

What might make a research career in Europe attractive? A prospective from a EURYI awarded

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1. Summary of *Subgroup on research career development* *Eero Vuorio & Irina Kauhanen*

- Lack of transparency in recruitment,
- Short term contracts with low job security, and lack of adequate social security and pension rights,
- Badly structured, inappropriately funded and poorly supported post-doc positions, and
- Overall low predictability of research career.

Full agreement on the 4 statements:

They could not be more concise and accurate!!

2. Spanish situation:

- **Difficult to get in** \Leftrightarrow linked to teaching needs ONLY

"the CV paradox" \rightarrow best CVs \rightarrow Ph D fellowship \rightarrow not stabilization at the end
 \rightarrow not so good CVs \rightarrow teacher assistants \rightarrow stabilization

- **Difficult to get a promotion** \Leftrightarrow linked to University budgets

Chapter I (personnel) expenses $>$ money received from government !!

Income limited since tuition fees are determined by government

- **Great disparity of competition between researchers...** but very similar salaries

"US-like researchers" \rightarrow very active \rightarrow get projects, get problems: personnel purchases physical space

"old-style civil servants" \rightarrow low efficiency

(sometimes from disappointment with "the system")

3. Roles, rights, responsibilities of young researchers and superiors

- In principle, it is good to advance in these definitions, but...

Before: 4 years of Ph D student (fellowship)

Now: 2 years of Ph D student (fellowship)

+

2 years of contract

+

What happens if Ph D Thesis not finished in 4 years?

Advantages: social security, unemployment security, etc.

Disadvantages: cannot receive a post-doct fellowship after contract

⇒ higher labor costs, not always possible

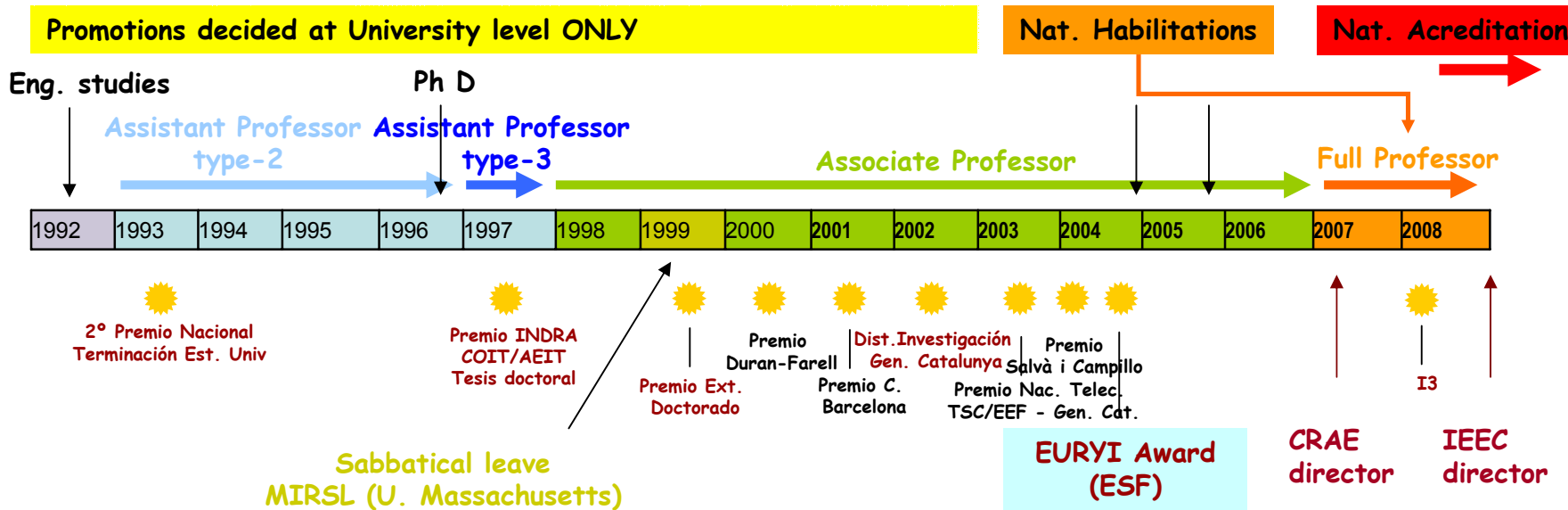
total amount of money constant ⇒ higher taxes, less income

