



**Danmarks Forsknings- og
Innovationspolitiske Råd**
Web-interviews among international
researchers employed at Danish universities

CONTENT



1. Foreword
 - Background
 - Method
 - Data collection
2. Management summary
3. Results
4. Appendix
 - Questionnaire
5. About Norstat Danmark A/S

FOREWORD



1. Background:

- The Danish Council for Research and Innovation Policies (DFiR) and Industrial PhD-student Thomas Trøst Hansen, Aalborg University, wished to conduct a survey among international researchers employed at Danish universities
- This survey explores what motivates international researchers to seek employment at Danish universities and their views on their subsequent working conditions in Denmark. A pilot survey has been carried out at Aarhus University. The study has now been rolled out at the seven other Danish universities (AAU, CBS, DTU, ITU, RUC, SDU and UCPH)

2. Method:

- The survey has been carried out among all international researchers employed at Danish universities. Norstat Danmark has sent an e-mail to all from the lists they have received from the universities

3. Data collection:

- The interviews have been completed in the period from 30 April to 23 May 2018. The results from AU are based on a survey from January 2018.
- The response rate from the universities where Norstat has carried out the survey are:

	E-mails sent	Incoming answers	Response rate
CBS	280	107	38,2 %
DTU	1670	468	28,0 %
ITU	95	28	29,5 %
KU	1263	314	24,9 %
RUC	81	25	30,9 %
SDU	532	178	33,5 %
AAU	597	170	28,5 %
Total	4518	1290	28,6 %

4. The questionnaire used for the employees at AU is a bit different than for the other universities. Therefor are some questions from AU left out in this report. This will be apparent from the base for each graph. If the base is 1,841, everyone has been asked the question. If the base is only 1,291, the question has not been asked to employees at Aarhus University



MANEAGEMENT SUMMARY

- Almost everybody did not hold a non-Danish citizenship at the time of their employment at their current university
- About half of all the international researchers have been employed more than three years
- There is a small overweight of men among the international researchers, with 55% being men
- Half of the international researchers are currently either PhD-students or postdoc
- Natural Science and Engineering & Technology are the most prominent scientific fields among international researchers in this sample
- Almost half of the international researchers worked in either Denmark, Germany, United States or United Kingdom before their employment at their current university
- Almost two-third did not participate in a conference, a meeting, a short research stays etc. in Denmark prior to their employment at their current university
- One-third visited their university for a job interview before they come to work there. Otherwise there were generally not many who had visited Denmark before their employment. Two-third of those who came to Denmark prior to their employment did either feel that the visit had a positive or very positive influence on their decision to continue their career at their current university

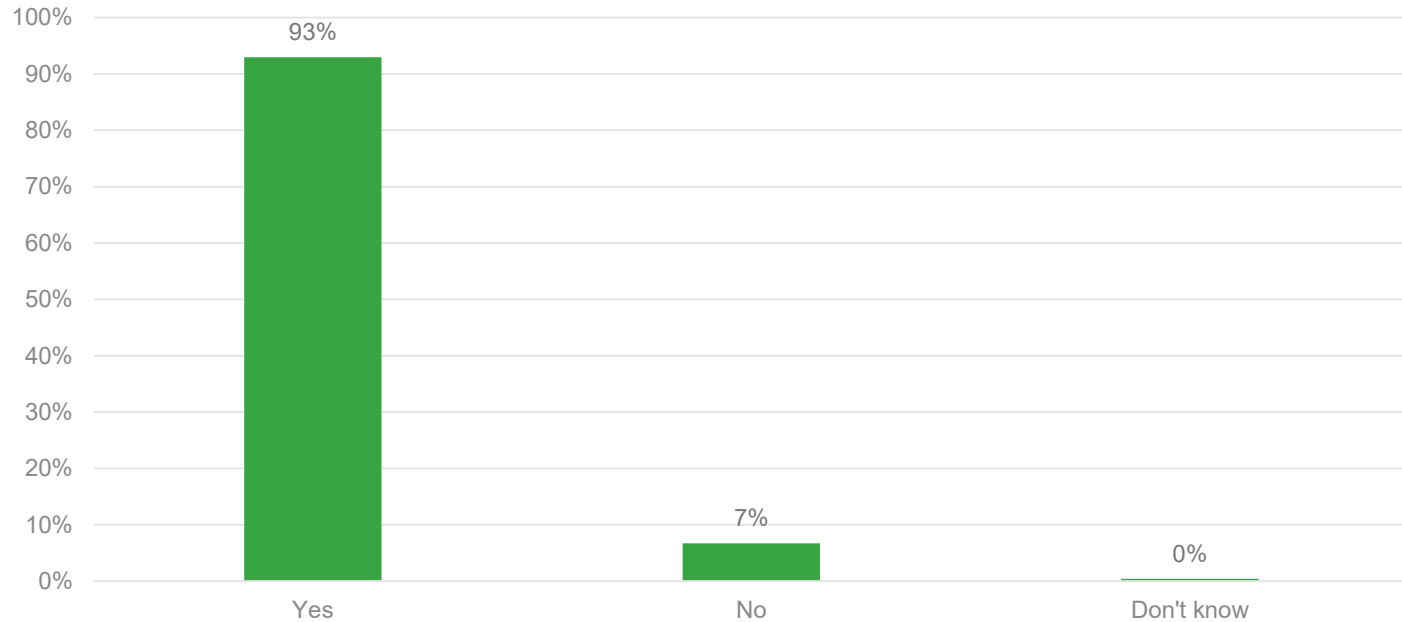
- Almost one-third were somewhat or extremely familiar with their future colleagues
- The most important factor behind the researchers choice to take a position at their current university is the opportunity to improve their future career prospects and the scientific quality of colleagues or research team. Least important is services to support when relocating to Denmark
- If researchers are going to apply for a permanent position, it is particularly important that they have publications in high-ranking journals and get external funding. Least important is engagement with civil society
- One-third have a permanent position at the moment. Half of those who do not have a permanent position have not made up their mind whether or not they will apply for one

RESULTS



Results

Did you at the time of employment at your current university hold a non-Danish citizenship(s)?

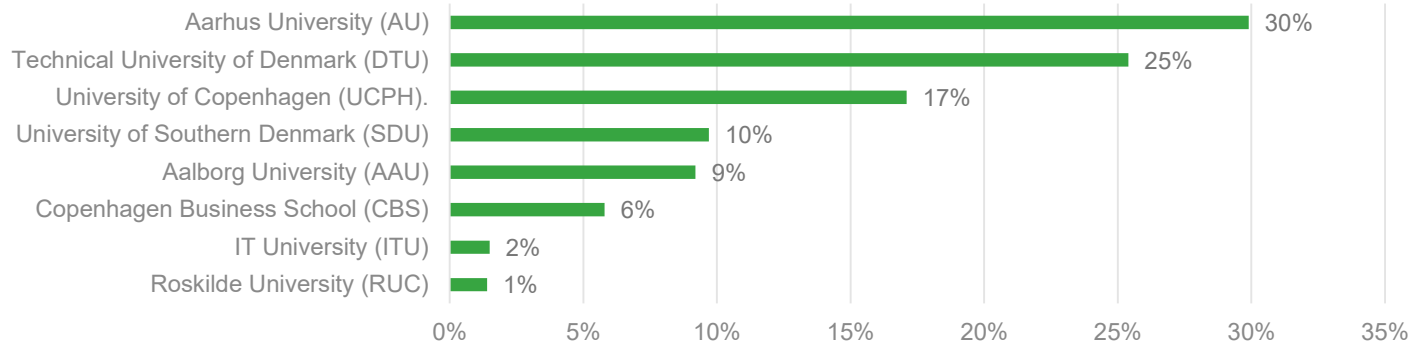


Base: 1,291

- This question was not addressed to employees at Aarhus University
- 93% of all did not have an Danish citizenship when they where employed

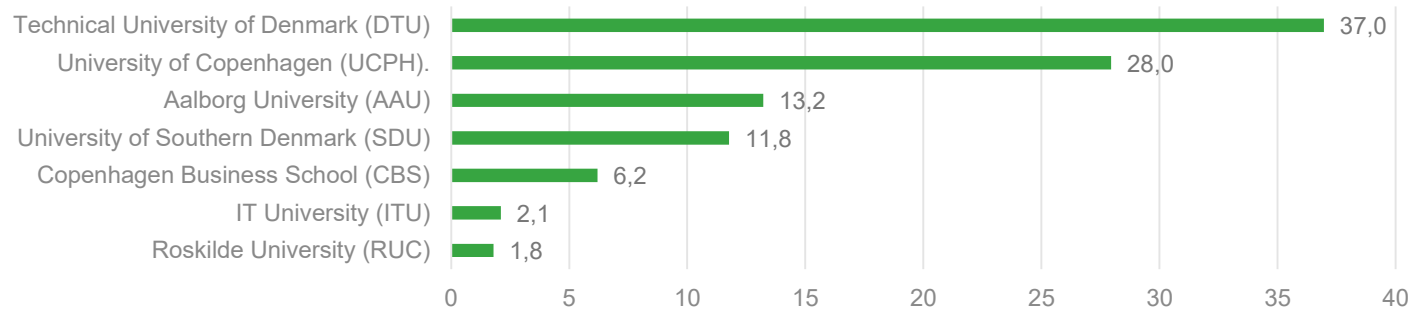
Results

Which university are you employed at?



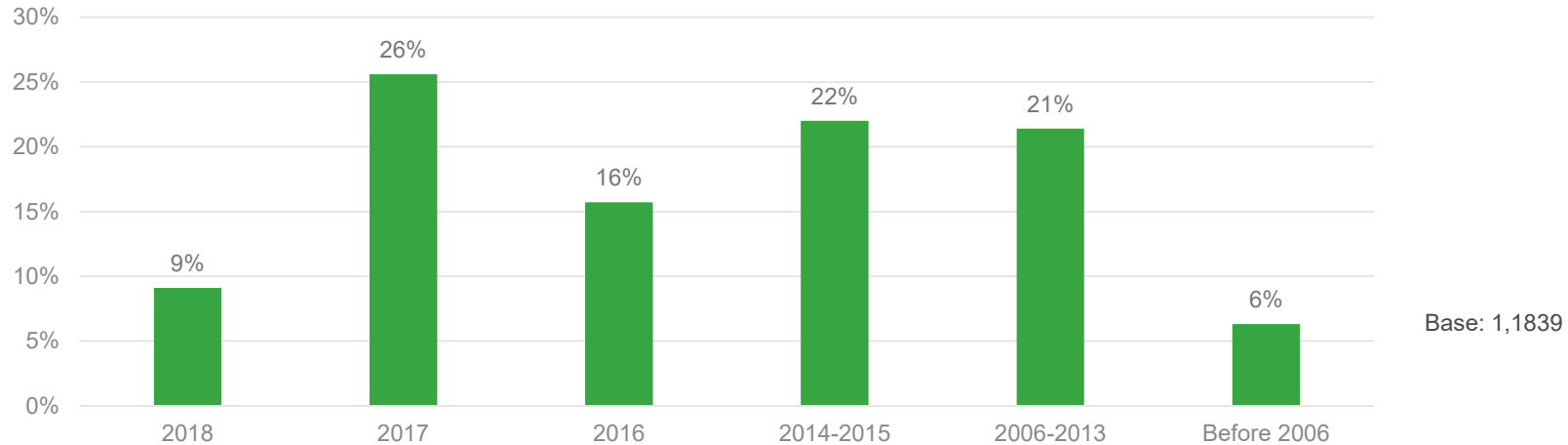
Base: 1,841

- AU represent 30% of the sample.
- Below you can see the universities share of the total sample



