants advocated a single framework—which could include multiple models—that would apply to research institutions and also to higher education institutions. Many professors who are employed at research institutions already conduct research as their primary responsibility.

Human Resources and Talent Management: One participant noted that Latvia faces constraints due to its size and demographics. The existing structure of academia in Latvia implies that permanent employment is a reward, not a feature, during one's academic career. Anecdotes can be cited in which 20

years elapse between the beginning of an academic career as a PhD student and being elected as a Professor in Latvia. As such, discussions on tenure-track, which often aim to make academic careers more attractive, would likely need to shorten this timeline from Student to Professor. Introducing new categories which exist in other countries is also a possibility and the focus should not only be on consolidating the existing categories. For example, the category titled Adjunct Professor may help to address some of the issues raised whereby an individual could be employed on an hourly basis to fulfill a teaching workload or supervise a doctoral dissertation. This category would allow scientists and researchers who are employed primarily at research institutions to also fulfill a limited teaching workload.

Finally, participants noted that it is difficult for Latvia to attract talent from abroad, given the existing “basket model” of employment which creates operational challenges at the institutional and individual level. At the institutional level, this model inhibits institutions’ ability to adopt a strategic management approach. At the individual level equity issues emerge when some individuals have robust work programs—i.e. too many contracts and projects—while other individuals may have an insufficient number—i.e. too few contracts and projects. One proposal highlighted the benefits of institutional agreements—or even integration—in lieu of the current model.

Strategic Directions: At a high level, universities and institutions may be bound by different strategic priorities, which could create challenges for individuals. For example, competition among organizations (institutions and universities) could limit an individual’s ability to perform their teaching and research duties adequately. Further, a lack of familiarity with organizations’ strategic plans could result in conflict in practice regarding expectations and terms of employment.

Research Institutes: Participants noted that stakeholders should consider the future of research institutions in Latvia, and the prospect of dual employment for staff i.e. being employed at both a research institute and a university simultaneously. Previous discussions focused on an individual being employed at one organization, mainly a university, and job responsibilities of teaching and research were contained within the organization. Cross-organizational (dual) employment introduces another dimension for establishing staff categories (and the associated tenure-track model).

Optimization via institutional mergers between research institutions and universities (as, for example, in Finland) would be difficult to achieve in Latvia due to significant political constraints and the existing model of resource allocation.

Participants’ Questions

- What are the differences between the categories of Assistant Professor and Associate Professor?
- Can two sets of categories exist in Latvia [for teaching staff and/or non-teaching staff who are not necessarily researchers]?
- Are there country examples where the tenure-track system does not distinguish between teaching and research positions?

Survey Questions

- *Is it sensible to develop a single set of staff categories for both HEIs and scientific institutes, or should research and teaching-oriented staff categories continue within the current framework?*
- *Are the minimum qualifications for different staff categories regulated nationally and should they be the same in all types of institutions?*
- *Should the framework be based on an idea of full-time positions as a presumption and part-time positions as an exception?*
- *How should the staff categories be linked to minimum qualifications, salaries, and (state) funding?*

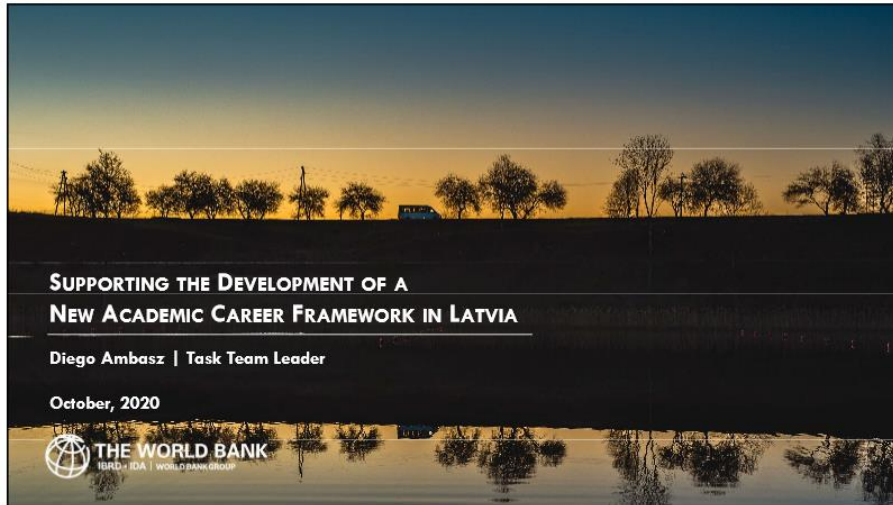
Existing Framework and New Framework: Respondents were divided on whether a single set of staff categories should be developed for both higher education institutions and scientific institutes, or whether research and teaching-oriented staff categories should continue within the existing framework. Specifically, some respondents agreed with developing a single set of staff categories, while others believed that the existing system is fit for purpose. Other respondents were skeptical and indicated that, although a single set of staff categories may improve transparency, the proposed changes were unlikely to be impactful.

