

**Disciplinary, sectoral and national
border crossings in the careers of
social science and humanities
researchers: findings from a
European project**

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The study:



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POCARIM

Mapping the Population, Careers, Mobilities and Impacts of Advanced Research Degree Graduates in the Social Sciences and Humanities

The data:

- 13 countries
- 2,500+ survey responses
- 325+ interviews

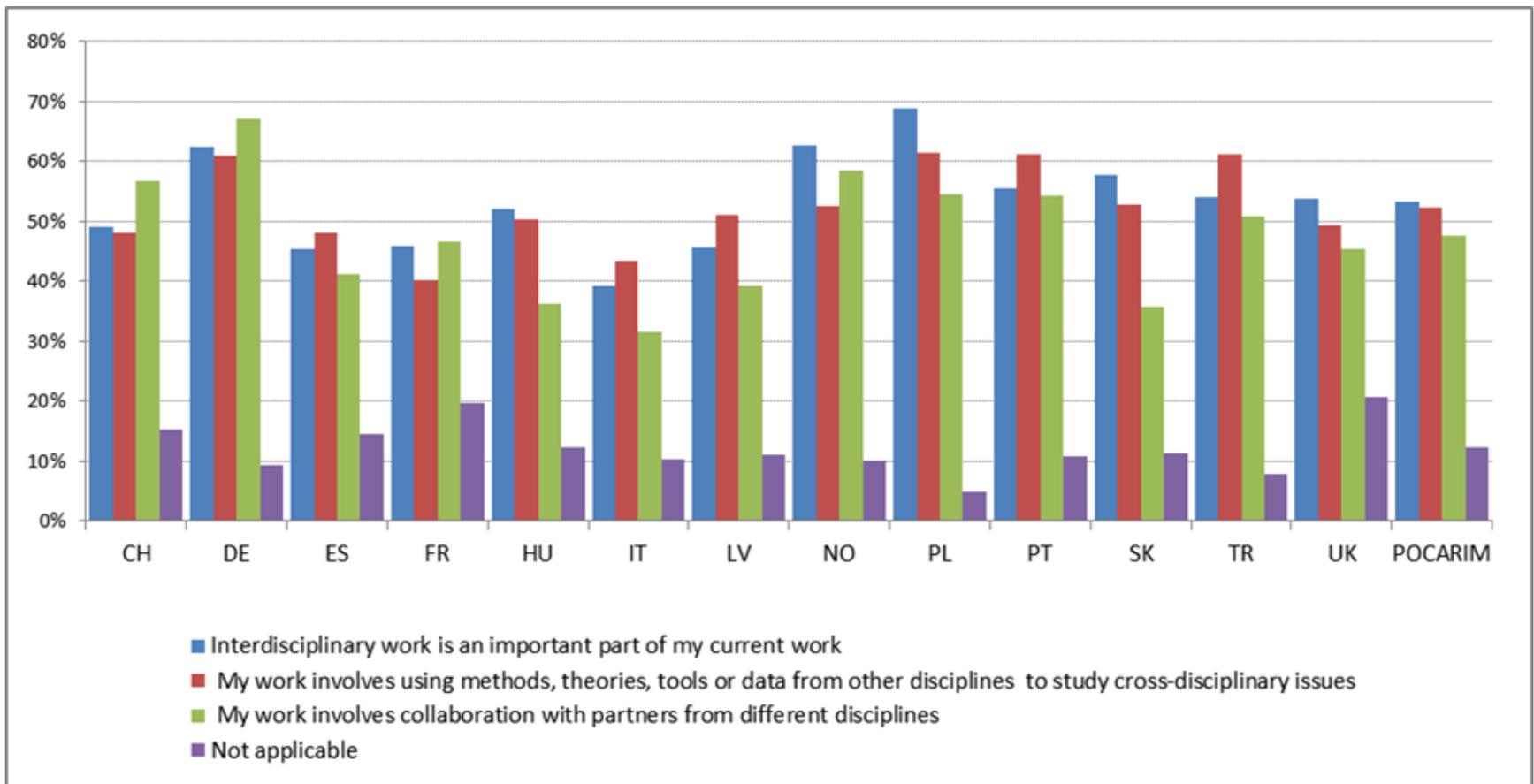
Border crossings: disciplines – sectors – countries

- Knowledge dimension
- Career dimension
- Disciplinary dimension

Crossing disciplines and interdisciplinarity (1)

- In policy
 - Europe – national
 - Discourses - action
- In theory and practice
 - Inter-/cross-/trans-disciplinarity
 - Collaborative/career path