Results

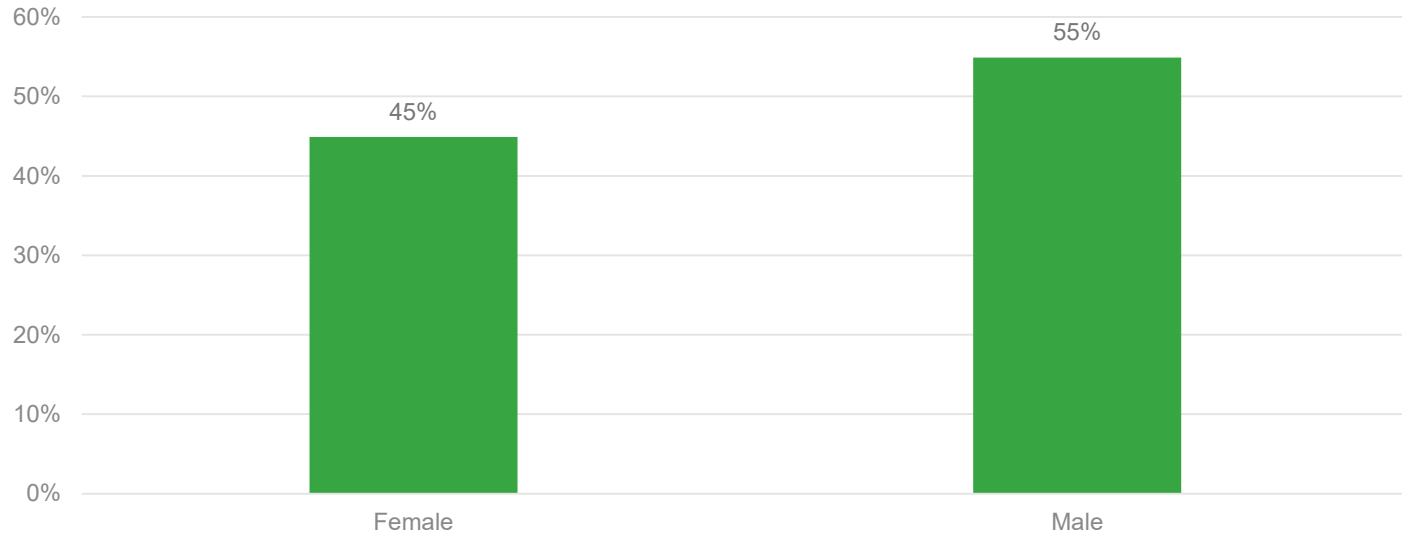
Which year were you employed at your current university?



- About half of all the international researchers have been employed more than three years
- 55% of the women have only been employed within the last three years. 47% of the men have been employed within the last three years
- 84% of the associate professors and 87% of the professors have been employed more than three years
- 72% of the research assistants and 73% of the PhD-students have been employed less than three years
- Researchers from United Kingdom seem to hold the longest period of employment since 62% have been employed more than three years
- 27% of the researchers employed in 2018 came from a private company

Results

What is your sex?

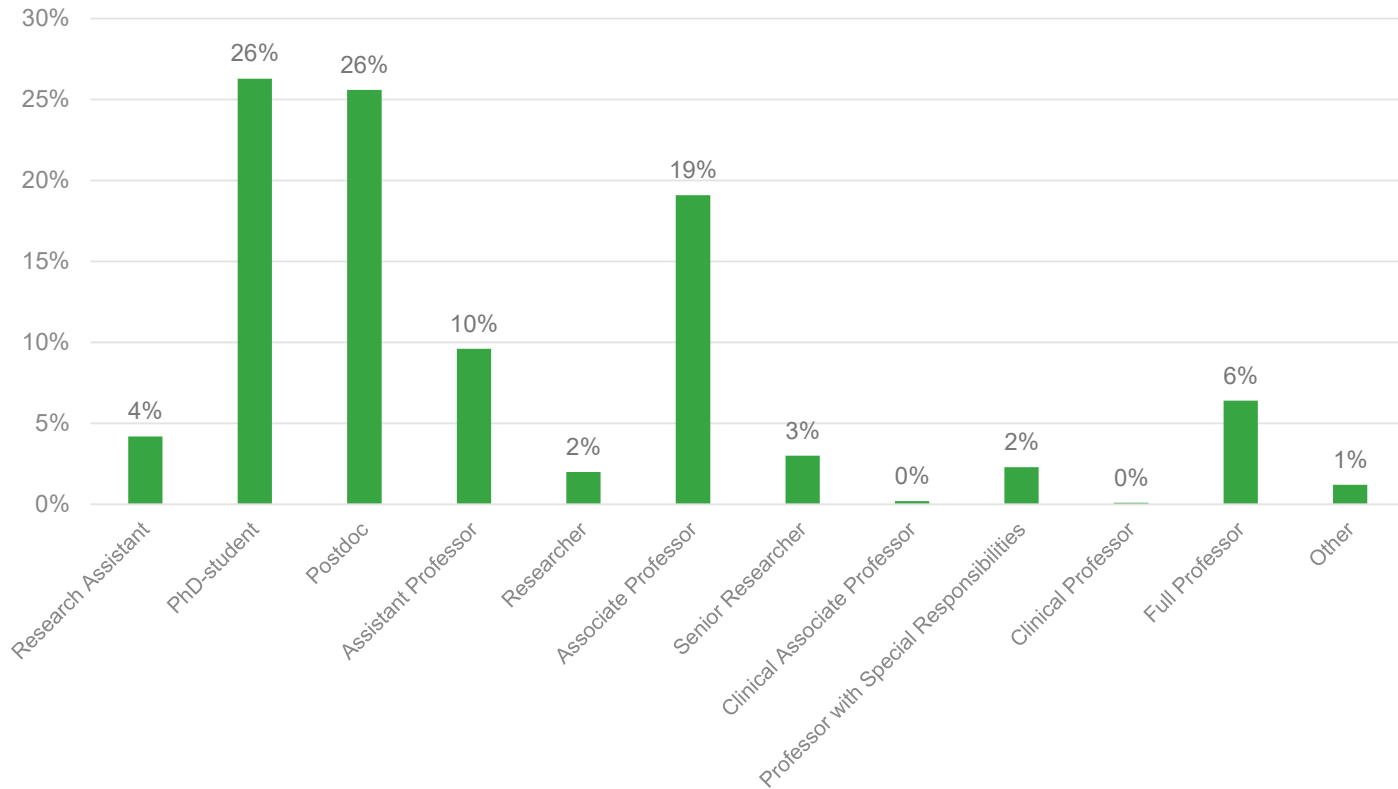


Base: 1,841

- 54% the PhD-students are women and only 30% of the professors are women
- 26% of those who have engineering & technology as their primary scientific field are women
- 64% of those who have agricultural science as their primary scientific field are women

Results

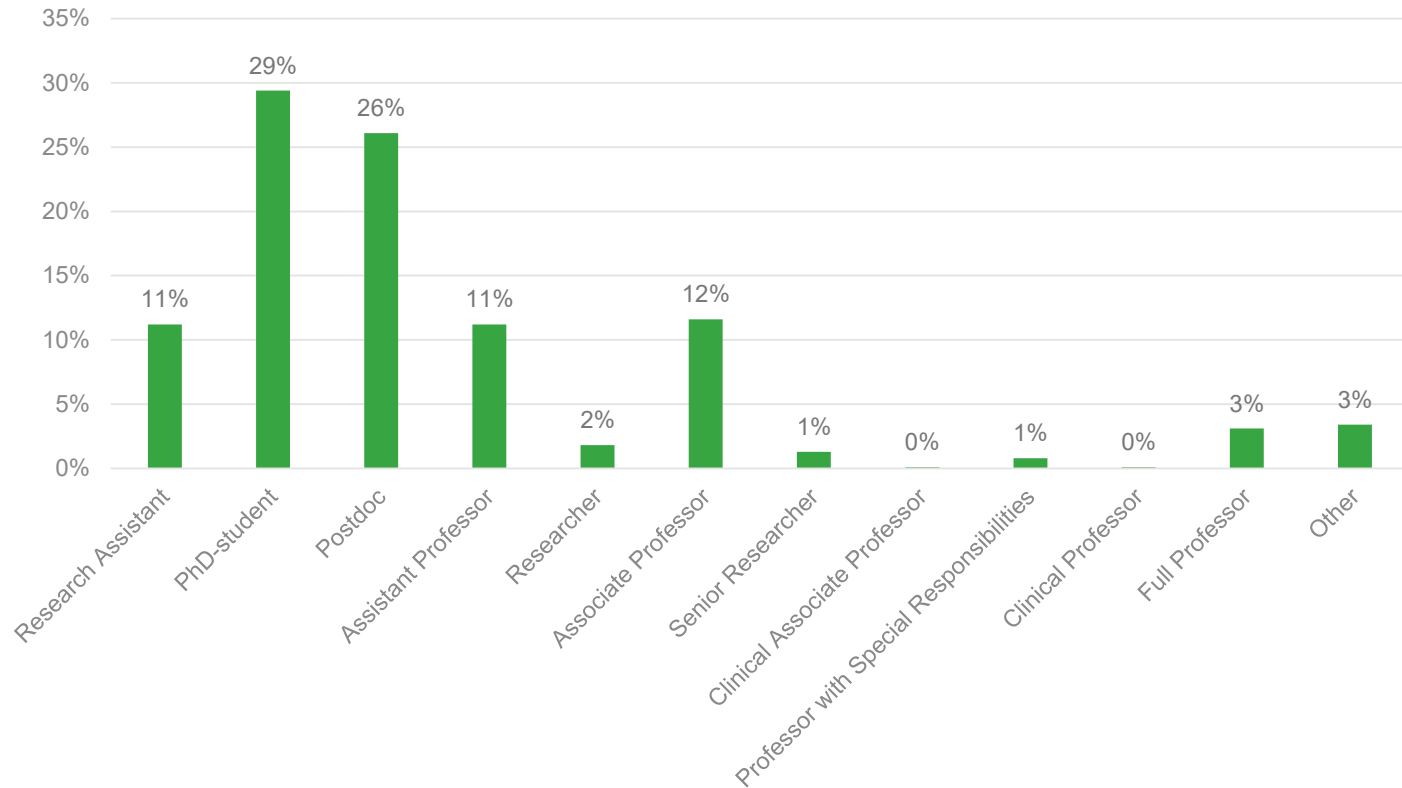
What is your current position?