Minimum Qualifications for Staff Categories: It appears that minimum qualifications for staff categories are currently regulated nationally, and respondents supported this approach. However, many respondents agreed on the need for differentiation across institutions, stating that the higher education system is over-regulated. As such, some respondents suggested that institutional autonomy was compromised since institutions were not allowed to designate qualification requirements. One respondent suggested that the qualifications regulated by the state should be treated as *minimum* criteria, allowing institutions the freedom to set more advanced qualification requirements in addition to the minimum.

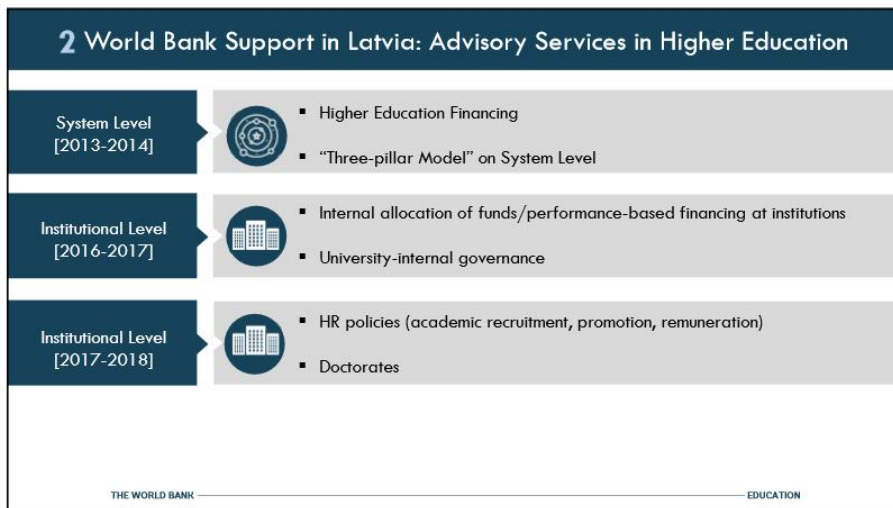
Annexes

Annex 1 Presentations

10/23/2020



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3 Why Focus on the Academic Career Framework?

World Bank support in 2017-2018 focused on the analysis of the doctorate and human resource policies, and on improving academic careers.

Recommendations

Ensure that individual career trajectories are predictable and compatible with formal career structures.

Develop the career stages and promotion patterns into transparent and predictable direction, that is, ensure that individuals are aware of the personnel plans of their department (retirements, (re)opening and closing of positions).

Anchor the institutional career model to national career framework to ensure the functionality of academic labor markets.

Maintain the transparency of institutional promotion criteria.

Maintain and further strengthen the transparency of criteria and evaluation of merits.



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4 Academic Careers in Latvia



Academic careers are an important aspect of higher education policies and practice, and thus impact countries' **competitiveness** beyond the narrow field of human resources (HR) management in higher education.



Latvia has a **"fragmented" approach to academic careers**, aspects of which have developed historically but which are now **likely to hamper the development** of a dynamic higher education and research system.



Fragmentation of academic careers **results in complicated HR arrangements and processes** on the institutional level, and often fragile arrangements for individuals.



Academic careers in Latvia are a succession of individual jobs, which makes planning for such a career difficult and the academic career overall **less attractive**.



Internationalization—a major **source of "fresh thinking" and potential quality enhancement** in higher education—is weak and affects several aspects of academia.

