Equal Opportunity in Mobility Related to Research Activity

The Mix of Professional and Personal Reasons

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Dr. Lotte Gabriel-Jürgens

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Outline

- Example situations for scientists – frame setting
- Professional and personal life span
- Arguments influencing mobility
- Potential for improvements

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Examples concerning mobility

- **Example situation 1.** New group leader (female/male) is appointed; category high achiever

good basis for negotiation: accompanying partner gets a temporary position at the same Institute until he gets his own grant

- **Example situation 2.** New head of a department; category high achiever

good basis for negotiation: the wife is strongly supported in finding a job as well if it is outside of science

Rarely a female department head is appointed

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Examples concerning mobility

- **Example situation 3.** Scientist receives a professorship; category high achiever

good basis for negotiation but no position for the husband / wife available (common situation at a university)

***Solution 1**: partner changes career plans to be at the same place as his/her partner*

***Solution 2**: weekend relationship*

- **Example situation 4.** New scientist is appointed; category: possible high achiever but yet not known

Average basis for negotiation: partner is rarely supported in finding a job, often weekend relationships.

***Present Solution:** see above*

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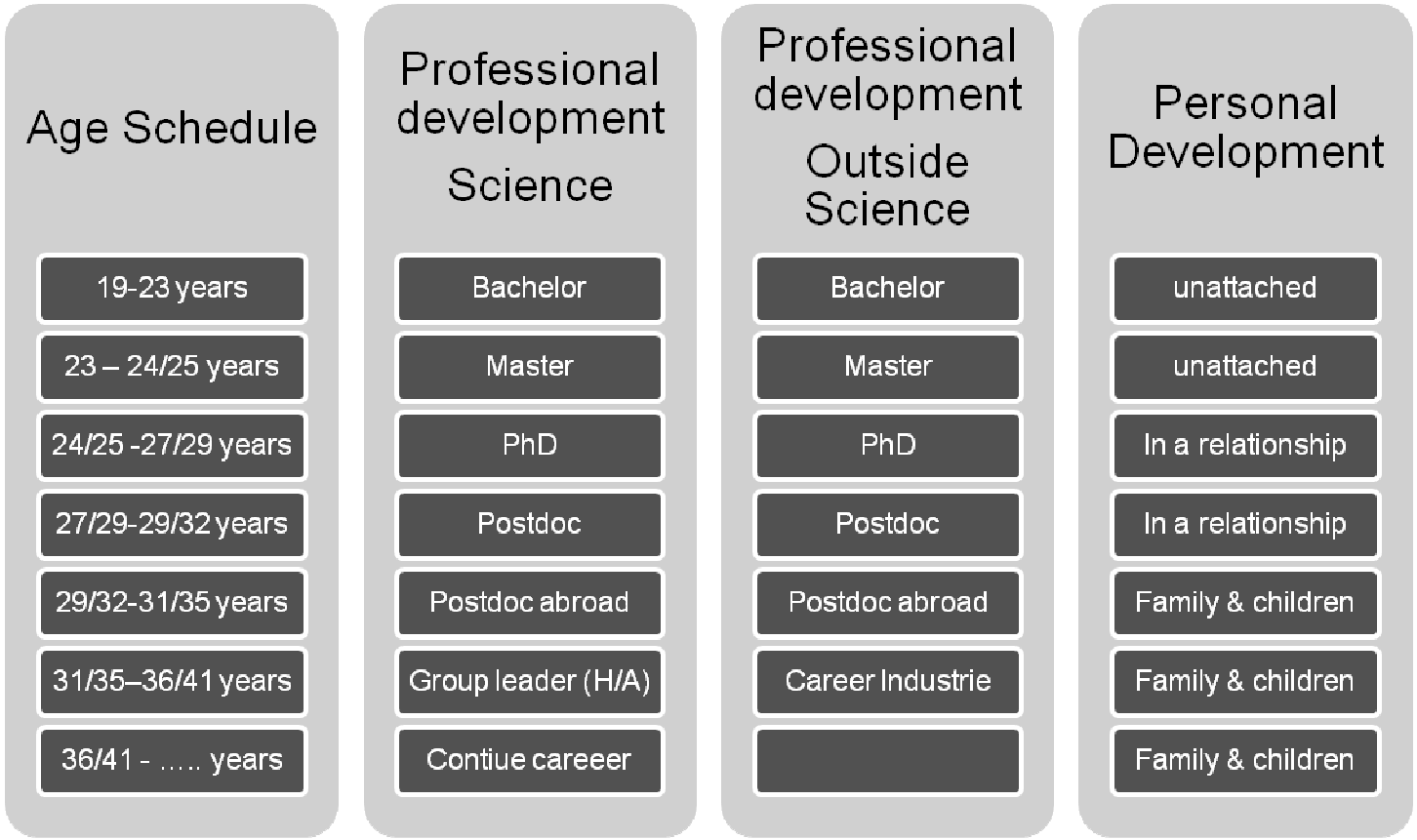
Professional and personal development

Related to age



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What aspects inherent to the science system influence the number of mobile scientists?