4. Insufficient Mobility of Young Researchers

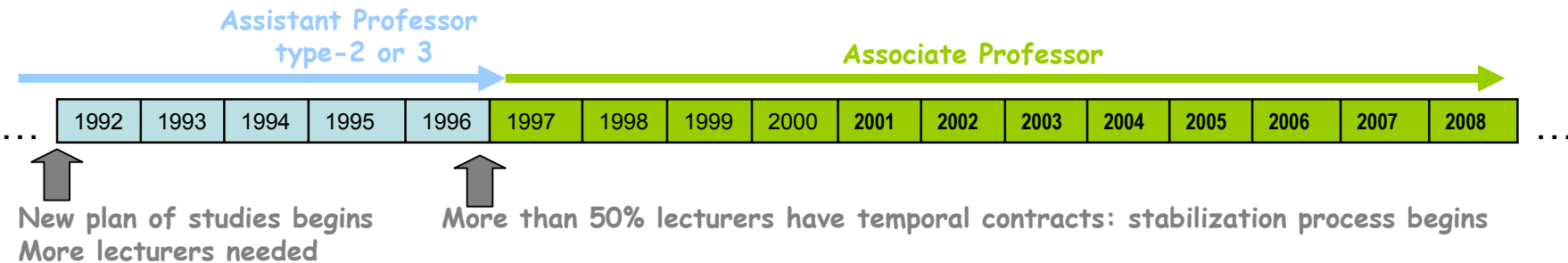
- Ph D with European mention (~ "ERASMUS" at Ph D Level)
 - much more mobility
 - still many do not do it because of lack of perception of real benefits
- After Ph D: mobility ↓:
 - different scales between countries
 - different social rights (transfer of social rights?)
 - typically until you do not get a tenured (permanent) position do not even consider a sabbatical leave:
your position may not exist when you will be back !

5. My (EURYI awardee) experience (i)

My professional career: *"I am a privileged person, many others also deserved it"*



The professional career of most of my colleagues



5. My (EURYI awardee) experience (ii)

Assistant Professor
type-2 or 3

Associate Professor



↑
New plan of studies begins
More lecturers needed:

↑
More than 50% lecturers have temporal contracts: stabilization process begins

- 1 year renewable contracts (max 3 years + 1)
- Social security

- Permanent position (civil servant)
- Social security

Today:

- Ramón y Cajal (researchers): 5 years + stabilization: how ? many unknowns remain
- Juan de la Cierva: 3 years → out
- Lecturers
- Co-existence of researchers with lecturers/researchers at Universities:
 - Lecturers/researchers feel that teaching prevents them from doing more research → main criteria for promotion
 - Researchers feel that no teaching prevents them from entering in the system → teaching is a prerequisite

5. My (EURYI awardee) experience (iii)

EURYI has provided me:

- Research independence
- Professional recognition (jealousy as well!)
- Boost professional career: multiplicative effect in all indicators

1992 ... 2003

- 41 journal papers
- 3 book chapters
- 90 conference presentations
- 3 patents
- 697 Keur in projects

2004 ... present

- ⇒ 70 + 5 submitted
- ⇒ 5 + 1 full book in process
- ⇒ 154
- ⇒ 4
- 1.633 Keur in new projects as PI

+ 1.055 Keur of EURYI

Management

- director of CRAE
- director of IEEC (late 2008)
- PI of secondary payload

Higher visibility and participation in Administrative Committees of International Professional Societies

6. What can make a research career attractive ? (i) (in a University environment)

If you join the University:

- It is **NOT** a matter of money... but you want to be able to buy an apartment and sustain a family !
- It is because **you are "curious"** and want to learn doing **research**, and
- It is because **you like teaching and being in contact with students**, but not to be "drown" with too many teaching obligations
6 h of lectures / week max + students tutorization: OK

6. What can make a research career attractive ? (ii) (in a University environment)

If you stay in the University:

- It is because **over all** you like it,

But:

- You would like to **know** from the beginning the “rules of the game”:

stable and predictable career

→ if you do/achieve what you are supposed to do/achieve

- Be able to **apply to your own research projects** (with chances of success)

→ typical comments for evaluation committees: oo young, lack of experience

not under the umbrella (shadow?) of your advisor until his/her retirement

6. What can make a reserach career attractive ? (iii) (in a University environment)

If you get your own projects:

- Be able to get some vital space to carry it out among a "feudal" structure
Vital space = lab space for instruments + office space for you and your team
- Be able to have some flexibility to hire/fire people
(salary / working condictiones) according to their value.
- Be able to buy goods with some flexibility (> 18 Keur):
3 offers, committee review etc OK
Bureaucracy ↓

... but after all, #2 and #3 are tolerable if you got the project!

#1 is a pre-requisite to do it!!

7. Conclusions:

What might make a research career in Europe attractive?

1. Know the rules of the game from the beginning (career):

Ph. D. → researcher (and lecturer) in tenure track

Ph. D. + 5 → associate professor (tenured position)

Ph. D. + 15 → full professor (tenured position)

(Ph. D. + > 20-25 ? → full professor?)

2. Be allowed to grow and mature on your own: *get your own projects* “pass from research adolescence to maturity”