Intersectoral mobility of research staff

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What do research staff do next?

- Explore the transitions of former research staff into other occupations through European survey
- Create careers resources based on former research staff experiences to help them make more informed career decisions
  - 40 career stories published
- Partners:
Reasons for leaving

- 76% Better long term prospects
- 75% More job security
- 69% Move away from short and fixed term contracts
- 56% Better-work life balance
- 52% Couldn’t secure a position
- 51% Better working environment
- 51% Wanted to pursue a career outside HE
- 49% Better salary potential
Factors hindering intersectoral mobility

- Most want an academic career path
  - lack of academic opportunities
  - emotional commitment to research and academia
  - perception of others
  - losing connection to research / academia
### Career aspirations (multiple responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As research staff</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career in HE: research and teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career in HE, primarily research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career in HE, primarily teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other role in higher education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-research career outside HE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research career outside HE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self employment/own business/consultancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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Satisfaction with current job

- 40% very satisfied
- 38% fairly satisfied
- 14% not satisfied

[All employed respondents]
Factors hindering intersectoral mobility

- Most want an academic career path

- Little exposure to other occupations
  - deciding whether to leave and what to do
  - transferability of competencies and experience
  - understanding of organisational culture
  - networking with former research staff
Employment sectors

- Higher education: 27%
- Life sciences and pharmaceuticals: 12%
- Public administration: 12%
- Charity and 'third sector': 9%
- General manufacturing (e.g. engineering, defence, chemicals): 8%
- Health and social work: 7%
- Other sector: 6%
- Consultancy: 5%
- Finance, business and IT: 5%
- Publishing and media: 4%
- Other education: 3%
- Energy and mining: 2%
- Legal: 1%
- NGO and international development: 0%

49% worked in 2 or more organisations
### Factors in gaining employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not very important but helped</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generic professional competencies</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant experience</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject knowledge</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a doctorate</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research competencies</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity current job (some and most of the time)

- 80% Draw on the capabilities and experience gained as research staff
- 71% Use general subject knowledge
- 53% Supervise others
- 46% Draw on the detailed subject knowledge gained as research staff
- 34% Conduct research
Top six competencies

- 66% Communication
- 49% Critical thinking
- 49% Problem solving
- 46% Team working & collaboration
- 46% Independent working
- 45% Project management
Factors hindering intersectoral mobility

- Most want an academic career path
- Little exposure to other occupations
- Time and permission to focus on career development
  - invest in professional development
  - Research into career opportunities
  - broaden career experiences
Horizon 2020  Stronger linkage of research funding to Charter and Code principles

‘Recruited researchers will play an active role in shaping their own training programme and professional development.

They will establish, together with their personal supervisor(s), an individual Career Development Plan.’

‘... In order to increase the employability of researchers, the research training will be complemented by meaningful engagement of each researcher to other sectors and by substantial training modules addressing key transferable skills...’
Advice to institutions

- Actively value all careers equally
- Be honest about academia and researchers’ potential
- Provide professional development opportunities and actively encourage participation
- Ensure researchers know the transferability of their competencies
- Actively encourage preparation for their next position
- Expose researchers to people in other occupations
- Support them to build networks across employment sectors
- Provide wider working experiences to researchers
Advice to current research staff

- Work on transferable competencies, sell yourself well
- Be positive and brave, move early
- There are plenty of opportunities available
- Use networks and talk to former research staff
- Be flexible, humble and open minded
- Get wider experience while research staff
- Prepare to the new environment and the new job