Crossing disciplines and interdisciplinarity (2)



Crossing disciplines and interdisciplinarity (3)

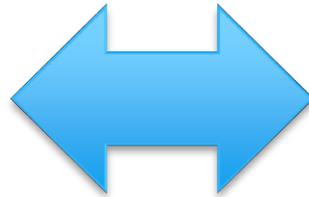
- Key findings
 - There is a high degree of interdisciplinary activity in the POCARIM sample
 - Funding can be a major incentive to interdisciplinary activity
 - Research career structures remain a significant disincentive to interdisciplinary activity
 - Additional workload of interdisciplinarity
 - Value of interdisciplinarity – intellectual
 - Value of interdisciplinarity – professional

Crossing disciplines and interdisciplinarity (4)

- Key recommendations (employability)
 - Career and reward structures
 - Institutions: recruitment, reward and progression systems need to reflect increasingly common interdisciplinary practices.
 - Policy: need mechanisms which recognise the value of interdisciplinarity in individuals and in projects
 - AND/OR recognise the need for identifiably disciplinary professional profiles
 - Time
 - allowances for learning and publishing in interdisciplinary contexts
 - Networks

Crossing sectors and inter-sectorality

Job mobility of PhD graduates between academic and other sectors (business, government, NGOs).



Social science and humanities

- * Most academic research on academic engagement is concerned with science and technology;
- * SSH links with industry far more limited than science and technology;
- * SSH mainly episodic contracting, more long-term and formal links in science and technology (Bastow et al 2014);
- * SSH more links with government agencies and NGOs (Olmos-Penuela et al 2011, Abbreu et al 2008).

Respondents by country of current employment and type of institution (%)

Type of Institution	CH	DE	ES	FR	HU	IT	LV	NO	PL	PT	SK	TR	UK	Pocarim Average
Business	7	14	7	16	6	4	6	3	11	2	10	2	8	7.4
HE/Research	70	65	78	60	74	86	77	91	70	91	83	91	76	77.8
Primary Secondary Education	2	1	7	6	1	2	3	0	4	2	1	0	4	2.6
Government	16	8	5	6	9	4	9	5	9	3	3	4	7	6.8
NGO	0	5	1	2	4	0	2	1	4	0	2	1	2	1.8
Other	5	8	2	10	5	3	3	1	2	1	1	3	2	3.5

Differences between sectors

- * Academic freedom;
- * Shorter timescales, emphasis on making money and more immediate rewards in industry and NGOs;
- * Challenge of translating academic findings;
- * Different rewards systems;
- * NGOs greater similarity to academia than industry.

Nature and extent of moves

- * One move outside academia after studies and PhD;
- * Mid-career switch – Starting career outside academia followed by PhD and academic career;
- * Several moves less common in particular between academia and private industry;
- * Combining different sectors/maintaining links to more than one sector.

Conclusions

- * 'Barriers of orientation' between academia and business;
- * Barriers of orientation appear starker between academia and business than academia and third sector in SSH;
- * Therefore difficult to move several times, often moves involved are a one way street only;
- * PhD graduates have a role in bridging this gap;
- * Contacts/networks may help to bridge this gap.

Policy recommendations

Inter-sectoral links

- * Promoting and formalising inter-sectoral links eg combined positions 20% academia and 80% other sector, industry mentoring of PhDs;
- * Supervisors and other academic staff open doors to PhD students outside academia;
- * Supervisors advise PhD students on applications of their research;

Policy recommendations

Training

- * Career advice on careers in other sectors;
- * Improving transferable training of PhD students eg IPR, entrepreneurship, management skills;
- * Some training provided by non-academics;

