

Mapping out a diverse career landscape: different points of departure, distinct joyrides, and surprising results

Career studies have always been of interest to EGOS. This is not surprising since the “evolving sequence of a person’s work experiences over time” (Arthur et al., 1989) has developed together with spatial, ontic, and temporal changes in the context of organizations as well (Gunz & Mayrhofer, 2015). However, if we critically look at the research that has been accepted for presentations, it mainly covers the careers of middle-classed, middle-aged, Caucasian, catholic, male career actors, preferably MBA-graduates. In fact, this focus is WEIRD (Heinrich et al., 2010) – it mirrors the generalization of Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic populations to the rest of the world. Hence, a growing discourse on diversity of careers posits that this group does not fully represent careers of the contemporary highly diverse work force. For instance, employability – which has been the term that has shaped career research at least until 2012 (Baruch et al., 2014), looks arguably differently depending on one’s own position within the social space.

For instance, other diversity dimensions than the so-called norm (in terms of physical abilities, physiognomy, weight, age, religious and spiritual beliefs, nationalities, class and the like) are hard to find on the fields’ research radar. But there are many surprising results to expect.

Hence we invite papers which address, but are not restricted to, the following themes and issues:

Discoveries about different careers of different groups. When talking about “different groups”, careers literature focuses predominantly on women and/or African American (which is necessary and good, but not the whole story). However, also other groups such as Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, nationals versus foreigners, people with disabilities, gay men, lesbian women, bisexuals, transsexuals, Muslims, individuals belonging to many non-mainstream minority faiths, overweight employees, and so on, experience special challenges, too (Prasad et al., 2007). In most developed countries around the world, we can expect fewer younger workers and more older workers (Cascio, 2007). Telling their stories may yield surprising insights. Correspondingly, intersectional career studies may create insights concerning the interplay of several diversity dimensions mentioned.

Discoveries about careers of other occupations. Although we know that career related definitions and experiences differ not only around the world, but also across occupations (Briscoe et al., 2012), careers research sets predominantly an emphasis on managerial careers. But how, for instance, do (female?) truck driver reconstruct their professional life? Which understanding of the term career is possessed by tattoo artists? What does “career satisfaction” mean for a channel digger? There are many unexplored expeditions in this respect.

Discoveries about career success. In the careers literature measures and analyses of career success typically focus on objective dimensions including income, advancement and status; and subjective aspects such as satisfaction, self-efficacy and identity (Arnold & Cohen, 2008). But are the seeds already planted in one’s childhood (and is career success, thus, a function

of psychological, or social heritage)? Does career success depend on one's decisions (as is the case in path dependency) and the result of individual actions? Which role does luck, chance, or happenstance play? And: are there other dimensions of career success?

Discoveries about emerging alternative career paths. Since the beginning of the new millennium at the latest, terms such as precarious employment, one-person employers, dependent independents, or chronic flexibles (Iellatchitch et al., 2003) entered the scene. Their careers do not necessarily take place beyond organizational boundaries (Inkson et al., 2012; Rodrigues & Guest, 2010), but the relation between the individual and the organization has changed significantly. Which careers are encountered by the Generation Y? Are there already prospects for careers of the Generation Z?

Discoveries about careers in very different work settings and contexts. Arguably, careers in e.g. professional sport (Coupland, 2015) differ from those taking place within companies. On top of this, historically inspired analyses may reveal that they used to be different in certain points in time. Lastly, they will look differently in particular parts of the world (see e.g. Mayrhofer & Schneidhofer, 2009).

Against this backdrop, the sub-theme invites papers which address one or several diversity-related issues. They can have a theoretical, methodological or empirical focus or combine them. Examples include, but certainly are not limited to the topics mentioned above; in terms of scientific discipline, papers from all areas of career studies are welcome.

Deadlines:

Short Paper submissions by January 8, 2018, 23:59:59.

Full Paper will be due by the end of June.

You will receive a notification on acceptance in February 2018.

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Stream Convenors

Maike Andresen is a Professor of Human Resource Management and Management and Vice President for Research at the University of Bamberg, Germany. She has served as a visiting scholar at Copenhagen Business School and Tilburg University. She is faculty member of a joint Master Programme in European Human Resource Management together with Vlerick Business School, EM Lyon, Radboud University Nijmegen, Luiss Business School and Risbea University. Maike has contributed numerous peer-reviewed articles to leading academic journals such as *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* or *Journal of Managerial Psychology* and to edited volumes and published and edited ten books. She currently serves on several editorial boards of academic journals and book series including *Human Resource Management Journal* and *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. Her primary research interests are in the area of international mobility, global career management, management and organization development, work flexibilisation and diversity management. Email: maike.andresen@uni-bamberg.de

Svetlana N. Khapova is a Professor of Careers and Organization Studies and Scientific Director of Amsterdam Business Research Institute at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She holds a Visiting Professor position at ESMT – European School of Management and Technology in Berlin. Khapova is a Past Division Chair of the Careers Division of the Academy of Management. Her research concerns contemporary issues in work and careers, and appeared in the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *Journal of Vocation Behavior*, *Human Relations*, *Career Development International*, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*, and many others. Her new book *An Intelligent Career: Taking Ownership of Your Work and Your Life* (Oxford University Press) co-authored with M.B. Arthur and J. Richardson, and will appear in 2017. Email: s.n.khapova@vu.nl

Thomas M. Schneidhofer is currently Professor for HR and Management at the University Schloss Seeburg, Austria. His research interests include the development of Pierre Bourdieu's practice theory to the study of careers, with special emphasis on power and gender. He has published in journals such as the Journal of Vocational Behavior, Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, or Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal. Email: thomas.schneidhofer@uni-seeburg.at