Base: 1,841

Results

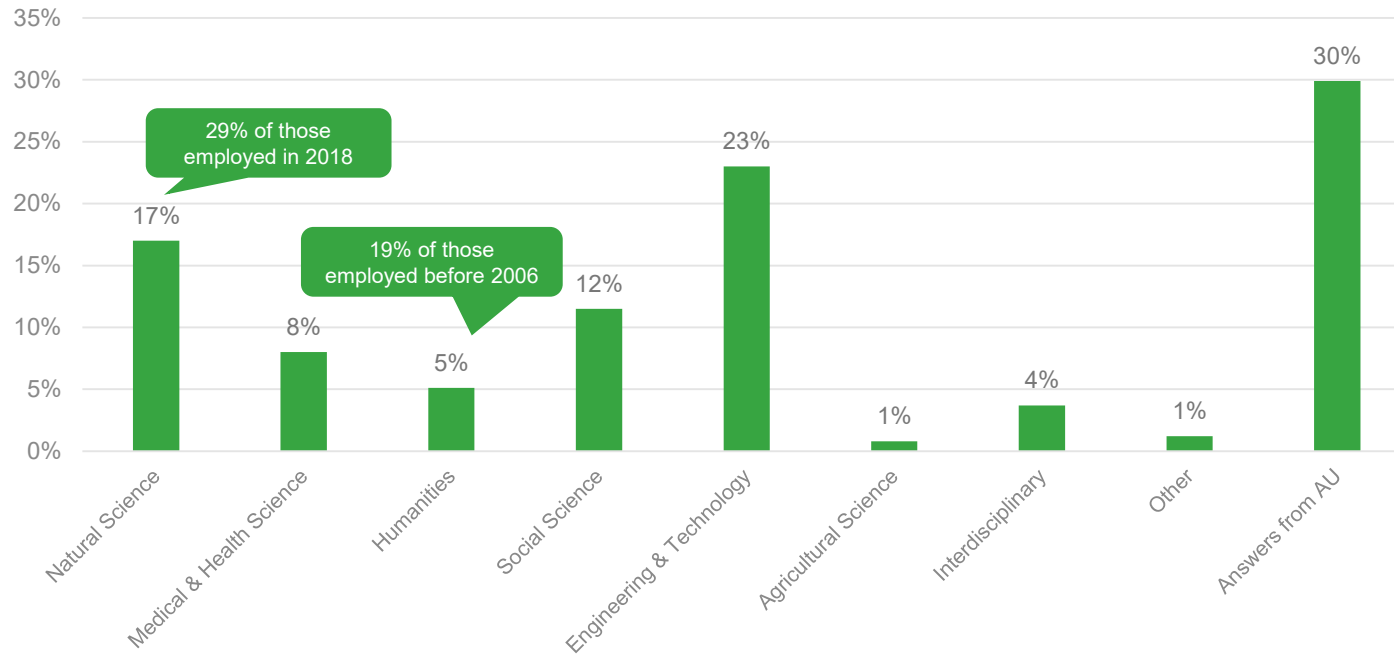
What was your initial position at your current university?



Base: 1,841

Results

Please indicate your primary scientific field

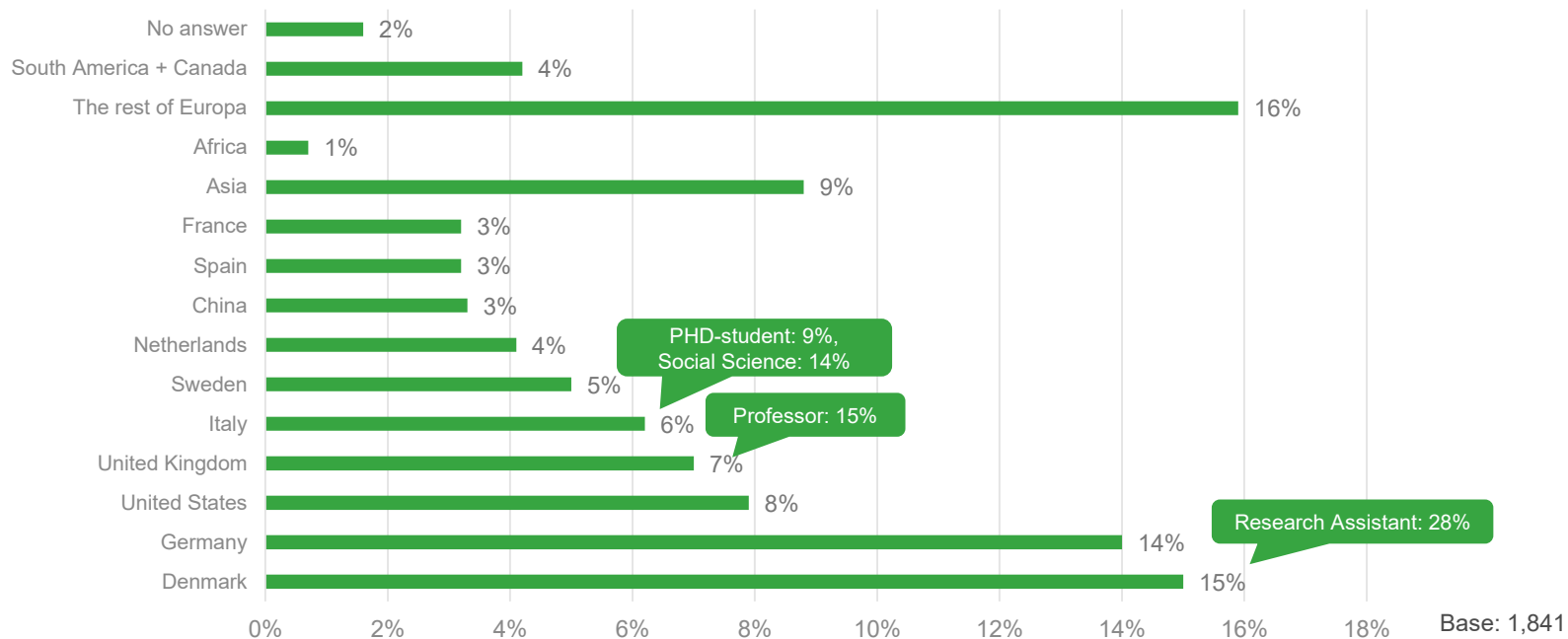


Base: 1,841

- Natural Science and Engineering & Technology are the most common scientific fields among international researchers

Results

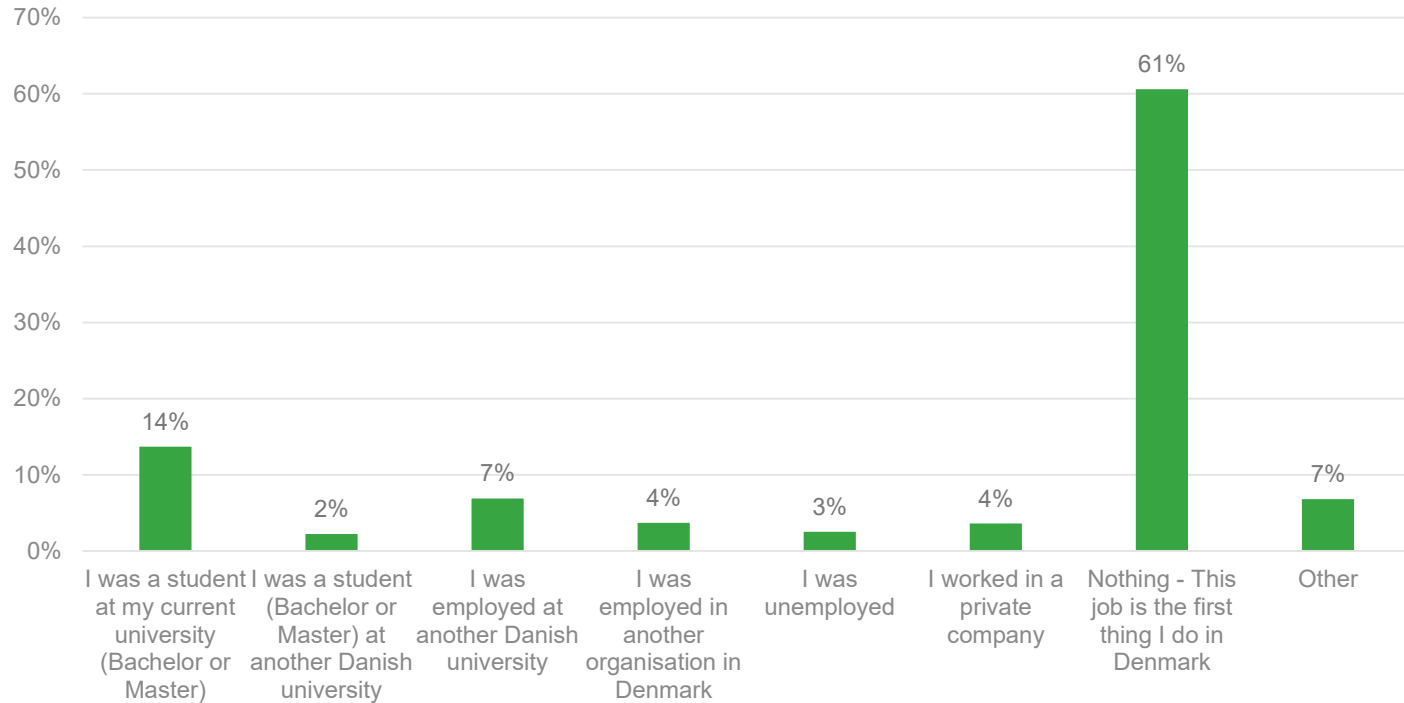
In which country (incl. DK) did you study or work immediately before your initial employment at your current university?



- Most of the researchers worked in Denmark, the nearby countries and United States before coming to their current University
- Many professors come from United Kingdom
- Research assistants came to a great extent from a study or job in Denmark

Results

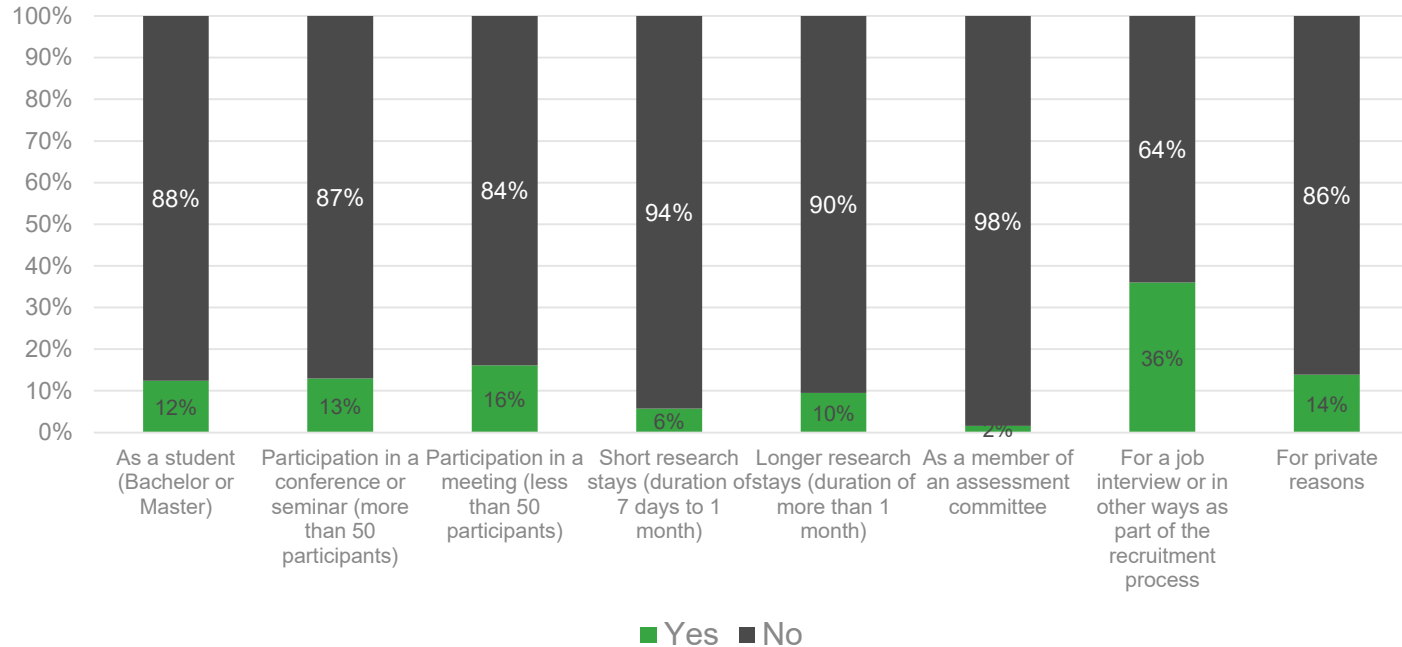
What did you do in Denmark prior to your employment at your current university?



Base: 1,334

Results

Did you visit your current university for any of the following reasons, before being employed?

