

# Academia vs Researchers vs Business

## Literature Review & Surveys

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EURAXIND Institutional Workshop  
Madrid, 17 October 2017



# Literature Review – State of the art

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- The institutional **engagement with industry** has been a **key priority** for the European Union for some time.
- Although many analyses have been carried on by different **stakeholders and the barriers** are generally well understood, there is **still need for practical actions** in fostering the engagement of research institutions with industry.
- There is so far only **limited involvement of industry in discussions** on how all actors can best profit from intersectoral mobility

# Literature Review – State of the art

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- There seems to be a **lack of quantitative data** to confirm:
  - Positive perception of intersectoral collaboration
  - Few examples of multiple intersectoral moves
  - Easier to move to and from the public sector than private sector
- More common in **arts, social sciences and humanities** (particularly moving into academia)
- **Different cultures** in academia and private sector mitigate against mobility including lack of understanding of skills developed by the other sector
- **Career progression & security** in academia mitigates the mobility by senior researchers

# Literature Review – State of the art

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- More common **when schemes are funded** to enable it: e.g., internships, intersectoral doctoral programmes (Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions):
  - **Early exposure** of researchers to the non-academic sector
  - Foster the **development of transferable competencies** and intersectoral mobility
- Key importance of **transferable competencies** for researchers
- It would be necessary that RFOs and RPOs acknowledge somehow intersectoral professional experiences beyond the usual academic **evaluation methods** in order to trigger mobility, especially from business to academia.

# Literature Review – State of the art

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*Barriers (SGHRM WG on Intersectoral Mobility, 2016):*

1. Awareness and recognition between sectors
2. Regulations, legal framework and administration
3. Insufficient funding & support
4. Few training & development opportunities for transferable skills development through practice
5. Limited incentives for risk-taking entrepreneurship
6. Lack of cross-sectoral collaboration

# Literature Review – State of the art

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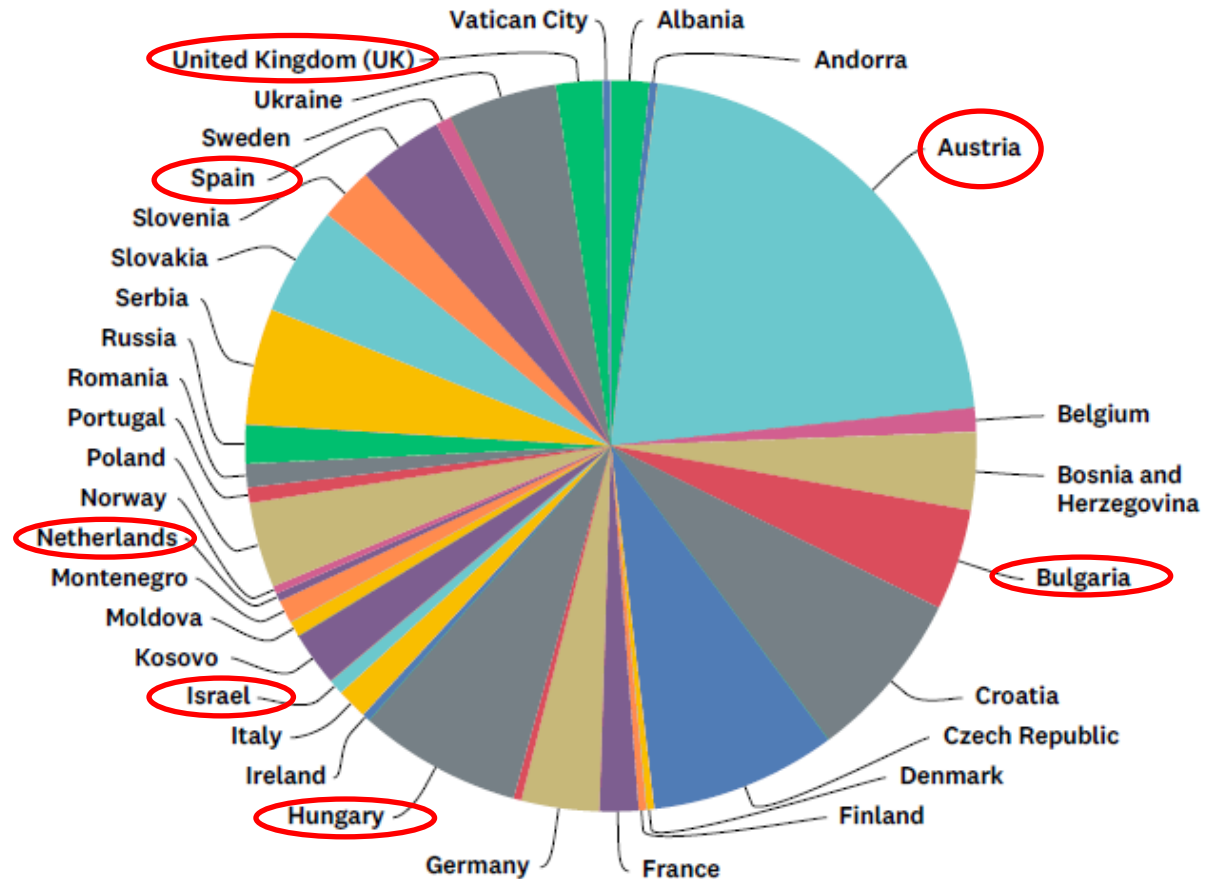
## *Possible actions (DOCENT, 2010)*