Gender unrelated

Scientist remaining within the scientific system decreases drastically after the first Postdoc position

- The average number of PhDs for Germany is approx. 14.2 % which is lower than Switzerland and Sweden but higher than the US and Canada
- The average percentage of postdoctoral lecture qualification (Habilitation) – still the precondition for a university professorship in Germany: approx. 9%
- The average percentage for comparable positions at non-university research institutes: approx.3.5%

There is a big gap between the number of PhDs and high positions in science. This is especially true for the women quota.

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What aspects inherent to the science system influence the number of mobile scientists ?

Gender unrelated

There is a big gap between the number of PhDs and higher positions in science

They drop out of the system soon after they finished their PhD – new career

- They try to get permanent positions within science, work up to a certain age and then drop out of the system (early mobility to enhance their career) – new career
- Scientists remaining in the system are part of international consortia/collaborations and travel within their projects – short mobility phases

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What aspects inherent to the science system influence the number of mobile scientists ?

Gender unrelated

System related influences - Scientists under temporary contract

- No job to return to afterwards.
- Time consuming reorganisation upon return.
- Is the science-network at home still active?
- Is the publication activity influenced through the mobility?

Scientists under permanent contract

- A temporary stay at another institution is not possible, due to the commitments at the home institute
- Competition (i.e. between research centres) hinders an open exchange

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What further aspects influence the mobility of scientists?

Financial issues

Social security

- Going abroad on a scholarship – no social benefits are paid, i.e. no pension, no unemployment benefits, no family allowance (Germany).
- Going abroad on a proper contract – big effort to gather the pension together - if you are entitled to a pension (time related)

Housing

- What to do with the flat at home (relevant for stays less than a year) – enormous organisational and financial effort.
- Cost for the move from one country to another
- Organising an appropriate accommodation

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What further aspects influence the number of mobile scientists?

Personal issues

Organisational aspects

- The partner does not want to go abroad because he/she works and can not leave the job
- Your partner wants to go abroad but only under the condition that he/she gets a job as well
- The organisation of the stay is very hard, due to insufficient support

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What further aspects influence the number of mobile scientists?

Personal issues

Family related issues

- You do not want to take your children out of their social system
- You care for elderly family members
- You feel too immobile with a family – organisational burden is much higher since you have to organise suitable housing, kindergarten places / schools for your children
- You simply do not want to go abroad since you feel comfortable at home.

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What further aspects influence the number of mobile scientists ?

Personal issues

Gender related issues

- Family organisation is still a primary women based job
- The continuation of two (top level) careers is hardly possible – still women are the ones to turn down their career.
- So-called DCC-couples are not always supported
- Caring for elderly family members is mostly done by women and is an important subject when the „possible late mobility“ could start

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What is the conclusion for enhancing „late mobility of scientist“ from the aspects prsented here?

Challenges for mobilising scientist – work related issues

- Mobility in a „later“ career is influenced by many aspects
- Gender related aspects are just one part: relate more to duties for women within the family
- Increase number of women scientists: Remaining in the science system is more difficult for women: Publish or perish – Conflict between job, career and family related duties
- As long as a 12 hour working day is a kind of status symbol, the overall number of women remaining in science will not rise and hence the mobility cannot rise.

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What is the conclusion for „late mobility of scientist“ from the aspects shown here?

Challenges for mobilising scientist – organisation related issues

Receiving Institution

- Good support for scientists to organise their affairs: housing, child care, schools, bank, health care etc. - **Welcome centre**
- Contract shall be issued very early prior to starting the appointment – stay abroad becomes organisable
- Offer information to integrate on a social level, especially for partners who accompany their partner and stay at home
- Support the partner in finding a job, if this is desired
- Offer language courses

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What is the conclusion for „late mobility of scientist“ from the aspects shown here?

Challenges for mobilising scientist – political level

- Permanent jobs give more security to temporarily work somewhere else
- A sabbatical should be supported – presently it is an exception in a scientific career and in the career of technical and administrative personnel
- Are scholarships still exceptionable with respect to declining retirement provisions, i.e. the time period during which scientist pay into the pension system is becoming shorter and shorter

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Conclusion

- Mobility and lack of mobility is not a gender selective issue
- The scientific system does not offer appropriate job conditions (i.e. short-term contracts) to many scientists and other occupational groups
- Highly insecure job situation for most scientists – reason to leave the system
- Highly inflexible – publish or perish *“If you have not achieved a certain number of publications up to a certain age – you are out”*
- Part-time scientists are very rare: higher legitimation for different time models
- Create a higher acceptance for family friendly work hours

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Thank you for your attention

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