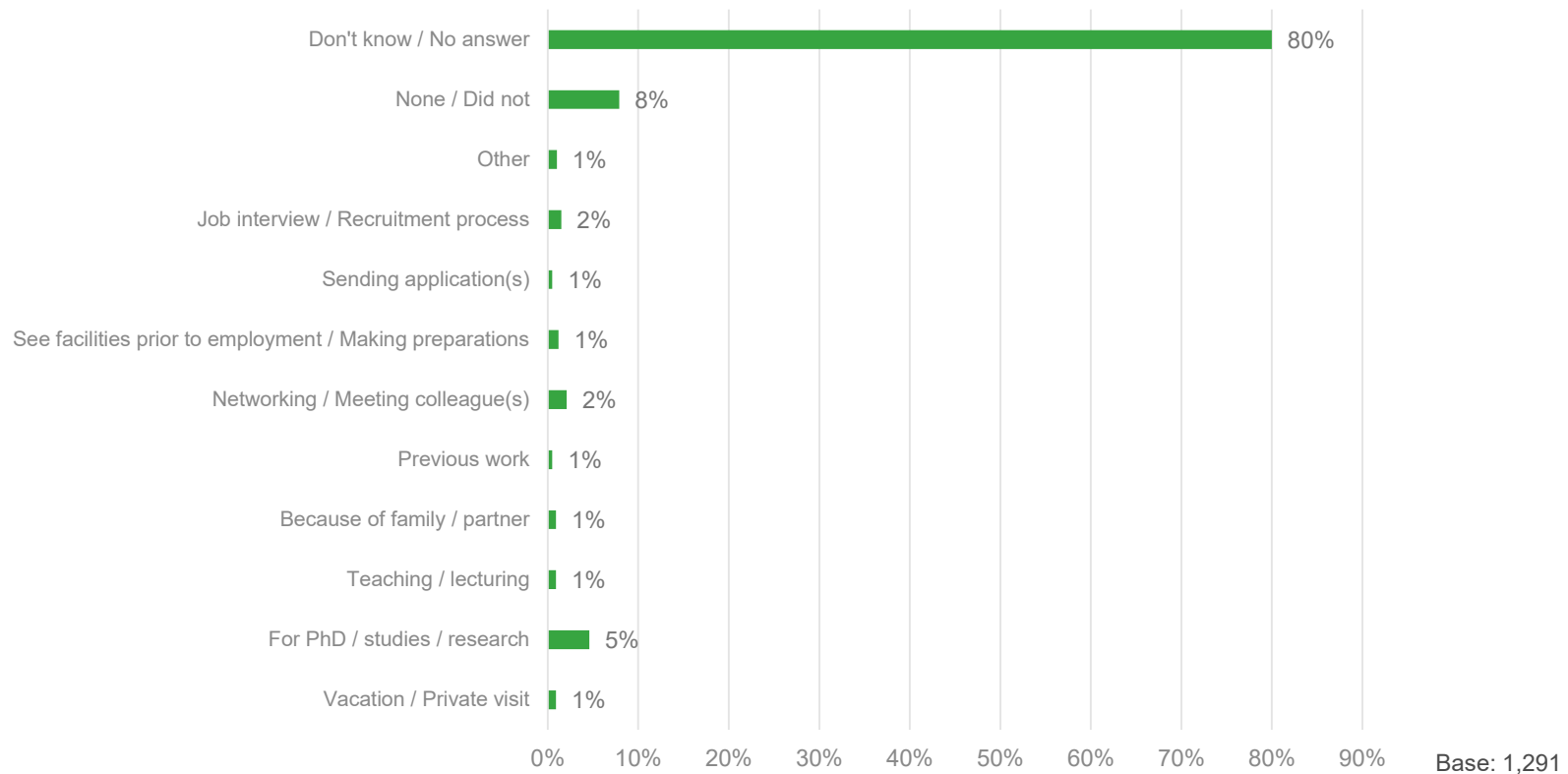


Base: 1,841

- Not many international researchers came to their current university prior to their employment for other reason than a job interview

Results

Other reasons for visiting your current university prior to employment



Results

Other reasons for visiting your current university prior to employment

To talk with another professor about being co-supervisor in my PhD application.

To meet professors and find commonalities in research areas

was offered a position as senior scientist at one of the department at the University

To assess if I would like to work in my current University. If it was a place that will allow me to develop my career.

Erasmus Exchange.

Invited seminar at Niels Bohr Institute

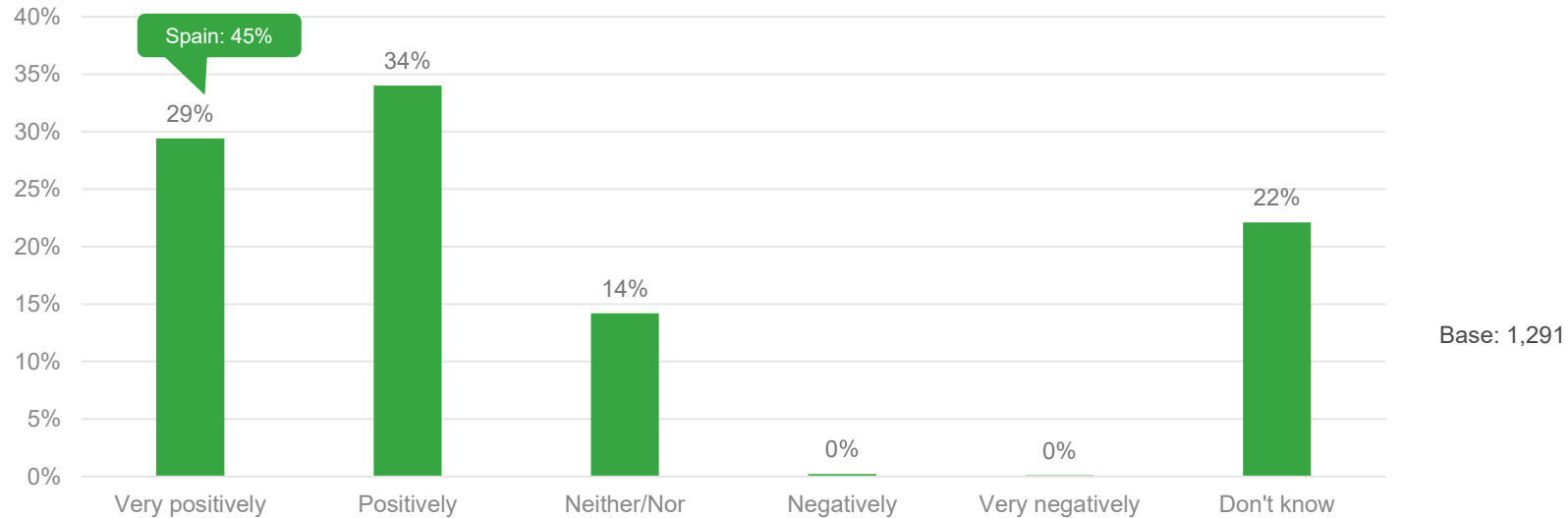
My wife, who is Danish, brought me during our summer holiday and I met with several members of the NNF Center for Basic Metabolic Research at UCPH.

Exchange student

As part of the requirements for a Preparing Future Faculty Program in the US that required I teach for a week at another University than my degree institution

Results

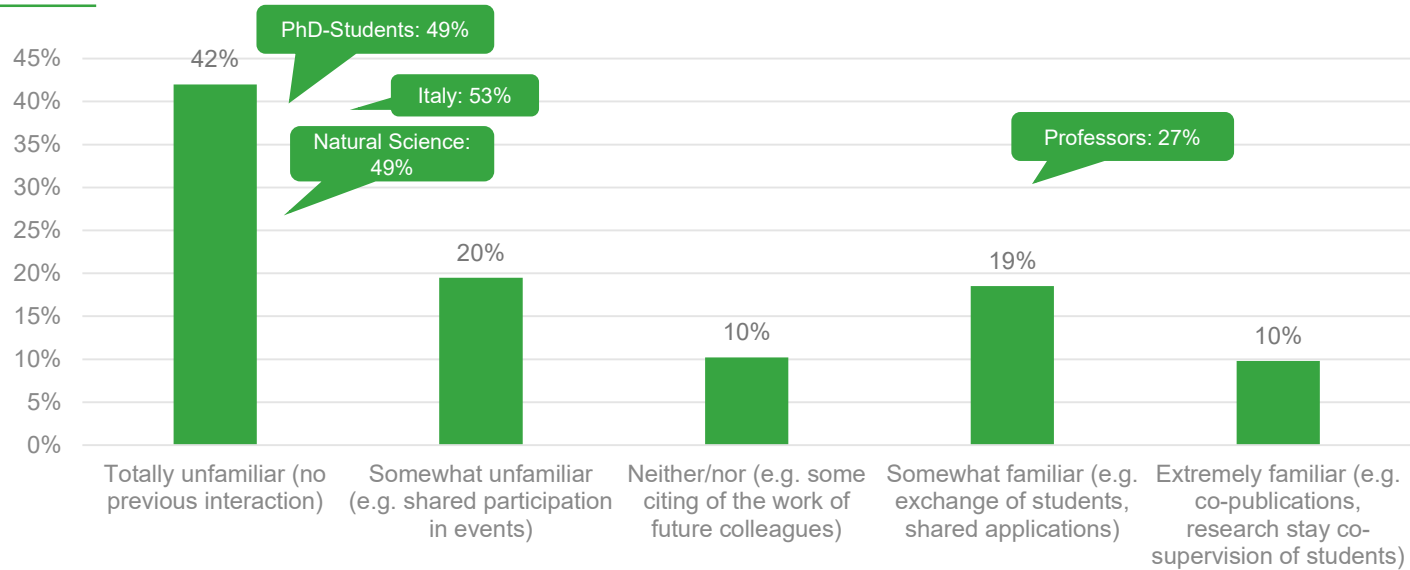
How did your pre-employment visit(s) influence your decision to continue your career at your current university?



- Nobody had a negative experience with their pre-employment visit. If they had had it, they probably would not have come to Denmark
- The researcher from Spain had the most positive experience

Results

Before being employed at your current university, how familiar were you with your future colleagues?