- Cross-sector collaborative programmes
- Targeted funding to develop individuals
- Overarching services
- Networks that help or advise researchers
- Financial incentives for companies to employ doctoral graduates
- Showcasing innovative or exemplary projects and programmes

# Institutional Survey

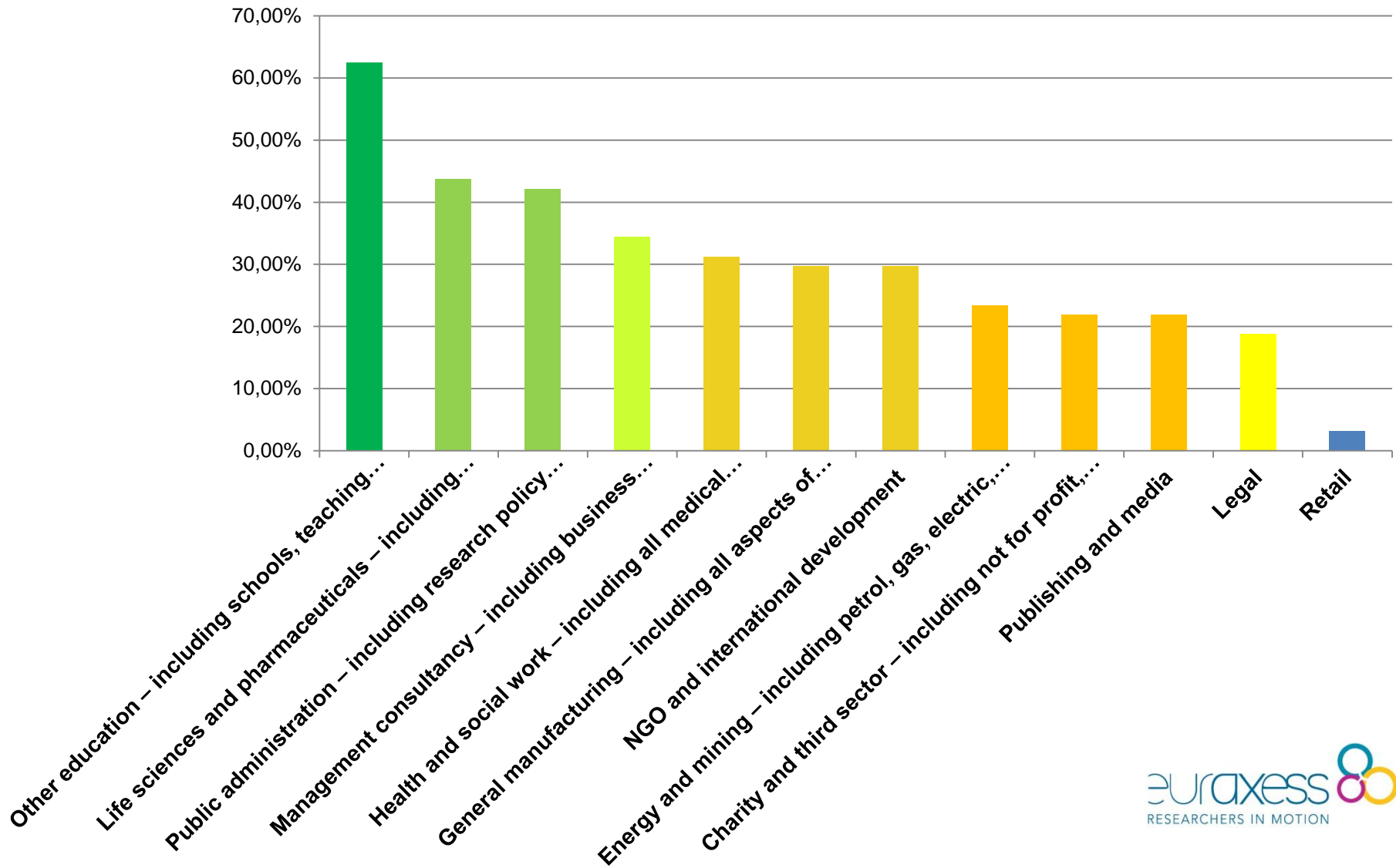
September 2017:

- 320 respondents
- 34 Countries
- 263 from MS & AC
- 90% public
- 80% Universities



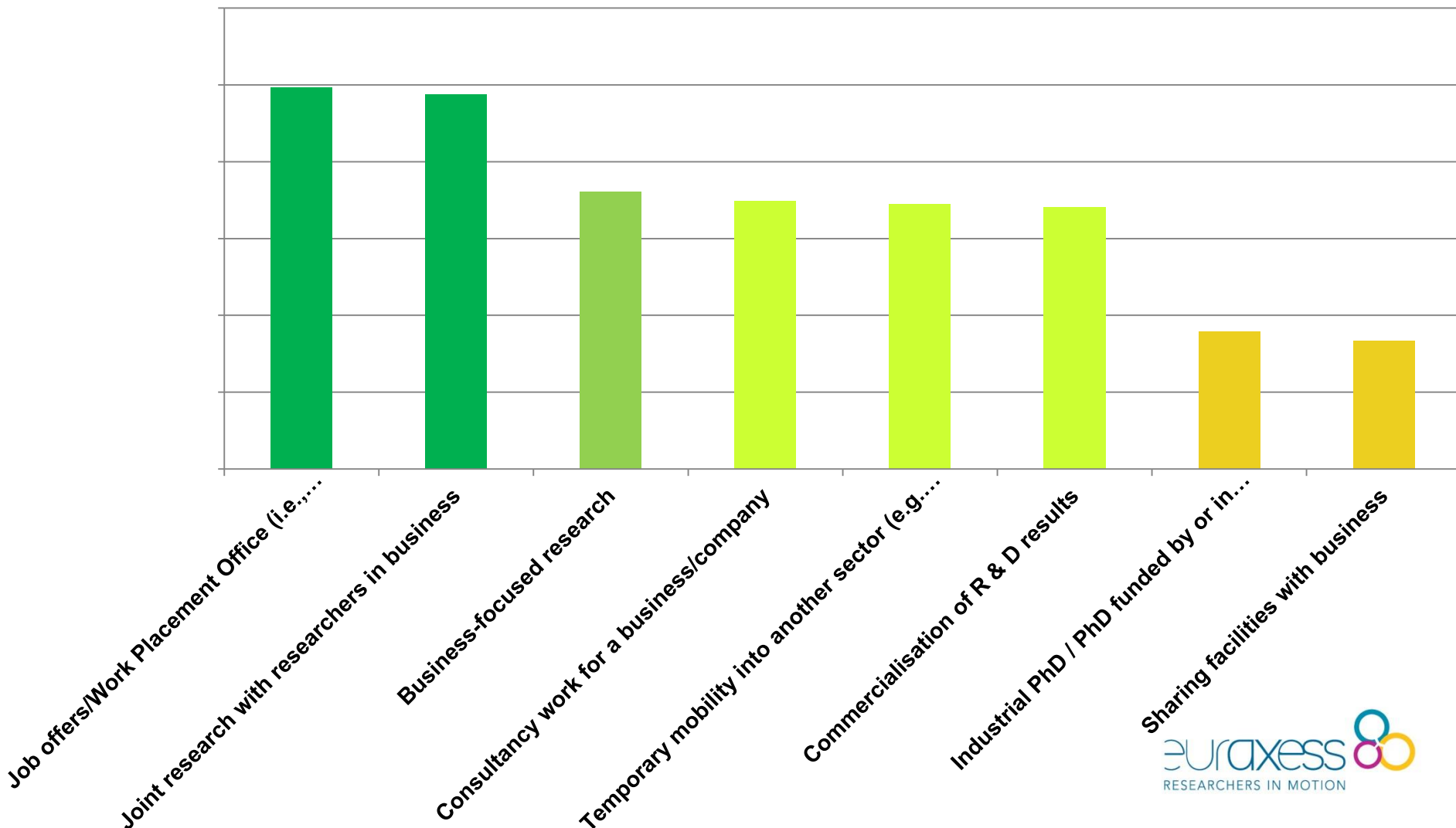
# Institutional Survey – current engagement

