

# **Academic Careers: A Comparative Perspective**

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# 1 Introduction

Jeroen Huisman

The Dutch *Adviesraad voor het Wetenschaps- en Technologiebeleid* (AWT) has commissioned The Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) of the *Universiteit Twente* to investigate the issue of academic careers in a number of Western European countries. The general objective was to enable the advisory council to observe the present-day state of the art and developments in the Netherlands from a comparative perspective. In collaboration with the commissioner, the following countries – next to the Netherlands – have been selected: Finland, Flanders, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The issue of the academic career was narrowed down by looking at the position of PhD candidates, and at the position of ‘advanced’ academic employees in the higher education systems. With respect to the position of PhD candidates, attention was paid to quantitative aspects (number of PhDs, composition of the cohorts, etc.), financial aspects (salaries and funding mechanism), and the transfer to the post-PhD period. Concerning the position of ‘advanced’ academic employees in the higher education systems, particular attention was paid to the rank structure, salaries and the comparison of academic positions with labour market positions elsewhere.

The project has been co-ordinated by dr Jeroen Bartelse and dr Jeroen Huisman of CHEPS. Regarding the report, they took care of this introductory chapter (chapter 1), the description and analysis of the Dutch case (chapter 2) and the comparative analysis (chapter 8). The other country studies have been written by international colleagues considered experts in the area of academic careers in the respective countries. Dr Beate Baldauf (Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick, United Kingdom) took care of the British case. The Flemish case has been delivered by prof. Jef Verhoeven and Kurt De Wit (Centre for Sociology of Education at the Catholic University of Leuven, Flanders). The Finnish case study has been taken care of by dr Päivi Kaipainen, prof. Osmo Kivinen and dr Sakari Ahola (Research Unit for the Sociology, University of Turku, Finland). Dr Jürgen Enders (Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work, University of Kassel, Germany) wrote the German case. Dr. Lillemor Kim (Research Director of the Swedish Institute for Studies in Education and Research, Stockholm, Sweden) took care of the Swedish country study. We would like to thank our foreign friends for their high-quality country studies and for keeping to the guidelines provided by the co-ordinators. We would also like to thank dr Hendrik Snijders (AWT) who has contributed to the guidance of the research process from the perspective of the principal.

Enschede

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