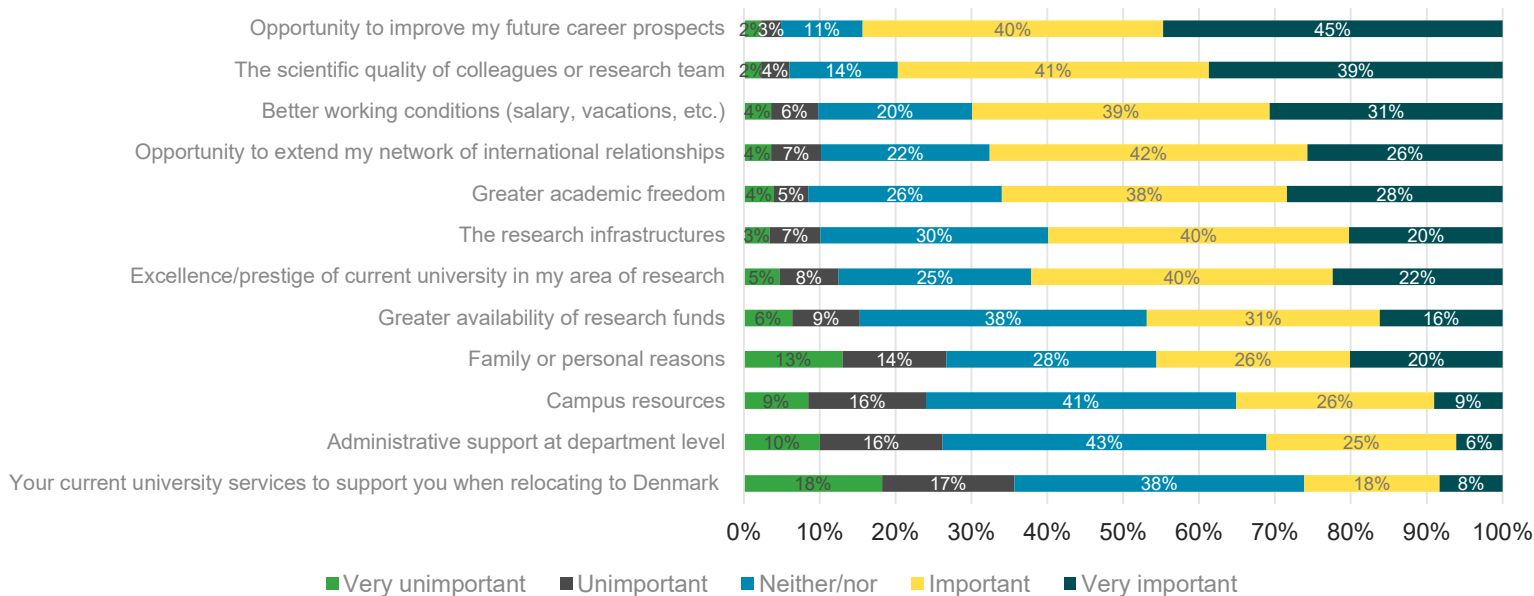


Base: 1,823

- Only 29% were somewhat or extremely familiar with their future colleagues

Results

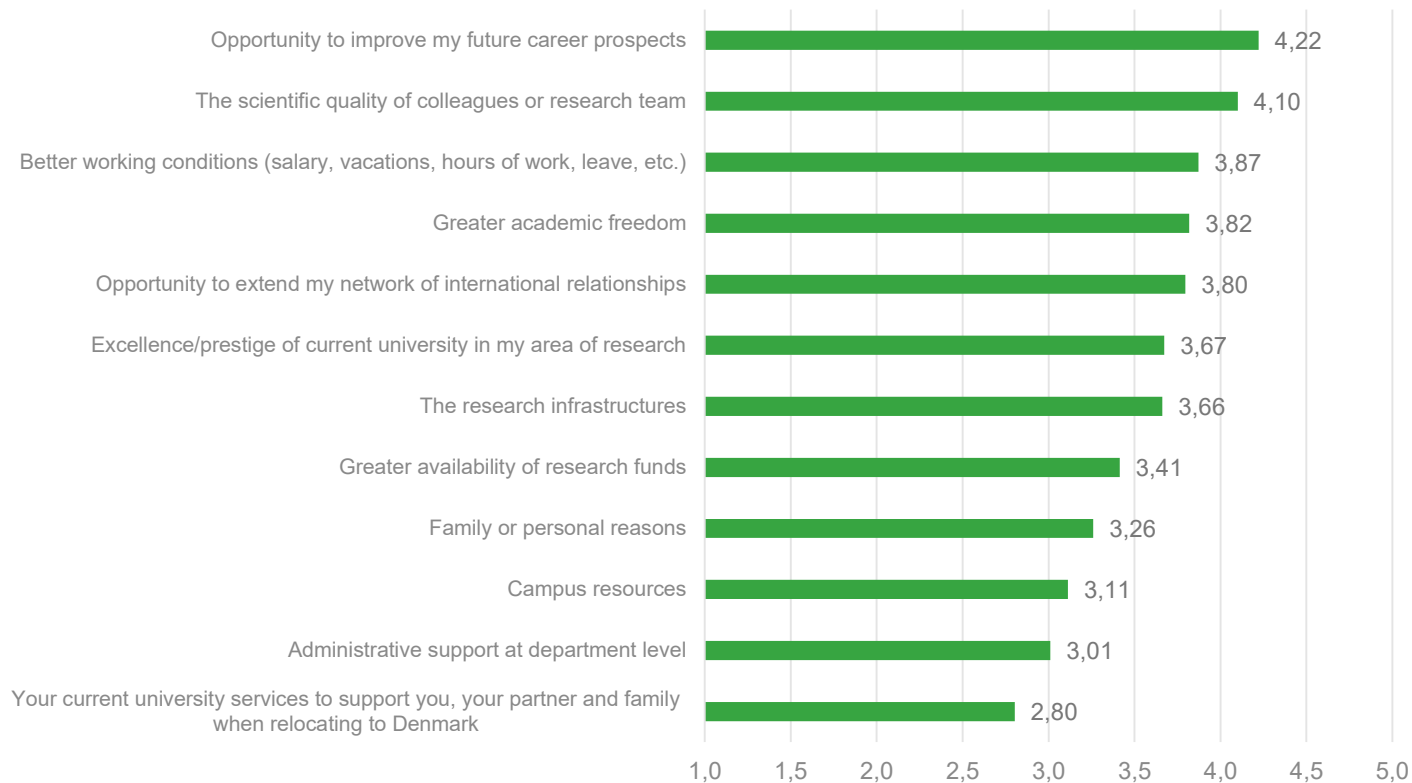
How important was each of the following factors behind your choice to take your position at your current university



- The graph above shows different factors importance behind the researchers choice to take a position at their current university.
 - The most important factor is the opportunity to improve their future career prospects
 - The least important factor is their current university services to support them when relocating to Denmark

Results

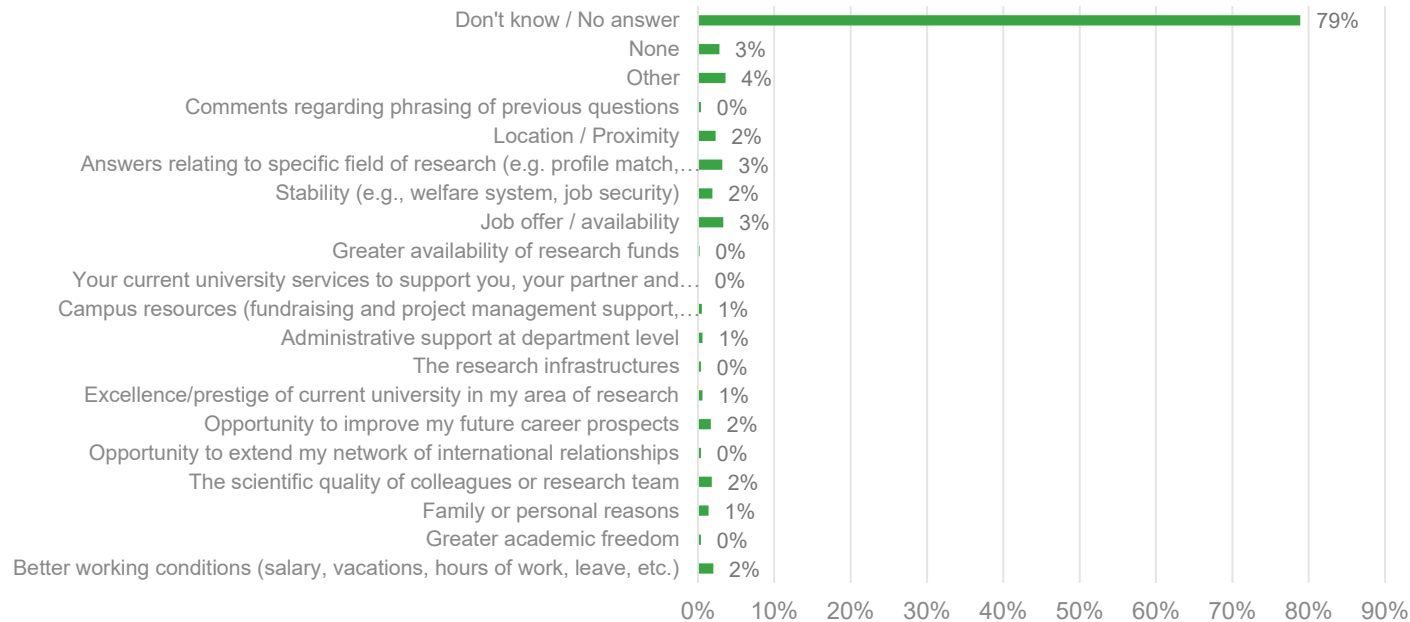
How important was each of the following factors behind your choice to take your position at your current university?



Base: 1,841

Results

Other important factors behind your choice to your position at your current university



Base: 1,291

Results

Other important factors behind your choice to your position at your current university. A small section of the open comments

Work life balance, while still striving for excellence internationally

Location (i.e. the fact that CBS is located in an attractive European city)

there was a position in exactly the research field I was interested in looking for the qualifications that I had (which was not a given - provided my technical background but interest in a 'social sciency' subject) - also the more secure employment conditions as a PhD (having been employed in industry several years before - return to academia in my home country would have meant severe cuts in my lifestyle & uncertain period until finalization of PhD).

Good atmosphere at workflow and no hierarchy at workflow

The interview process was fundamental. DTU spent a lot of money for locating me in a very nice hotel and covered travel expenses -including a small trip with the future supervisors in the surroundings of the campus and a dinner at the restaurant. This made me feel important and welcomed. When I decided to apply for a job in Denmark I was looking for a country that really cares about its researchers.

My wife is Danish, that is the sole reason I moved to Denmark.

Relationship with supervisor/ mentor and knowledge spillovers from studies

Offer of a great opportunity to set up a research team, working with high quality data and top level colleagues I already knew and had worked with.

I was offered a research professorship, in other words a greater proportion of my time for research. I was at Roskilde from 1973 to 2000, deeply committed to teaching, with an outstanding level of research productivity, but also involved in university administration. I probably work for 60-70 hours a week for many years.

Friendly environment

Denmark was in the EU, I wanted out of Brexit

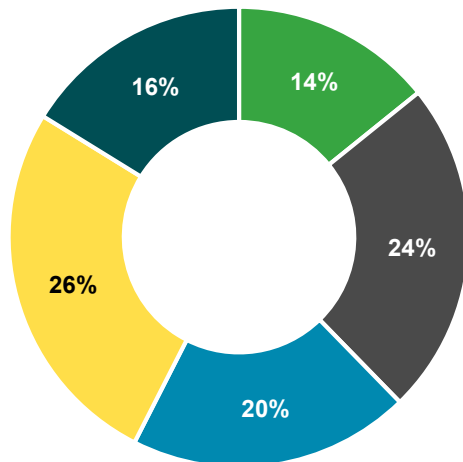
Amazing project with great opportunities to learn new techniques and improve my qualifications.

Bad treatment of PhD-students and students in general at German universities and therefore no interest to continue in that environment

Results

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement regarding your current university?

International academic staff has equal access to tenured positions as Danish academic staff:



■ Strongly disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither/nor ■ Somewhat agree ■ Strongly agree

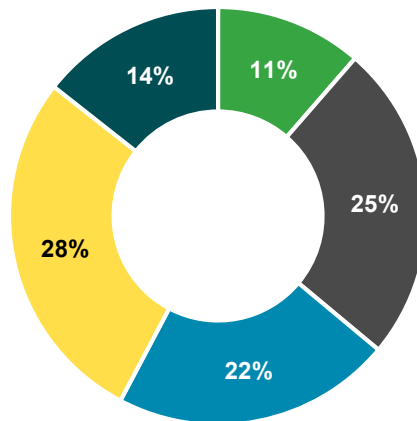
- Researches who have been employed at their current university before 2013 agree more to this statement: International academic staff has equal access to tenured positions as Danish academic staff, than those who have been in there for a short while.
 - 23% of the researchers from United Kingdom do strongly disagree to this statement
 - 36% of the researchers from Asia do somewhat agree to this statement

Base: 1,841

Results

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement regarding your current university?