## Most common business partners

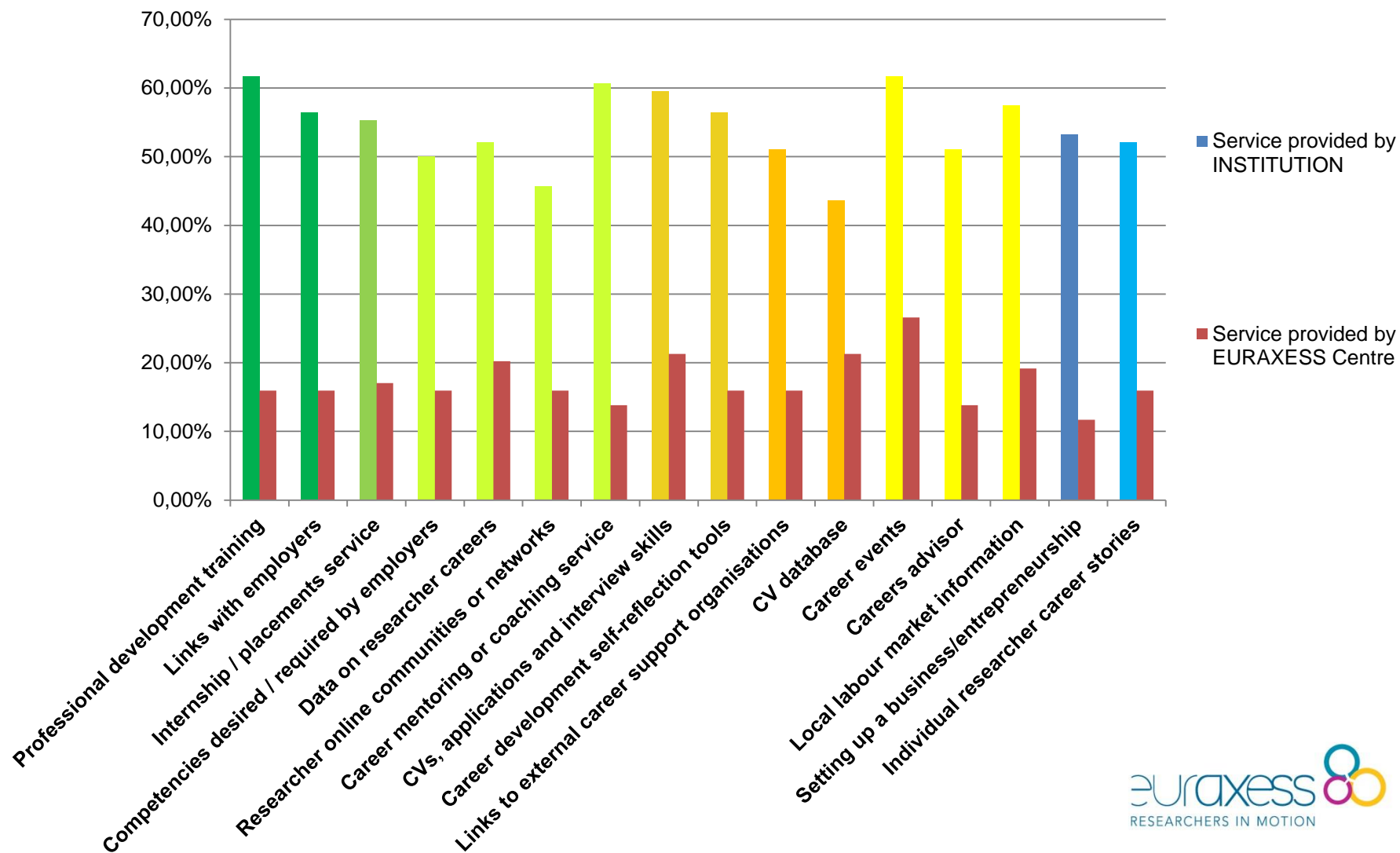


# Institutional Survey – current engagement

## Most important engagement activities



# Institutional Survey – future engagement activities



# Employer Survey

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- 111 responses
- Equal share of small, medium & large organizations
- 14 countries (25% Austria, 10% Spain, 10% Netherlands)
- Different profiles:
  - HR specialists
  - Recruitment consultants
  - Line managers
  - Managing director /Owner
  - Other

# Employer Survey – barriers to engagement

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- 47%: Lack of compatibility of researchers in working environment
- 30%: Not enough opportunities to meet researchers
- 27%: Low awareness of researchers as potential employees
- 16%: Researchers lack experience in writing CV, writing applications and/or interview skills
- 11%: Lack of understanding on qualities of researchers

# Employer Survey – future tools supporting recruitment

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## **MOST IMPORTANT**

1. Network between organization and university

## **IMPORTANT**

1. CV database
2. Information about skills of researchers
3. Information on local research talent
4. On-line researcher communities or networks

## **NOT IMPORTANT**

1. Career events
2. Alumni networks
3. Meet & greet sessions
4. Newsletters (recruitment, events, etc.)
5. Special recruitment

# EURAXIND Workshop – Discussion

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- What are the existing collaborations?
- Who are the proper stakeholders in academia in order to facilitate intersectoral mobility? (researchers, institutions, other...)
- Which are the existing barriers?
- How can engagement be done?

# EURAXIND Workshop – Discussion

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- Vision on the ideal Industry-Academia collaboration?
- Vision on the ideal Industry-Academia interaction?
- What services should be provided?

# Survey to researchers & alumni

- Researchers – 994 responses
  - Disciplines: 37% biol/life/health sci, 32% phys sci/eng/IT, 22% social sci, 9% arts/humanities