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5 Project Objective and Outcome

“ The specific objective of the project is to support the Latvian Ministry of Education and Science in reforming its academic career system by proposing a new academic career framework in line with European and international good practice, including a proposed system of academic positions and related selection and promotion processes. The new framework will be accompanied by a proposed roadmap for implementation and an analysis of legal and financial implications, also developed under the project. ”

Detailed Project Description, March 2020



Intended Outcome: Enhanced attractiveness and efficiency of the Latvian higher education system, in line with European and international good practice

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6 Timeline: Project

| Scope | Inception Phase | Diagnosis | Recommendations | Dissemination & Follow-up |
|---------|---|---|--|---|
| Outcome | Clarity on reform goals | Authorities have a better understanding of international developments in ACs and steps needed to reform Latvia AC Framework | Authorities have a better understanding of the specific options for their future AC Framework | Joint understanding across sector regarding the new framework and next steps |
| Outputs | Virtual Kick-off Event "Ideas Paper" | Study Visits Information Event | Workshop: Where do we stand—where do others go? Options for Academic Career Framework Workshop: Framework and Roadmap development | Delivery of report on future Academic Career Framework Dissemination event |

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7 Today's Information Event

Changing Academic Careers in Finland



Finland provides a case study about reforms in academic careers over the past decade. This case study will explore Finland's reforms including changes in recruitment processes, and examples of Finnish universities' tenure-track models.

Principles



In planning a Career Framework, the main strategic goals of higher education and science should be considered. Human resources (HR) policies, political context, and administrative as well as legal frameworks should, in turn, be considered when defining new higher education and science policies.

Progression Models & Processes



The basic mechanisms for career progression are (a) through an application process for an open vacancy, (b) promotion, or (c) the tenure track.

Staff Categories



Staff categories are the basic building blocks of an Academic Career Framework. Typical boundaries refer to the following: administrative and support staff, and academic staff, research-oriented and teaching-oriented positions; among others.

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CHANGING ACADEMIC CAREERS IN FINLAND

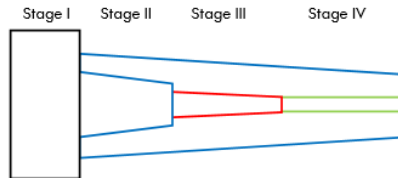
Elias Pekkola



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9 Four Stage Career Model and Tenure Track



- Stage I Doctoral training stage
- Stage II Postdoctoral stage
- Stage III Independent researcher stage
- Stage IV Established researchers (professors, research professors, directors, senior scientists)

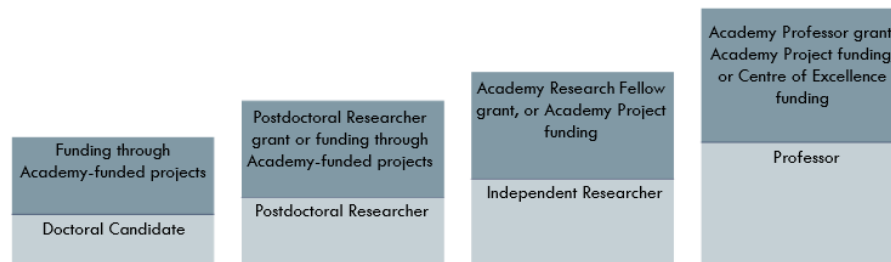
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10 Link to Research Funding

