

# EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT IN GERMAN HIGHER FOR FAIR

DEMANDS  
OF THE  
NETWORK  
FOR  
DECENT  
LABOUR IN  
ACADEMIA

## OF THE NETWORK FOR DECENT LABOUR IN ACADEMIA

Precarity instead of  
excellence:

This is the prevailing reality in the German science system, which is structurally based on insecure employment and often on dumping wages. More than 90% of the so-called mid-level academic positions at German universities are temporary, and for the majority of the academics employed in this way there is no prospect of remaining in academia, even though they are responsible for a large part of regular research and teaching nationwide.

Together we demand a fundamental reform of the German university system, focusing in particular the following points:

We, being PhD candidates, post-docs, lecturers, project assistants, student employees and professors at German universities, are no longer willing to silently accept this situation. We have therefore created the cross-faculty and nationwide, **Network for Decent Labour in Academia**.

→ We demand: A referendum of the university members that always funds the universities. Expenditure of public funding of the Higher Education Foundation (HBF) to the universities of Applied Research, namely towards the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), in order to reallocate the budget to the universities.

→ We demand: Decentralisation of the university structures in universities. The universities and universities must take over their responsibility for their development and funding structure in order to reduce inefficiencies.

→ We demand: Appropriate salaries and just contracts for PhD students and post-docs in order to attract qualified professionals to the academic system. The current employment system is not only unfair but also plainly undignified. It leaves us alone in the university and forces us to leave our studies.

→ We demand: Abolition of the PhD is sufficient for research purposes but also for teaching purposes and research institutions. The universities and private universities, teachers and students, must be granted the right to teach in the university and receive payment for it.

→ We demand: Abolition of the Habilitation system. The Habilitation is a later point in life where individual careers are determined rapidly. This is however the PhD that determines the career of a professor. We demand that the PhD is awarded - not a later point in life where individual careers are determined rapidly.

## 7. STRENGTHEN THE CORPORATE UNIVERSITIES

## 6. ABOLITION OF CARTELISATION OF INSTITUTIONS

## 5. EFFECTIVE MEASURES AGAINST DISCRIMINATION INEQUALITIES AND INSECURITY

## 4. APPROPRIATE WAGES FOR TEACHING, ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS

## 3. ABOLITION OF THE HABILITATION SYSTEM

## 1. NO EXTENDED FIXED-TERM EMPLOY- MENT IN UNIVERSITIES

We need permanent employment contracts to be standard at the very least for those who have completed their PhDs. Only this will enable academics to make realistic decisions about their professional careers and life plans, and carry out challenging and independent – i.e. high quality – academic work. One of the key causes of the current disastrous situation in academic employment – the Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz (Temporary Employment in Higher Education-Act).

## 2. ADEQUATE JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR PHD CANDIDATES, POST-DOCS AND STUDENT STAFF

The PhD is the central qualification required for an academic career, but the process of completing it is often financially insecure. Mandatory minimum force academics into interim phases of unemployment – academic work. Beyond that, it is important to develop financial models which initial contracts of those embarking on a PhD. Factors which might prolong completion periods must be taken into account; both financially and time-wise: parental leave, sick leave, care responsibilities, as well as teaching or administrative tasks. Five years is a realistic estimate of the time it takes to complete a PhD. Beyond that, it is important to develop financial models which support students during transition periods before and after receiving their PhD.

Furthermore, we demand an appropriate salary pay-scale, i.e. one in line with wage trends in the public sector, for all student employees, as well as the abolition of the common practice of piecemeal contracts.

This is completely absurd and unacceptable.

→ We demand: Appropriate scale-based wages and minimum term contracts, subject to social insurance contributions, for PhD students, along with permanent employment for post-docs as standard.

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UNPAID TEACHING FOR THE  
PAST 10 YEARS TO KEEP MY  
QUALIFICATION (HABILITATION).

AS A WOMAN WITH  
MIGRATION HISTORY I'M  
PARTICULARLY AFFECTED BY  
FIXED-TERM CONTRACTS.

I DO UNPAID ACADEMIC  
FUND RAISING UNDER  
MY BOSS'S NAME.

I'M DOING MY PHD  
ON A 50%-POSITION  
AND TEACH 8  
HOURS A WEEK.

30 YEARS OF PROFES-  
SIONAL EXPERIENCE  
ON 20 SHORT-  
TERM POSITIONS.

WE DEMAND  
DECENT LABOUR IN ACADEMIA