  - Level of researcher: 27% First stage; 42% Recognised; 18% Established; 11% Leading
  - 47 countries (Top 5 – Hungary, UK, Poland, Germany, Spain)
- Alumni (Ex-researchers) – 339 responses
  - Fair split of disciplines: 46% biol/life/health sci, 21% phys sci, 14% eng/IT, 14% social sci, 5% A&H
  - Mostly they left after being research staff - highest stage of research role was: First stage 28%; Recognised researcher 62%; Established researcher 8%
  - 33 countries (Top 5 – UK, Spain, France, US, Germany)

# Researchers - Career thinking and development

- In the long term, 78% want an academic career
- 57% would consider working outside academia – of these...:
  - 70% would still want to do research
  - 37% in research/grant management
  - 35% in research/science policy
- 70% would be interested in short-term work outside academia
- 65% think it would be hard to get a non-research job in business:  
<30% think businesses value what researchers offer working in non-research roles

# Researchers - Interactions with business

- 28% have done joint research; 27% business-focused research; 27% consultancy; 12% temporary sector mobility; 7% long term mobility
- 48% would like internship/placement in business; 52% to do joint research; 59% valorisation of research knowledge
- What would help more interactions with business?
  - more knowledge of opportunities (>60%)
  - greater recognition of value to an academic career (45%)
  - more training in skills valued outside academia (43%)
  - better understanding of those skills (41%)

## Researchers -Interactions with business

- Barriers preventing interactions:
  - 45% uncertain impact on career (& reduction in research outputs)
  - 35% lack of experience/skills valued by business
  - 26% lack of confidence
- Researchers less confident about presenting evidence of people skills (incl. communications) or commercial skills, compared with their research or self-efficacy / self-management
- Also less confident about interviews / selection, and getting good references, whereas confident about their CV/application form