Link to Research Funding

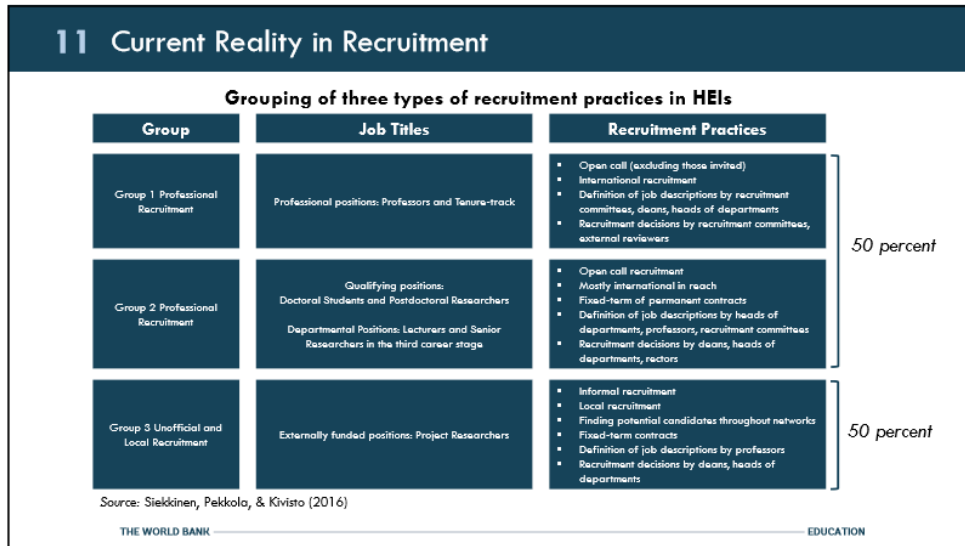


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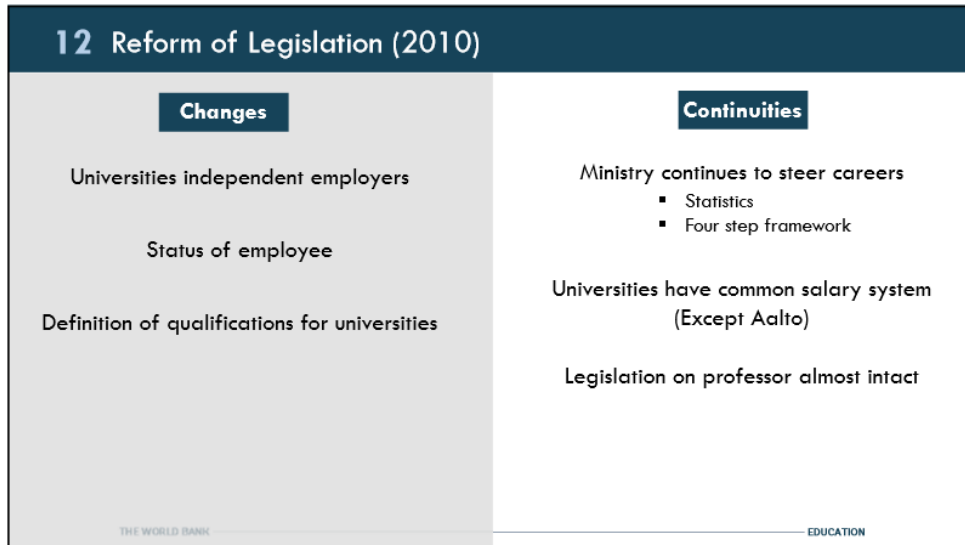
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13 Main Changes at Institutional Level (Post-2010)

- Former assistant positions were changed to positions of university instructors and PhD students
 - Who does teaching related administrative work?
- Majority of fixed term mid-career positions (senior assistants) were transferred to permanent positions (university lecturers and researchers)
 - How the motivation of mid-career employees is ensured and what happens to the dynamics of employee structure → teaching-oriented tenure
- Position of post doctoral researcher was introduced
 - How to finance these positions
- Tenure track positions were introduced
 - The question of professors

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14 Changes in Recruitment of Professors: Recommendation 2013

Academy of Finland

- Professorial recruitment should be opened for larger pool of applicants
 - Wide job descriptions
 - International Calls
 - Tenure tracks

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15 Changes in Recruitment of Professors: Recommendation 2016

Academic Evaluation

- National framework for tenure-tracks should be established
- Universities should assess the share of tenure-track positions in comparison to “traditional” positions
- Clear distinction with “tenure-processes” and “normal processes” should be made

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16 Currently (2020)



Most professors are recruited to tenure-track positions



Applicant pool has changed

More applicants
More male
More international applicants



Development is still “organic”

No legislation or national practices, statistics, titles
Major differences in institutional models
Legislation does not recognise “tenure-track professors”
Question of a “professoriate”

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17 Examples



A professor's academic contract on an indefinite-term basis is made by a public application process or by invitation. Legislation and collective agreements do not recognize a professor's tenure track. For the tenure track to be fair, it must follow the below criteria:

1. The university is using a public and clear description of the application process and assessment on the tenure track.
2. During the recruitment process, if only those deemed most qualified are being evaluated, the evaluation must concern at least three applicants.
3. The employment contract of the recruited states the assessment criteria, under which the professor will be evaluated.
4. Those on the tenure track are being treated nondiscriminatory and equitably.
5. During the contract of employment valid today, the employment contract of the person on the tenure track can be altered on a temporary agreement only.
6. Those on the tenure track can give sufficient information on how they will advance their career.
7. Those on the tenure track are provided with a genuine opportunity to manage those tasks that will be used as the basis for the evaluation of their success.
8. The assessment of those on the tenure track is supported on an annual basis, for example, in connection with performance assessments.
9. After achieving the goals specified in the employment contract, an individual can advance on the tenure track faster than originally planned.
10. Those occupied by a tenure-track position are provided with an opportunity to receive support and assistance for their work.
11. The university will ensure a fair continuation of the career for those who, in an assessment, fail to meet the jointly predetermined criteria.
12. A mechanism of how equity can be ensured to those