International researchers/academic staff has the same access to acquire external funding as Danish academic staff



■ Strongly disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither/nor ■ Somewhat agree ■ Strongly agree

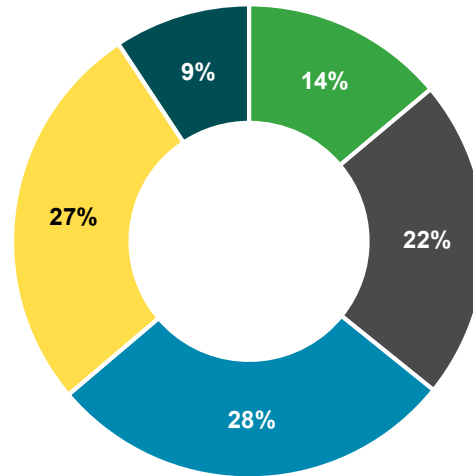
- International researchers/academic staff has the same access to acquire external funding as Danish academic staff
 - Strongly disagree: 24% of the humanities and 16% of the associate professors
 - Strongly agree: 19% of those who studied or worked in Denmark

Base: 1,841

Results

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement regarding your current university?

It is transparent what sort of research-based activities that leads to promotion



■ Strongly disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither/nor ■ Somewhat agree ■ Strongly agree

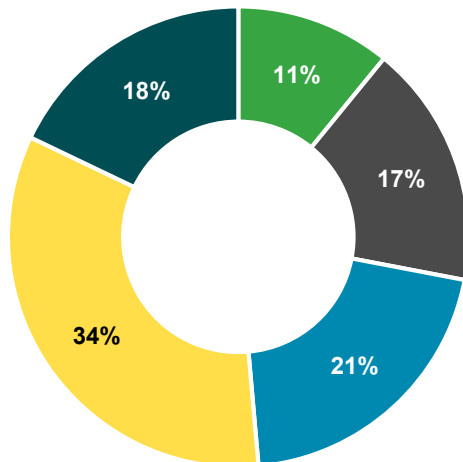
- It is transparent what sort of research-based activities that leads to promotion
 - Strongly disagree: 21% of the associate professors and 24% of those who have interdisciplinary as their primary scientific field
 - Strongly agree: 16 24% of those who have social science as their primary scientific field

Base: 1,841

Results

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement regarding your current university?

The recruitment process is transparent for the applicant



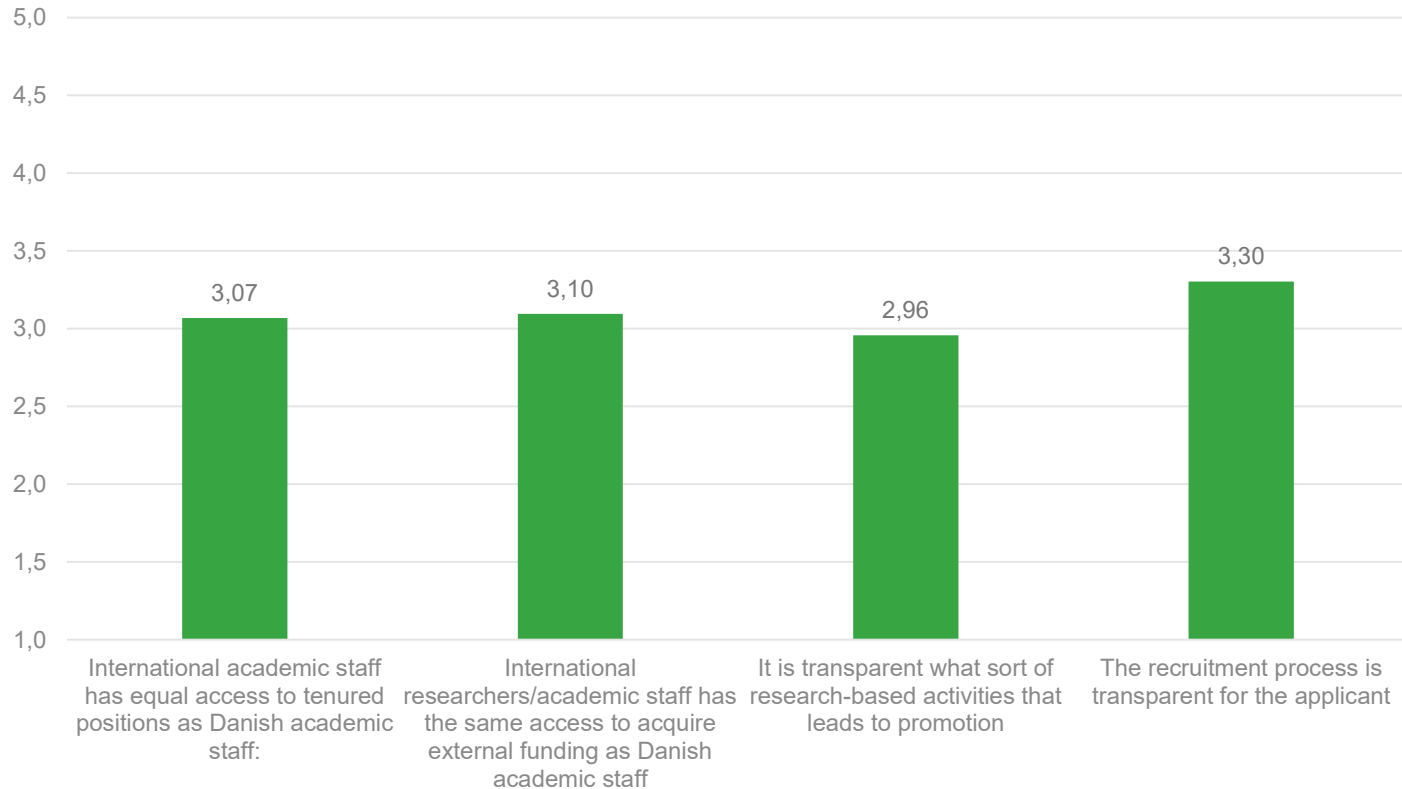
■ Strongly disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither/nor ■ Somewhat agree ■ Strongly agree

- The recruitment process is transparent for the applicant
 - Strongly disagree: 19% of the researchers from United Kingdom
 - Strongly agree: 30% of those employed in 2018 and 28% of the researchers from Asia

Base: 1,841

Results

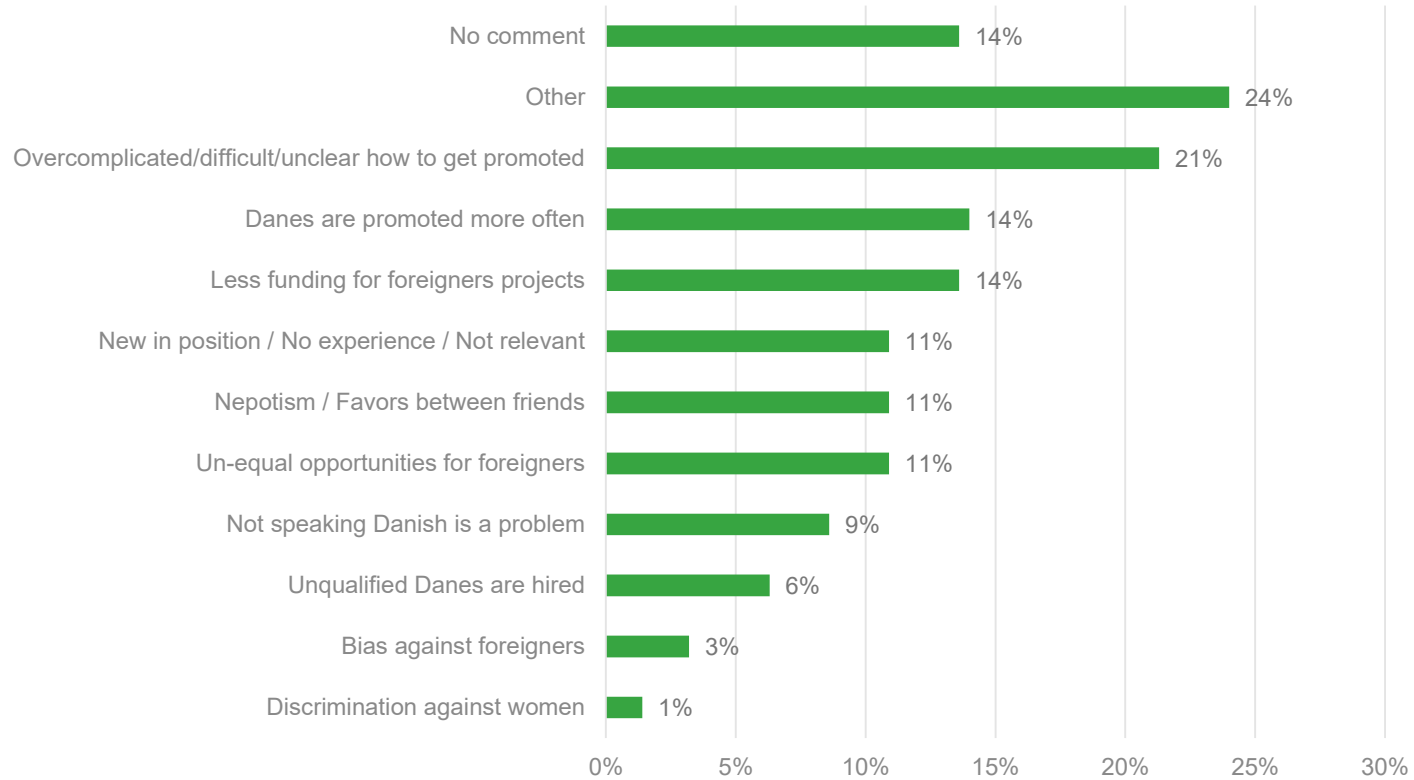
Do you agree with the following statement regarding your current university? Mean value



Base: 1,841

Results

Comments regarding the statements above



Base: 221

Results

Comments regarding the statements above

There is a surface of political correctness but in fact, unfortunately, the reality is different.

The recruiting process is not (fully) transparent, assessments are not (entirely) fair and there is no possibility to object/complain. When competition includes national candidates and foreign ones, preference is given to the former, even if the latter would be more qualified.

The Danish funding system does often not require international (or national) reviewing. Such approach seems prone to promote national (rather than international) networks and local collaborations. Getting tenured as international researchers requires much higher qualification compared to researchers that have spent much time at the university (including being a student).

I have found KU to be a uniformly terrible employer of foreign nationals and continue to do most of my important research in the US and UK

Positions listed on DTU website are often already filled before it was announced publicly, which gives a false impression about available positions, and it is frankly dishonest. There should be no reason to post these positions online.