Policy recommendations

Incentives and rewards schemes

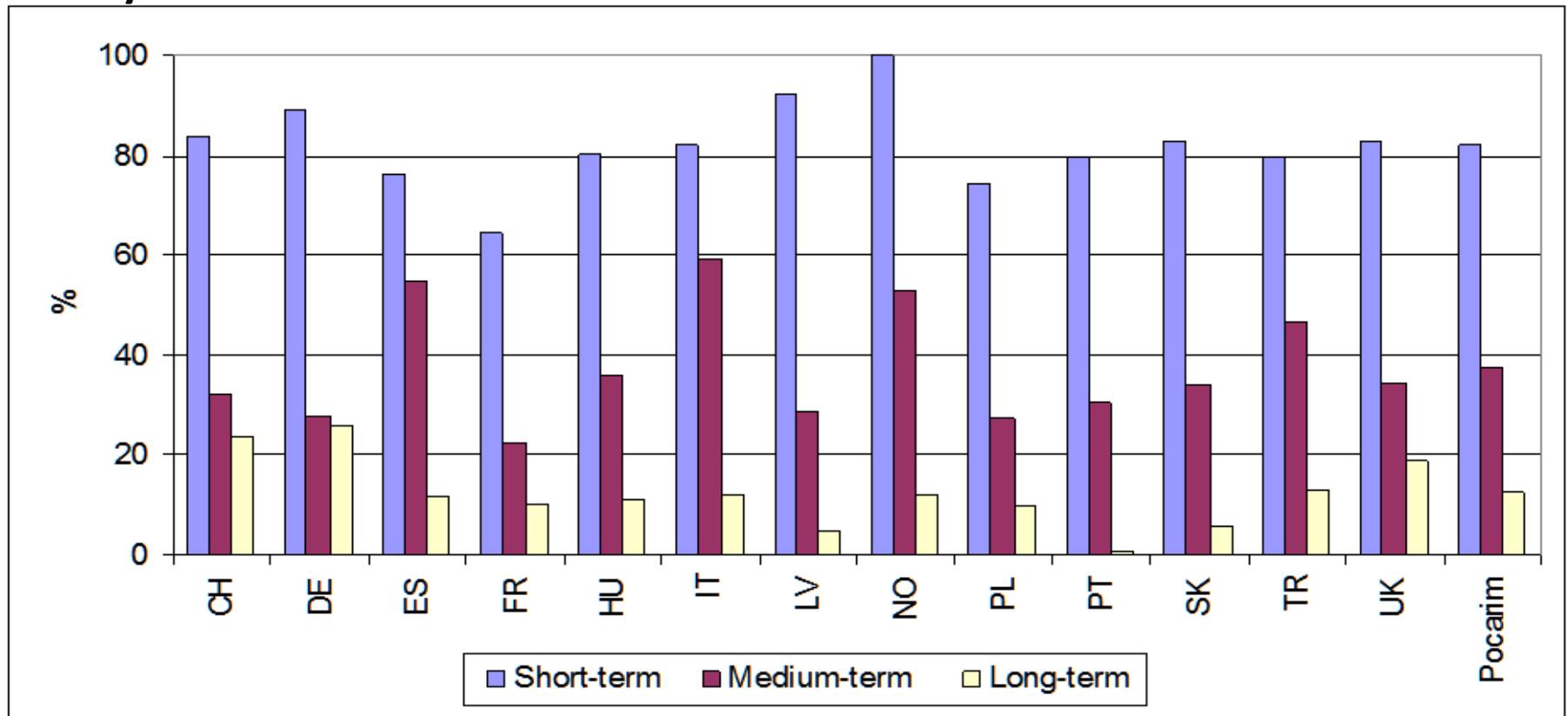
- * Making some changes to career paths and incentive schemes to allow people to develop combined careers;
- * Changing academic reward systems to reward other achievements as well as peer-reviewed publications, such as management or organizational achievements. Including alternative career paths for some academics, creating new jobs roles to exploit or translate knowledge rather than expecting academics to 'do it all', as well as rewarding academics both for peer-reviewed articles and high impact work;
- * Improve understanding of impacts;
- * Increasing incentives to write policy reports. Possibly employing others for this 'translation' role;
- * Increasing funding for exploiting results of academic research or translating academic results into products.

International mobility and internationalisation (1)

- In policy
 - Europe – national
 - Discourses - action
- In theory and practice
 - Productivity and impact

International mobility and internationalisation (2)

Share of respondents with international mobility experience, by type (duration) of stay abroad



POCARIM data analysed by Kupiszewska et al. (2013)

International mobility and internationalisation (3)

- Key findings
 - Geographies of international activity are patterned but everywhere a feature of SSH work and careers
 - There is a close relationship between mobility, impact and career progression
 - The main obstacles to mobility are institutional support and funding
 - International mobility can lead to the establishment of enduring and productive networks

International mobility and internationalisation (4)

- Recommendations
 - Support relatively inexpensive short- to medium-term trips at early career stages when they are doable and have the greatest potential for enduring benefits
 - Internationalise research training and early careers 'at home'
 - Information and training for prospectively mobile researchers
 - Identify the value of mobility – not simply an end in itself

Conclusions

- Border crossings in early career phases in SSH: opportunities and risks
- Informed decision making and career planning: mitigating risks and exploiting opportunities
- Networks: establishing valuable channels for the communication of opportunities