Fair Tenure Track: Indicator of the tricky parts

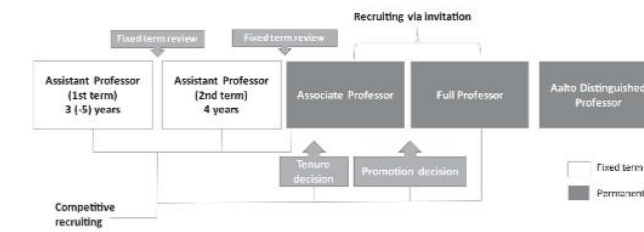
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18 Examples: Tenure Track at Aalto

Tenure Track Model at Aalto University



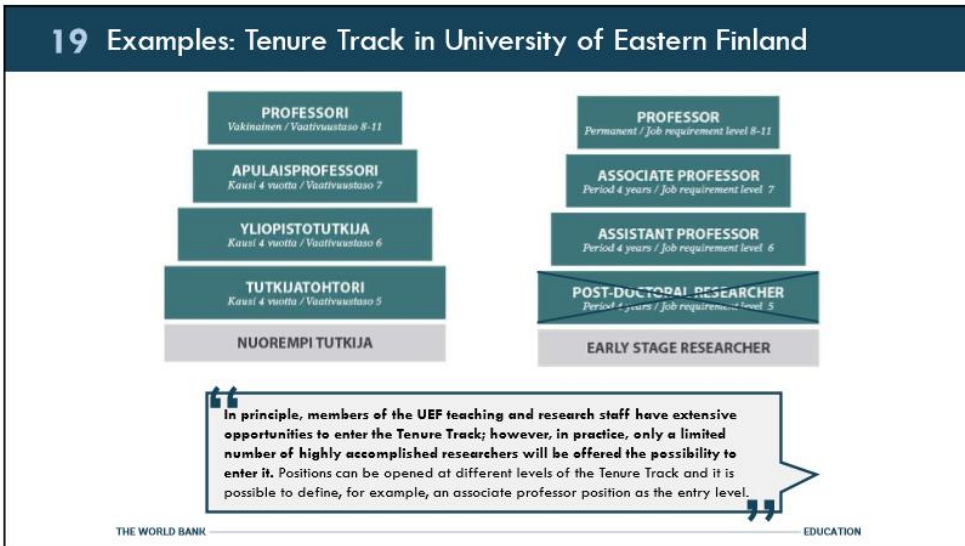
Source: Aalto University (2018)

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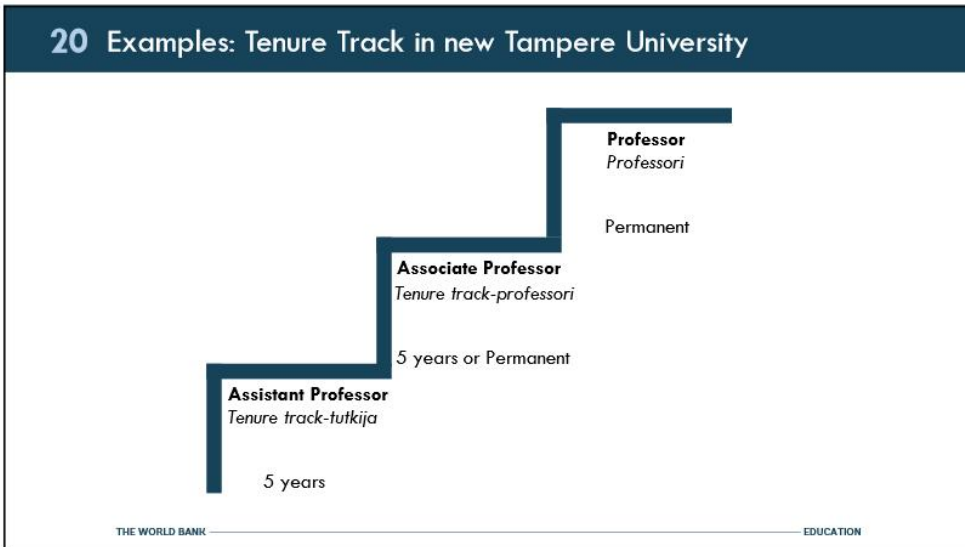
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PRINCIPLES