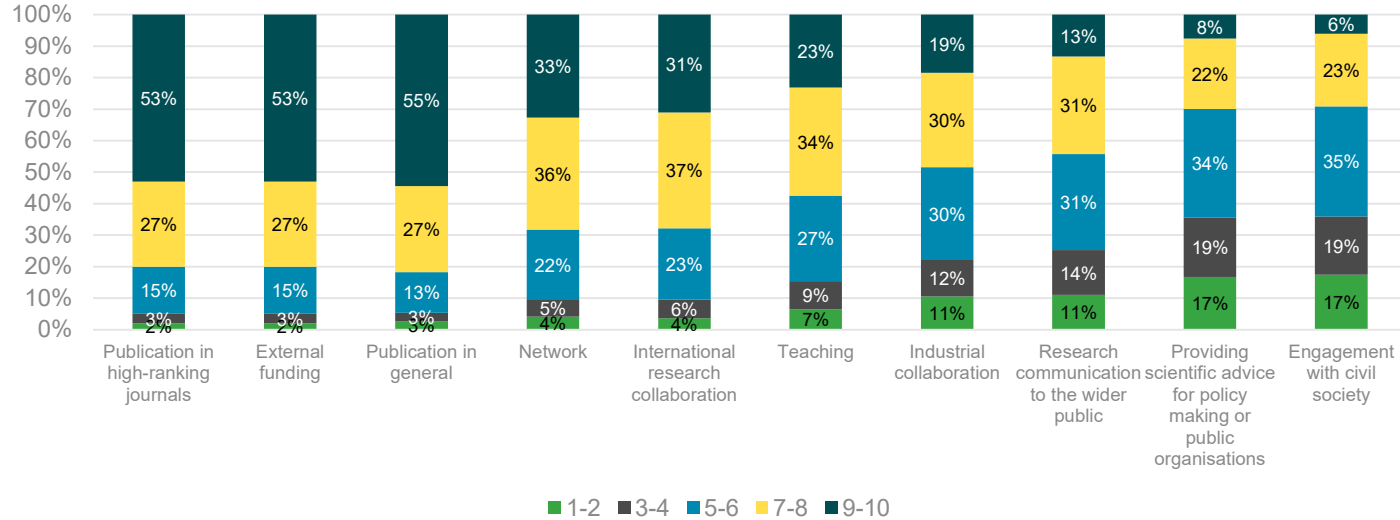
It is not transparent how international staff's seniority is handled. Often lower seniority is applied without the staff members full knowledge. Very disappointing.

Being Danish, or having a supervisor who is Danish, absolutely helps for securing private research funds such as Carlsberg and Lundbeck. Also, for a University which touts itself as excellent in the natural sciences, there is overrepresentation of Danish citizens at the tenured faculty level compared to other equivalent status universities. At some level, this is likely due to the academically competent Danes strong desire to stay, or return, to Denmark. I see very few tenured faculty who are either A) non-Danish, or B) have a non-Danish partner.

I do understand that some advantages that Danes have in getting better positions is because of their familiarity with the Danish culture. But there might also be a policy that implies we do not want the department culture to change too much from Danish. I do not know which of these is influential to what extent. And I do not know if these are good or bad.

Results

To what extent are these factors central in order to acquire a tenured position at your current university

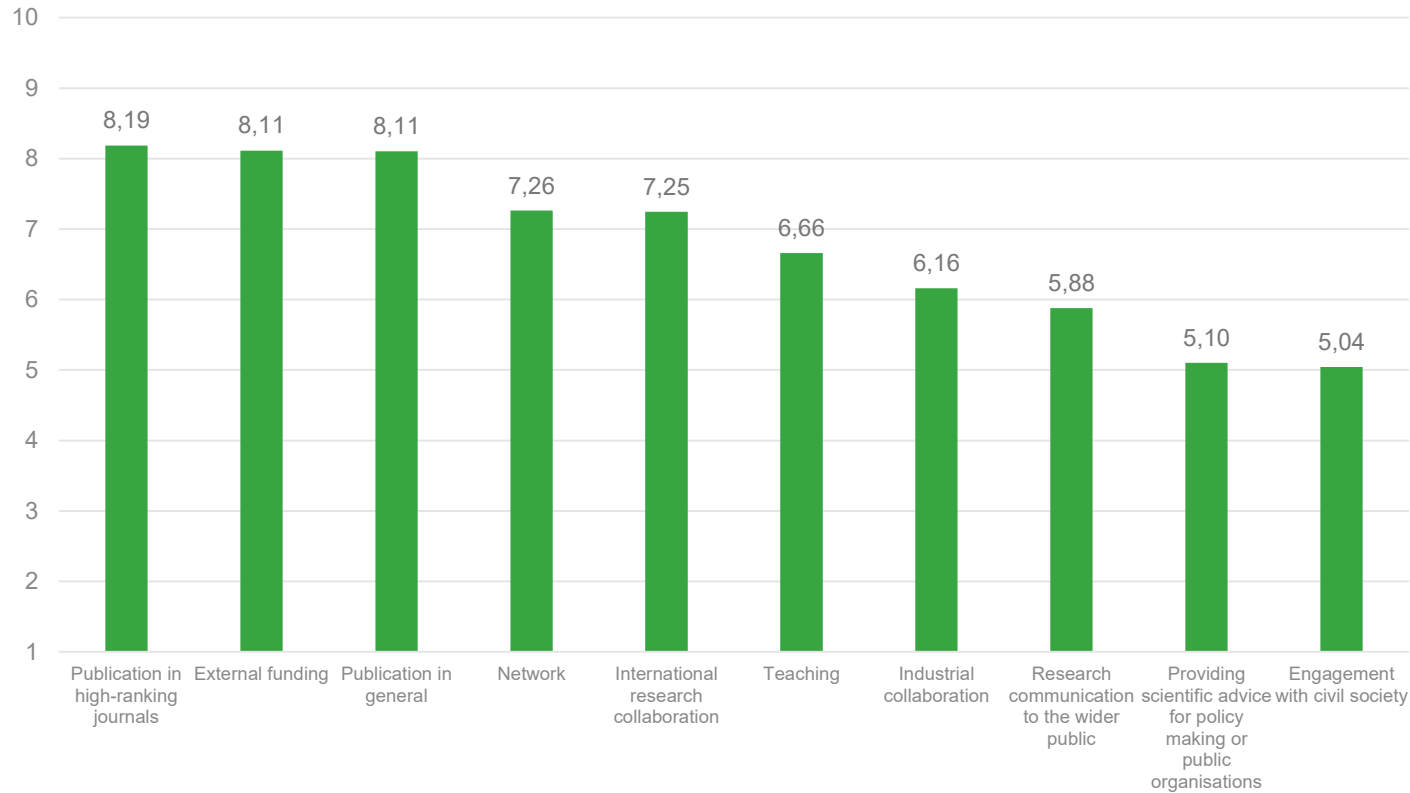


Base: 1,291

- The researchers had to answer this question from a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 is very important. For the sake of simplicity, the response categories have been merged two and two
- The most important thing is publication in high-ranking journals and the least important thing is engagement with civil society
- Publication in high-ranking journals are particularly important to professors (9+10=65%) and researchers working with social science (9+10=75%)
- Otherwise there are not any other interesting significant fluctuations among the most significant factors in order to acquire a tenured position

Results

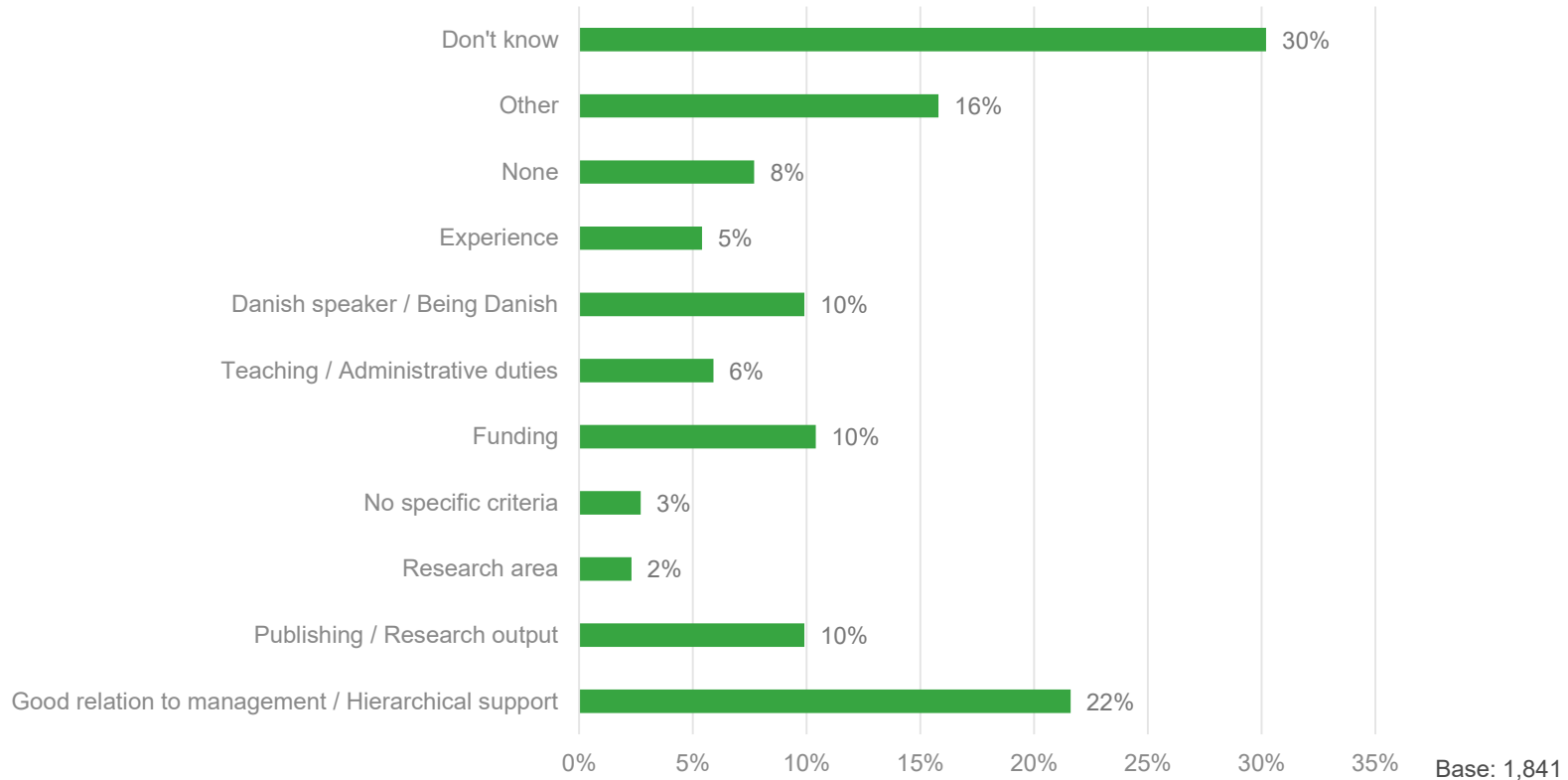
To what extent are these factors central in order to acquire a tenured position at your current university. Mean value



Base: 1,291

Results

Are there any other central factors to acquire a tenured position at your current university?



Results

Are there any other central factors to acquire a tenured position at your current university?

your manager likes you i suppose. certainty it is not sufficient to be accomplished researcher with publications, and international network and funding. that is clear.

The results of hiring at my uni, show that one factor surely brings tenure: publications in highly ranked journals. The role of any other activity (funding, teaching) is ambiguous - counts in some occasions and in other cases it does not, depending on who is counting :) So, regardless of the rhetoric, there is only one factor that qualifies as central : publications in highly ranked journals.

Research experience overseas or other institutions (limited funding for postdoc, national wide push towards international postdoc funding)

Personal factors, whether you are a person that is trusted and liked

Given the other comments I've made, obviously I would say speaking Danish is a strong criterion in practice (though never stated). There is a department at my university for whom being collegial is explicitly treated as one of the four criteria, next to the standard three (research, teaching, administration). Obviously this massively impairs outside hiring and favors those with shared cultural norms and language.

Being Danish, or having already done your PhD in the University, or hanging around as a postdoc/relief teacher until a post comes up.

No, it completely depends on funds available and other random factors at the moment when the renewed contract is being negotiated.

