

Notes from workshop after SiN AGM, 29.05.2015 on the topic of the hearing from KD.

About

The proposed change is regarding the “tjenestetid” (from now on seniority) that is now earned during the PhD. Currently, every year of a PhD is counted towards the seniority, so a three-year PhD gives three years of seniority, while a four-year PhD gives four years. The change is essentially that the three years of doing a PhD shouldn't count towards seniority, only the fourth year (duty work). The suggestion is originally from Rindalutvalget (<https://www.forskerforbundet.no/var-politikk/aktuelle-saker/arkiv/rindalutvalget/>), in section 5.4 of their report (http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/KD/Vedlegg/UH/Rapporter_og_planer/Bruk_av_midlertidig_tilsetning_271110.pdf).

The law states that anyone employed temporarily for more than four years in the same/a similar position at an institution, has a right to a permanent position. Recruitment positions (“rekrutteringsstillinger”), i.e. PhD and post. doc. positions, are exempt from this. However, the time spent doing a PhD or a post.doc. is still counted towards the seniority. This means that a person going from a PhD to a temporary position (e.g. temporary researcher or teaching a course) at the same institution can demand a permanent position once the total time they've been a PhD and a temporary employee exceeds four years. A person doing a PhD followed by a post. doc. can on the other hand *not* demand a permanent position.

The proposal from KD will remove the three years where the PhD candidate work on their PhD, from being included in the seniority calculation. This means that after finishing a three/four year PhD, the doctor can be employed temporarily for four/three years at the same institution, as opposed to one/zero years as it is now.

Discussion - Issues and things to take into account. Pros/cons.

The suggestion opens up for unpredictable career paths, which is the opposite of what we want. It opens up for fewer permanent positions, as it creates incentives to keep people in temporary positions instead.

It's easier/cheaper to employ people in temporary positions, which creates incentives to employ fewer post. docs.

Gives some increased flexibility for PhDs – could allow them to wrap up projects and continue working for a short period while applying for positions.

Helpful in the short term for the individual PhD, but what about long term consequences for PhDs in Norway?

Current rule has a loophole, as it allows institution to permanently employ PhDs right away. That's nice for the individual who gets a position this way, but not for everyone else. Would this loophole be closed/reduced by allowing the graduate to stay in a temporary position for three years?

Career politics/planning - PhDs should go away after finishing, preferably abroad, rather than stay at the same institution. Hence, opening up for three years of temporary employment would be counter-productive for the academic environment in Norway.

Are there other possible solutions than the ones proposed by KD?

- Less than three years removed from the seniority calculation, such as one or two years? Is it a good idea to suggest a compromise such as this?

- Explicitly allow a short temporary position (6-12 months?) at the same institution, which doesn't give the candidate the possibility of getting a permanent position afterwards? Can this be done within the present framework/law, and if so how?