

HRK

Scientific Career and Parenthood

Hamburg, 22nd June 2017

Henning Rockmann
German Rectors' Conference

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The German Rectors' Conference

German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

The HRK is the voluntary association of state and state-recognized universities in Germany.

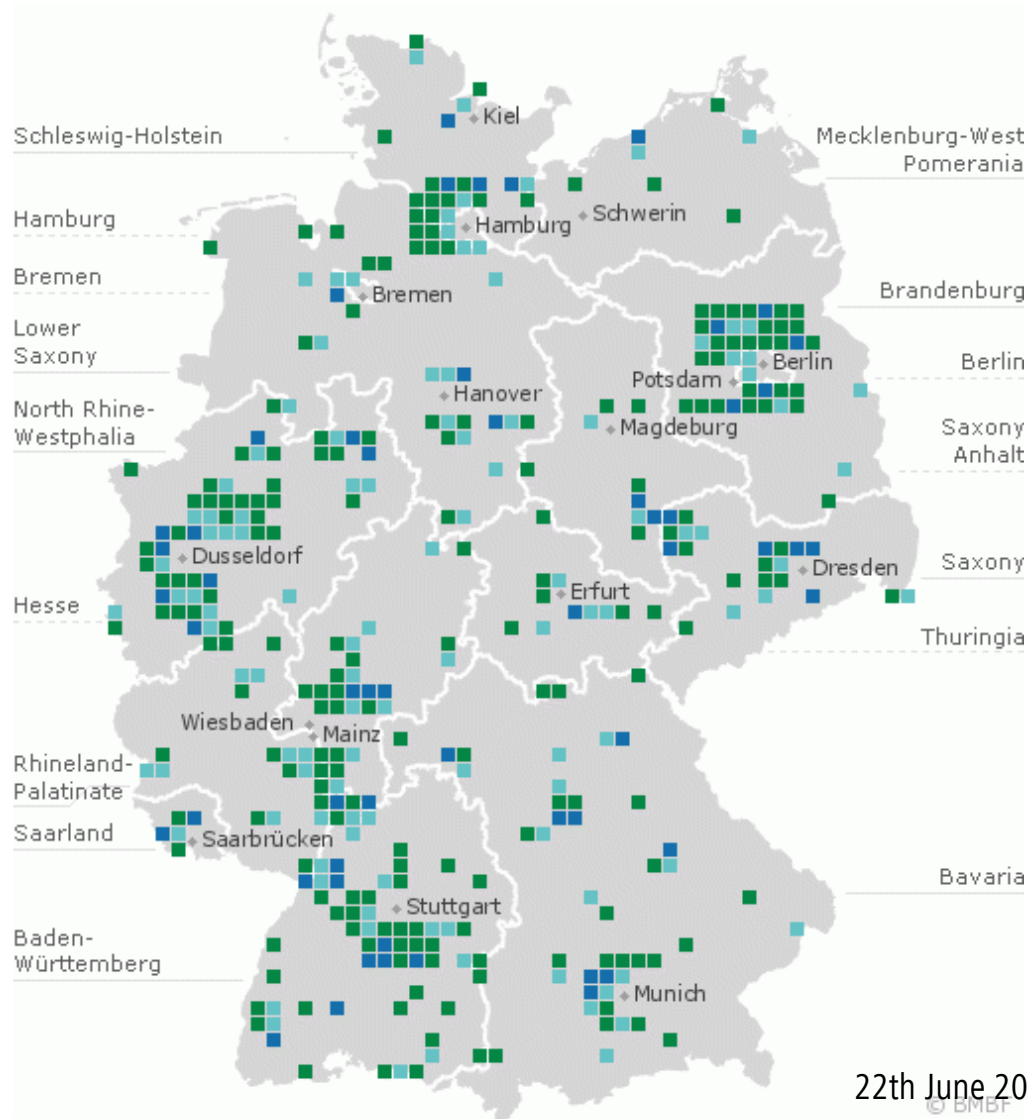
The HRK currently has 268 member institutions which account for 94 per cent of students in Germany.

HRK German Rectors' Conference
The Voice of the Universities



The German Higher Education System

268 HRK Member Universities



102 Universities

121 Universities
of Applied
Sciences

45 Colleges of
Art and Music

Mission

The **HRK** is the **political and public voice of universities** and provides a **forum** for the process of forming joint policies and practices.