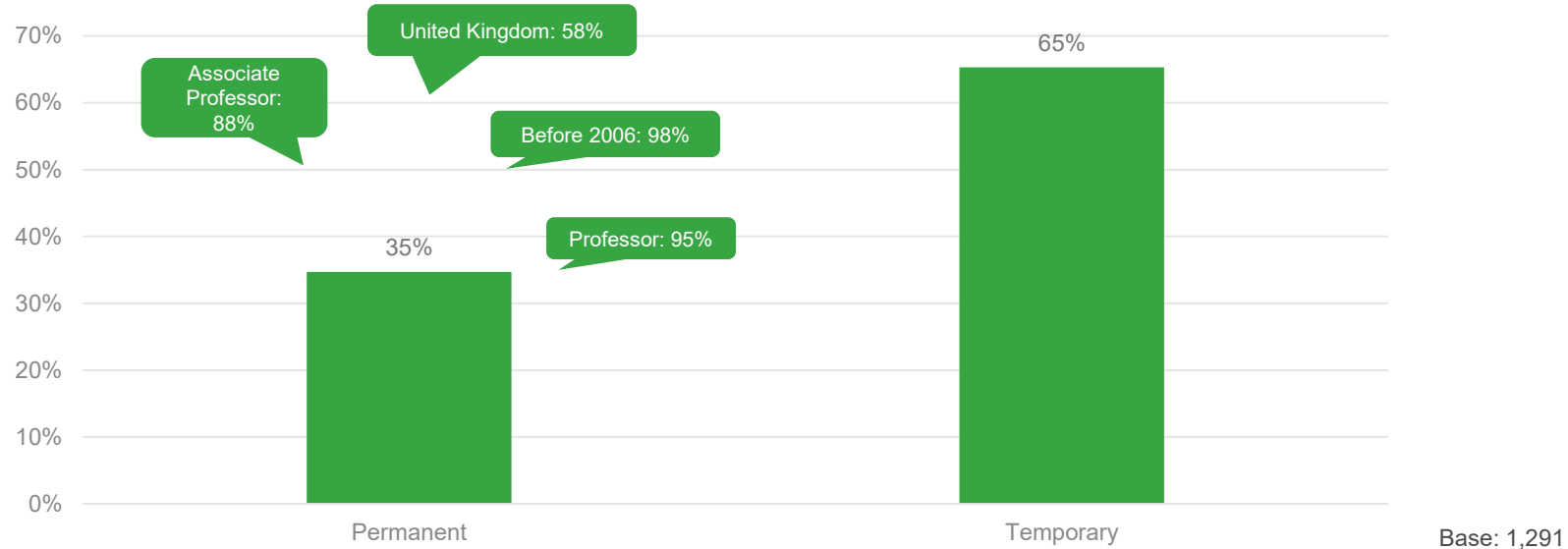
- Institutional development via participation in committee work etc. - Pedagogical development via course organization and coordination, participation in teacher meetings, etc. - Research and teaching profile must meet the institution's research strategy

Growing up inside the institution, that should give the tenure. People, that got forward early, did their Bachelor, Master, PhD and PostDoc in the same institute/group. Usually, with 1 international experience of maybe 1-2 years in usually USA or UK. This applies to many. Exceptions come here as PostDoc and then worked their

Making the right people aware that you want/need a job, and being willing to take on shitty tasks temporarily to get one.

Results

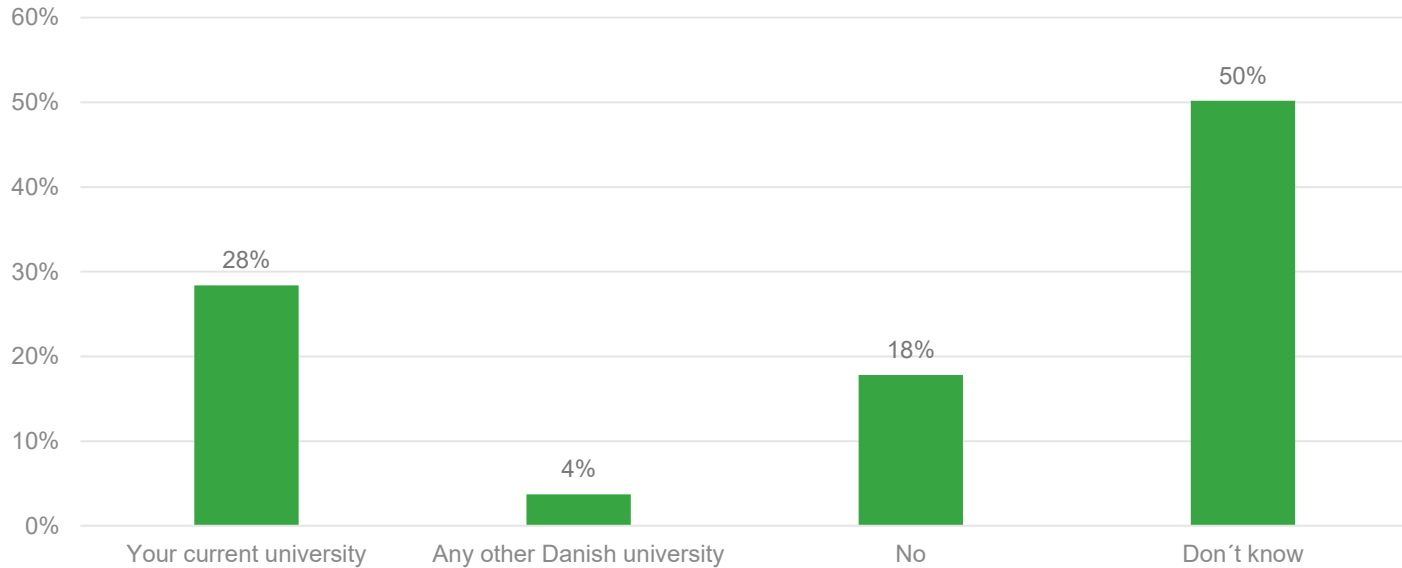
Do you have a permanent or a temporary position?



- You are most likely to have a permanent position if you come United Kingdom, are an associate professor, professor or have been employed before 2006

Results

Are you planning to apply for a permanent position at:

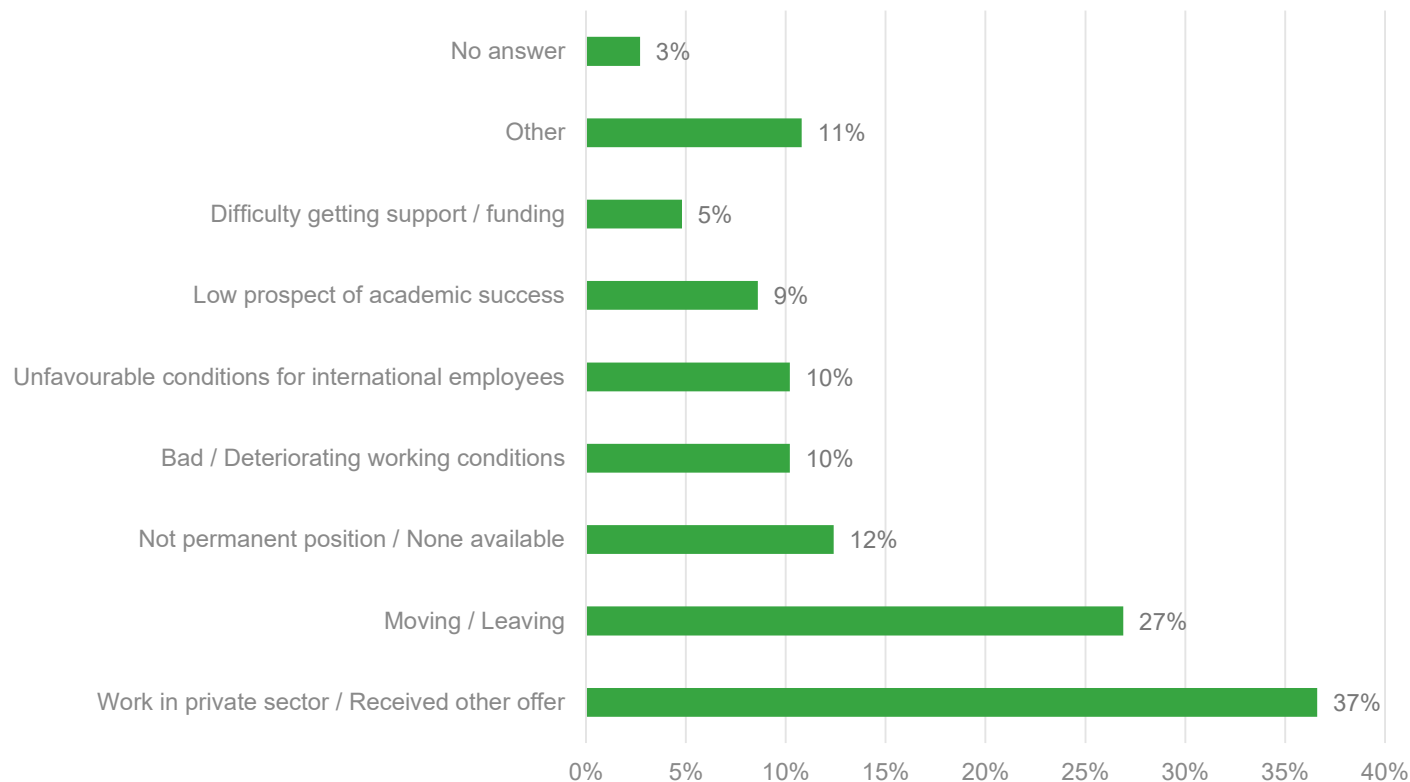


Base: 843

- This question has only been asked to those who don't have a permanent position
- Half have not made up their mind yet

Results

If you do not plan a future career at a Danish university, please specify why this is the case?



Base: 186

Results

If you do not plan a future career at a Danish university, please specify why this is the case?

Work life balance and the low chances of success in academia without fully devoting your life to it

It is not clear yet whether I want to proceed or not with an academic career or go to industry.

Because the working pressure on international people is usually higher, with the fixed salary without job guarantee so that usually there is no permanent position especially in recent years for even for high qualified international people in academic level.

I already have a position in Germany for next year. Other than that I'm only applying for permanent positions in my home country

A career in the industry is preferred due to lack of tenure-track positions available at university

This goes with the previous question about requirements for tenured positions... there are almost no tenured positions available. I find this very sad, but I have to provide for my family, and will seek employment in industry instead. Opposed to Academia, in industry there is the very realistic prospect of getting a permanent position.

Plan to find job in industry

I think is difficult as an expat to access to Danish university positions.

If the opportunity arrives, I would like to work in Danish universities. But the opportunities are extremely limited. Thus research outside universities or work in the industry is a more realistic option for me.

Family prospects in Portugal. Although the system is more transparent in Scandinavian countries, scientific research seems to be still coupled with marketing and political decisions which can be contradictory to the research goals themselves. Funding for scientific research is strongly dependent on subjective evaluations based on the ability to sell a product or an idea. In this process, science lost some of its objectivity and we are now investing too much time and money in projects with no future due only to tradition and high-qualified staff specialized in a specific area

My scholarship program requires me to go back to my home country

Because I have had it with the lack of transparency in this academic culture. It is a pity, as there are still some very good people left at DTU, who will eventually leave when the majority is not at their level



APPENDIX

Questionnaire

APPENDIX

Questionnaire

A woman with long hair, wearing a red and white patterned dress, is walking barefoot on a railway track. She is seen from behind, with her arms outstretched, as if feeling the breeze. The landscape is hazy and sunlit, with rolling hills and tall grasses. The sky is a mix of blue and yellow, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

ABOUT NORSTAT

ABOUT NORSTAT



- \\ Started in Norway in 1997
- \\ Norstat is the market leader in the Nordic region on data collection
- \\ Subsidiaries in 12 countries
- \\ Panels i 19 countries
- \\ In 2017, Denmark had a turnover of approx. 47 million

CONTACT:

Merethe Kring
Client Development Manager

Norstat Danmark A/S
Frederiksborggade 1, 3. th.
1360 København K

T: +45 2777 2011

