**Project carried out with funding by the European Union in cooperation with the European Commission’s DG REFORM**

Information Event – Workshop

**S*upporting the Development of a New Academic Career Framework in Latvia*.**

October 6, 2020

10.00 – 14 EEST (Riga) : 11.00 –15.00 CET (Brussels)

***Zoom:*** (*information will follow*)

**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 the other stakeholders to develop a new academic career framework in line with European and international good practice.

The goals of this event include informing a broader audience about the project work plan and the starting point for the project; consulting with stakeholders on the current academic career system and aspects in need of change; and sharing transformational experiences of other similar higher education systems which have already reformed their academic career framework.

**Indicative Agenda[[1]](#footnote-1):**

**10.00 – 10.10** **Opening remarks** (*representatives of the MoES,* *European Commission and World Bank*)

**10.10 – 11.00 Towards New Career Frameworks in the Baltic Region**

10.10 – 10.30 **Developing an Academic Career Framework for Latvia: Project Outputs and Timeline***(Overview of earlier work and remaining open questions and next steps)*

10.30 – 11.00 **Academic Career Model in Finland**

**11.00 – 11.10 Break**

**Discussions with stakeholders on key concepts and open questions regarding the development of the new Career Framework**

*(Three topics based on the interim-report “Academic Career Framework for Latvia: Ideas Paper”, each topic to be moderated by the World Bank who will briefly introduce the issue and the current status and then pose questions to stakeholders in order to gather their feedback and views on the issue/topic and potential solutions.)*

**11.10 – 11.50 Discussion 1:** **PRINCIPLES**

**The main strategic goals of higher education and science should be taken into account 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.

***Potential questions*:**

* How should the new Career Framework be integrated into Latvia’s labour market for a highly skilled labour force?
* How should the new Career Framework be integrated into the European/international labour market for a highly skilled labour force?
* How should the new Career Framework fit into the current legal steering—administrative law, higher education legislation, and labour 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?

**11.50 – 12.00 Break**

**12.00 – 12.50 Discussion 2: PROGRESSION MODELS AND PROCESSES**

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.

Contrary to common assumptions, the tenure-track model is not a uniform and standardized system but has multiple variants in Anglo-Saxon countries. **The recent trend of developing tenure-track models in continental Europe has even increased the fluidity of the concept, and thus, tenure track has multiple applications and meanings.** The processes of recruitment, selection, and progression on academic careers are dependent on the type of career model. Staff categories are closely connected to the processes of career progression. In addition, remuneration should be discussed simultaneously while planning the career steps. **If the typical tenure model is implemented in Latvia, a major change to the decision-making method from election to selection/appointment is needed**.

***Potential questions:***

* 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?

**12.50 – 13.00 Break**

**13.00 – 13.50 Discussion 3: STAFF CATEGORIES**

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.

In addition to the previously mentioned categories, variable academic positions can be divided into different categories based on the following factors: seniority (serving years), managerial responsibilities (hierarchy), the background of a position holder (visitor’s positions, industry positions and so forth), and the funding basis of a position (academic researcher, postdoc, and so forth). **All these dimensions and the need for separate or integrated categories must be carefully considered when planning the overall career framework for Latvian academic staff working in HEIs and scientific institutes**.

***Potential 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 same 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 presumption and part-time positions as an exception?
* How should the staff categories be linked to minimum qualifications, salaries, and (state) funding?

**13.50 – 14.00 Discussion summary and closing remarks**

*(Ministry of Education and Science, European Commission, World Bank)*

1. For the duration of the workshop a simultaneous translation from Latvian to English and vice versa will be provided. The workshop sessions will be recorded. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)