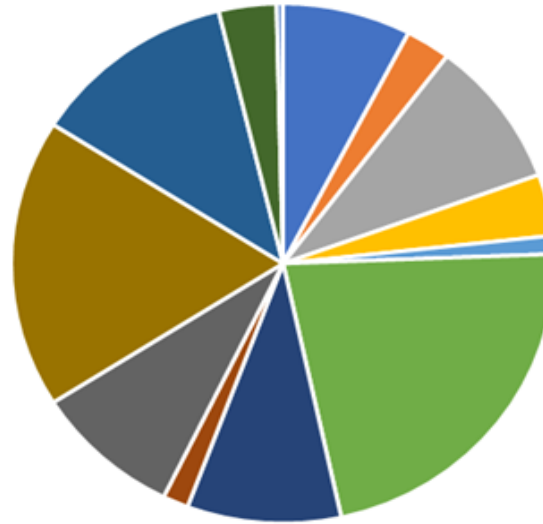
## Alumni - Leaving academia

- Top reasons for leaving.... they wanted:
  - Better long-term employment prospects
  - More job security, not short-term contracts, better work/life balance
  - Wanted different professional challenges
  
- Most helpful support in transition:
  - Their own active job searching
  - Professional and personal networks
  
- Most useful support / experience / attribute when making transition:
  - Personal motivation / confidence / determination (73%)
  - Flexibility / adaptability (69%)
  - Training in transferable skills / competencies (26%)
  - Guidance from careers advisers etc. (11%)

## Alumni - In their current job...

- 84% are very or fairly satisfied with current work/job (42% very), and only 6% want an academic career now (and 12% another role in HE)
- What they actually do now:
  - 75% draw on experience/competencies developed during HE research
  - 68% evaluate/understand others' research
  - 64% manage other people
  - 43% conduct research
  - 43% use detailed knowledge from their specialism
- Only 36% think employers value researchers for doing non-research jobs

# Sectors alumni now work in



- Charity and third sector
- General manufacturing
- Legal
- Management consultancy
- Other education – inc. HE teaching
- Public administration – inc. research policy
- Retail
- Energy and mining
- Health and social work
- Life sciences and pharmaceuticals
- NGO and international development
- Other
- Publishing and media

- 1. Problem solving
- 2. Research skills
- 3. Collaboration
- 4. Tech/subject expertise
- 5. Self-organisation
- 6. Adaptability
- 7. Creativity
- 8. Emotional intelligence
- 9. Communication
- 10. Project management

**What  
researchers  
believe they  
are good at**



- 1. Problem solving
- 2. Creativity
- 3. Adaptability
- 4. Communication
- 5. Collaboration
- 6. Innovation
- 7. Self-organisation
- 8. Project management
- 9. People management
- 10. Tech/subject expertise

**What  
researchers  
think  
employers  
want**



- 1. Problem solving
- 2. Tech/subject expertise
- 3. Research skills
- 4. Communication
- 5. Creativity
- 6. Self-organisation
- 7. Collaboration
- 8. Innovation
- 9. Project management
- 10. Emotional intelligence

**What  
employers  
say they  
need**



- 1. Creativity
- 2. Innovation
- 3. Problem solving
- 4. Tech/subject expertise
- 5. Communication
- 6. Collaboration
- 7. Research skills
- 8. Self-organisation
- 9. Adaptability
- 10. Business awareness

**What  
institutions  
believe to be  
top  
employable  
skills**



# Competencies

- Many **views shared** (e.g., the importance of **problem solving**)
- Researcher & institutions think that **research skills** are not considered to be very important for employers, but ranks 3rd when asking employers
- **Technical/subject expertise** is not perceived as valuable for employers, but it ranks 2nd when asking them
- Skills on innovation are considered as quite important by institutions and researchers, but employers do not rank it high
- Communication skills are considered important by all, although researchers do not think they are too good at it.

# EURAXIND Workshop – Group work

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- Which jobs are researchers recruited for outside the academia?
- How are researchers recruited outside academia?

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# THANK YOU!!

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