Jeremie Amoroso
Discussion 1









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24 Higher Education and Science Policy Priorities: 2021-2027

The draft *Guidelines for Science, Technology Development, and Innovation for the years 2021-2027* outlines six policy priorities

| | | |
|--|--|--|
|  <p>Excellence in science</p> |  <p>Research for society</p> |  <p>Integration of higher education and research</p> |
|  <p>Digital transformation and open science</p> |  <p>Implementation of the Smart Specialization Strategy</p> |  <p>Innovation: stimulate development and promote implementation</p> |

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25 Education Objectives: 2021-2027

The draft *Guidelines for Education Development 2021-2027* outlines four objectives

Highly qualified, competent, and excellence-oriented pedagogues and academic staff



A modern, high-quality education focused on the development of highly valued skills in the labor market

Support for everyone's growth



Sustainable and efficient management of the education system and its resources

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26 Planned Higher Education Changes

Strengthening the quality of academic staff and ensuring a sustainable academic career

- Developing and implementing a new academic career framework
- Strengthening strategic and effective governance and management of HEIs

Promoting excellence in higher education

- Developing a quality assurance system for higher education
- Transitioning to cyclical institutional accreditation starting from 2024

Changing the governance of HEIs

- Establishing a system for public funding allocation related to the development strategies of HEIs and monitoring their implementation.

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27 Principles for Developing a Career Framework for Latvia



Academic Excellence



Professional Development



HR Practices

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28 Discussion Questions: Principles

How should the new Career Framework be integrated into...



- (i) Latvia's labor market
- (ii) the European/international labor market
...for a highly skilled labor force?

How should the new Career Framework fit into the current...




- (i) Legal steering i.e. administrative law, higher education legislation, and labor law
- (ii) Political steering, including employers and unions
- (iii) Financial steering
...of higher education and science?

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PROGRESSION MODELS AND PROCESSES

Andrée Sursock
Discussion 2



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30 Discussion Questions: Progression Models and Processes

Please share your experience of tenure track

Should tenure track be established in Latvia?

For purposes and aims?

How many steps should the tenure-track model have?

What will be the main recruitment method for professors in the future?

What would be an ideal length (or range) of a tenure period in Latvian institutions?


How and when should the assessment be done and by whom?

Who are the key stakeholders in planning, implementing, and assessing the tenure-track system in Latvia?

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STAFF CATEGORIES

Elias Pekkola
Discussion 3



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32 European Career Steps and Latvian Equivalents

| Career Step | Current Latvian Titles | Title in traditional track based on vacancies (if needed) | Title in tenure track based on promotion (if separate) | Qualifications |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Junior (R1) [4-8 years; permanent] | Research Assistant Assistant [PhD Stipendiat] Lecturer | Junior Researcher Junior Lecturer | | Master's degree with excellent grades, competence for PhD studies |
| Postdoc (R2) [4-5 years; permanent] | Docent Researcher [Optional Postdoc] | Postdoctoral Researcher Lecturer | Assistant Professor | PhD (or other work experience to fulfill criteria?) |
| Independent (R3) [4-5 years; permanent] | Associate Professor Senior Researcher | Senior Lecturer Senior Researcher PoP | Associate Professor | Qualification comparable to 4 years postdoc research or other merits |
| Leading (R4) [permanent] | Professor | Professor | Professor | External evaluation |

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33 Discussion Questions: Staff Categories

HEIs and scientific institutes—what should be the level of career framework integration?

What challenges and opportunities you foresee?

Should all institutions be able to use all staff categories such as PhD candidates (should they be a staff category?) and professors?

How should research and teaching duties be integrated in the two subsectors (higher education institutions and scientific institutes), or is the integration done only in higher education?

Are the minimum qualifications for different staff categories regulated nationally and should they be the same in all types of institutions?

What is the role of PhD?

Any post-doctoral qualifications that should be taken into account?

Should some of the staff categories always be permanent or always fixed term, or could this depend on institutional circumstances?

Is the framework based on an idea of full-time positions as a presumption and part-time positions as an exception?

How should the framework recognize different funding sources (stipends, external funding, and so forth) while fairly treating all employees, regardless of the funding source, in enabling their career development?

How should the staff categories be linked to minimum qualifications, salaries, and (state) funding?

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