- ✓ **Agenda setting** and **advocacy** at national and international level
- ✓ **Service provision** to member institutions

HRK Resolutions and Recommendations

- Core Theses for the “Guidelines for the Advancement of Early Career Researchers”

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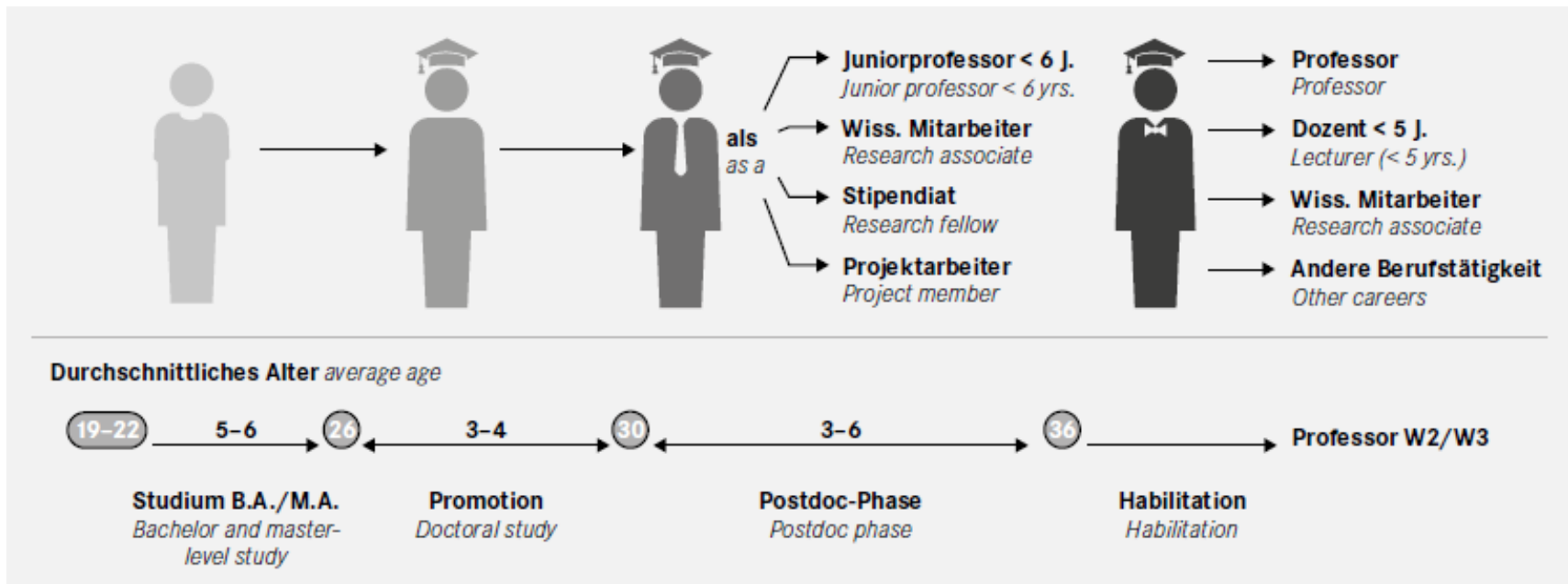
Early Career Researchers

Early Career Researchers

In Germany, the terms of continuance of contracts are quite strict, and academic staff are routinely forced to leave a position at the end of a contract. For young researchers, the basic principle is “up or out.”

Professors are generally civil servants with permanent lifelong positions that they have obtained after receiving habilitation, a formal postdoctoral qualification usually earned after the publication of a major book and a public lecture. Job security and salaries for the other academic staff members, such as lecturers and postdocs, are much less; more than two-thirds are temporary employees with fixed-term contracts.

Early Career Researchers



(c) Dr. Christan Bode

Early Career Researchers at Universities

Guidelines for the advancement of early career researchers in the post-doctoral phase

To ensure their future viability, member universities draw up concepts for the advancement of early career researchers and options for academic career paths with due regard to rules governing fixed-term employment and opportunities for further training. The staff development concepts should take account of equal opportunities for women and men and also of diversity.

Each university involves its faculties in drawing up a concept for future staffing arrangements and personnel development, including specific requirements of permanent and fixed-term employment for post-doctoral research personnel.

Early Career Researchers at Universities

Tenure Track Programm

On the 20th of May 2016 the Joint Research Conference (GWK) presented their new program, the Nachwuchspakt, through which one billion EUR will be used to create 1,000 tenure track positions over the next 15 years.

Through this program, researchers attain a permanent professorship after being evaluated over several years of temporary employment using a transparent set of criteria.

Early Career Researchers at Universities of Applied Sciences

Recruitment problems occur especially in relation to professorships at universities of applied sciences, which educate two thirds of all engineers. The surge in newly enrolled students (81 per cent) and students overall (73 per cent) has been and continues to be disproportionately high here. A fundamental requirement for appointment to a professorship at a university of applied sciences is not only a doctoral degree, but also at least three years' experience outside academia.

Unattractive conditions make the recruitment of suitable staff from industry more difficult: lower remuneration compared to industry, heavy teaching loads, few research opportunities.

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WissZeitVG

- general aspects

The Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract

On April 18th, 2007, the Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract (so called Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz) came into force.

The Act contains rules for temporary employment of scientific, research and artistic staff at higher education institutions (e.g. the University of Hamburg) and research facilities. The Act applies equally to German and foreign academic staff.

Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz Novellierung

The amendment of the Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz (WissZeitVG), has fundamentally been changed. On the one hand, the prerequisites for a time-limit have been tightened, on the other hand new possibilities of limitation have been created and existing ones have been eliminated.

The Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract

Employment contracts of scientific staff can be limited up to 12 years and for medical staff even 15 years (Section 2 Paragraph 1 of the Act). The 12-years-limit is called the maximum fixed-term contract period or qualification phase.

The Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract

Section 2 Paragraph 1 regulates the employment for scientific or research associates or scientific or research assistants (in German: “wissenschaftliches Personal”) and section 6 for student assistants funded by university or research facility. The Act does not apply to university professors.

The Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract

Section 2 Paragraph 1 contains the regulations concerning the duration of the qualification phase:

Fixed-term employment contracts for the research and scientific staff, who have not been awarded a doctorate, are permissible for a limitation period of six years.

Following completion of a doctorate, fixed-term contracts up to duration of six years are permissible.

The Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract

If the fixed-term employment in the phase without doctorate was less than the maximum permitted six years, the limitation period in the post-doc phase extends correspondingly by the time not used in the prior limitation period. So, the maximum duration of the fixed-term contract prior and after the doctorate amounts to a total of the permissible 12 years.

The Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract

All fixed-term employment relationships with more than a quarter of the regular working time which have been entered into with a German institution of higher education or a research facility as well as corresponding temporary civil servant relationships or private contracts pursuant to Section 3 must be counted to the permissible fixed-term period of 12 years (regulated in Section 2 Paragraph 3).

The Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract

Also, periods without employment at a German university or research facility in which the employee worked at his dissertation has to be counted for the maximum duration of the qualification phase.

Employment periods as a research or scientific student shall not be counted to the permissible maximum duration of the qualification phase.

The Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract

The law was amended by adding a mandatory condition requiring that the fixed-term employment contract must be “devoted to the purpose of furthering the employee’s own scientific and artistic qualification.”

In addition, the duration of the employment contract must be “appropriate for attaining the intended qualification goal.”

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WissZeitVG

third-party-funded
research

The Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract

Section 2 Paragraph 2 contains rules that third-party-funded research staff can be legally employed in the university or research facility on fixed-term contracts – even beyond the end of their qualification phase. The permitted contractual period is based on the duration of the grant.

The Act of Academic Fixed-Term Contract

The conditions for this type of third-party-funded limited contract are:

- (1) The overwhelming majority, i.e. at least more than half (50 percent + x) of the funding for the position in question must come from external sources.
- (2) The third-party funding must be made available for a specific research project and for a limited period of time.
- (3) Fixed-term contract employees must also be occupied mainly with tasks pertaining to this research project.

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WissZeitVG

- Balance between a scientific career and family

Family related regulations in the WissZeitVG

Section 2 Paragraph 1 of the Act contains the regulations in case of the scientific or research staff is being funded by university or research facility. For this kind of staff, the limitation period of the employment can extend – if there is a will and the possibility of financing through the university or research facility – in case of care for one or more children under the age of 18 living in the same household as the employee for two years for each child.

Family related regulations in the WissZeitVG

Section 2 Paragraph 5 Sentence 1 Number 1 rules that the duration of a fixed-term employment contract is extended with the consent of the employee by times of a maternal or parental leave or a reduction of the working hours by at least a fifth of the regular working hours that have been granted in order to care for one or more children under the age of 18 or other family members requiring care. This extension is not counted to the fixed-term period permissible in Section 2 Paragraph 1.

Family related regulations in the WissZeitVG

Section 2 Paragraph 5 Sentence 1 Number 3 of the Act contains this family-friendly rule: the respective duration of a fixed-term employment contract pursuant to Section 2 Paragraph 1 is extended with agreement of the employee – father or mother - by times of taking parental leave pursuant of the Federal Act on Parental Benefits and Parental Leave (so called Bundeselterngeld- und Elternzeitgesetz) and times of a ban on working pursuant to Sections 3, 4, 6 and 8 of the Maternity Protection Act (the German “Mutterschutzgesetz”) to the extent that no gainful employment has taken place.

Family related regulations in the WissZeitVG

The family-friendly rules in Section 2 Paragraph 1 (the possible prolongation for each child under the age of 18) and in Paragraph 5 (the possibility of extension in case of maternal and parental leave or in case of leave or reduce the working hours for childcare) allow the extension of the qualification phase before and after the doctorate for employees with fixed-term contracts pursuant to Section 2 Paragraph 1.

Family related regulations in the WissZeitVG

The family-friendly rules are not mentioned in the regulations for the third-party funded staff pursuant to Section 2 Paragraph 2. So, the situation for employees in positions financed by third parties is in case of childcare and parenthood much more complicated. The universities and research facilities have no due to extend the third-party- funded contracts in case of maternal or parental leave or in case of reduce the working time for childcare.

Family related regulations in the WissZeitVG

Here, an extension of the employment contract is only possible if the project financed by third party funding continues also after the employment contract expires and when therefore personnel funding is still available. Third-party-funded projects financed from the German Research Foundation (DfG) often contain the financial opportunities for an extension in case of parenthood. Furthermore, some universities or research facilities have special substitute funds for such kind of extension.