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Chapter Title:

STUDYING AND PRACTISING SOCIOLOGY IN SPAIN

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1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of sociological studies and sociological practice in Spain. Our aim is to help and make information available to students, graduates and practitioners that are interested in coming to Spain for purposes of study, training, research internships, and career development in different sectors of the labor market.

Some important facts that sociologists wishing to come to Spain should take into account is that our history and context are important issues for both studying and working. Spain offers a vibrant and diverse arena for learning and practicing sociology, although the peculiarities of the universities and the labor market have important implications. Sociology is a very young official degree when compared to other European countries. It “emerged” together with the Transition to Democracy in the early 1970s (the first official promotion of sociologists entered into the labor market in 1978). Since then, sociology has expanded quickly as an academic field, supported by the inclusive model of public higher education.

This development provides advantages in terms of diversity of perspectives, many places for studying and learning, and opportunities for different and useful experiences. Nevertheless, the occupation of sociologist is not completely defined in terms of having specific work positions. As in many other European countries, sociologists need to compete with other social science graduates. They should acknowledge the importance that specific skills, competences and institutional support have for their careers.

The following sections are intended to be a guide to the main organizations and resources that might be useful for defining different strategies both in the academic and the professional domain. The first section provides an overview of the official degrees and the academic internships offered through the university system. The second section analyzes the situation of sociologists in the labor market focusing on current work situations and fields of work. The third section reviews some challenges related to the competences that sociologists consider as important for their careers. The fourth section offers a description of the resources for sociology in specific institutions of the discipline, both scientific and professional, in addition to support that can be found in the R&D system. Finally, in the conclusions some strategies for students and graduates are discussed.

2. SOCIOLOGICAL STUDIES IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Spanish University System was formed by a total of 50 public universities and 32 private universities in the academic year 2013-2014. Since the incorporation into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 2010, new degrees have been implemented: the Bachelor degree (or *Grado* in Spanish), with a duration of four years and 320 ECTS credits (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System); the Master Degree, with one or two years or 90 to 120 ECTS, and the PhD degree.

The discipline of sociology is very versatile and of a transversal nature in the university system with 46 public universities offering subjects related to sociology. They are present in disciplinary degrees related to economics, business, political science, education, geography, and many other professional degrees, such as social work, management, tourism, sport, or labor studies¹. The following sections focus on public universities offering specific bachelor and master degrees in sociology.

Bachelor degree

Sociology degrees as such are offered in 15 public universities. In the first year, the main subjects are introductory sociology and introductions to related social science disciplines. In the second and third year students mostly take mandatory subjects, which comprise the core elements of the discipline such as methodology, sociological theory, social structure and the main sociological specialties (work, culture, education, gender, family, etc). Elective subjects that offer a greater specialization are located on the fourth and final year, which ends with the presentation of the Final Degree Work (*Trabajo de Fin de Grado* or TFG). Although the main structure of the curricula is similar, some differences can be found depending on the university. Universities have a certain amount of autonomy for designing their degrees. Therefore, they may differ in terms of skills orientation and specific subjects. The tuition for a complete first year of bachelor degree in sociology is about 1,500 €, depending on the policy of the regional government².

¹ The presence of sociology as an official knowledge area in the Spanish university system can be found in the report by Beltrán (2014).

² The higher education system is regulated by a general state law, whereas funding, tuition and specific competences for universities are in the regional governments' responsibility. After the first year, the cost of tuition depends on the number of ECTS enrolled and on the previous failure in a subject. The scholarship system in Spain for regular university courses depends on family income. It ranges from free

Table 1 shows some of the main indicators of the bachelor degrees in sociology offered by Spanish universities (note that some universities offer a double-bachelor degree). In regard to the supply of places, the Complutense University of Madrid for the first year annually provides for 240 places for future sociologists. The Faculty of Political Science and Sociology at the Complutense University was established in 1971 and was the first faculty of Sociology of Spain, so it somehow constitutes the "headquarters" in which most of the seniors sociologists of the country have studied. Other universities started to offer sociology degrees beginning in the 1990s. The University of Barcelona, the University of Granada and the Autonomous University of Barcelona have more than 100 places available annually. In almost all cases, the number of students who enroll for the first time (fourth column) almost entirely cover the supply of places (third column), making the occupancy rate of the degree (sixth column) quite high, with an average occupation rate of 97%. A different but interesting case is the National Distance Education University (UNED), the public university of distance education, with presence in all the territory through a wide network of associate centers. Actually, UNED enrolls most of the current sociology students in Spain (around 400 new students per year), although the access system does not have the same restrictions given that students do not have to attend classes.

An important issue is that only 56% of students who enroll in sociology have decided it as a first choice (fifth column). In some universities, however, this percentage is considerably higher. This situation might be explained by the enrollment procedures. In Spain students have to pass the "entrance exam to the University" (*Prueba de Acceso a la Universidad*, PAU) in order to enter into the university. The results of the entrance exam are averaged with marks from the Baccalaureate. They must exceed the minimum score for admission established by each university and degree in each academic year. The minimum score is not an indicator of the difficulty of the degree, but of the rate between the demand and the number of places offered by universities. Since access scores in sociology are low (5.92 out of 10) (last column of Table 1), it is common for some students to enroll simply because they have been unable to enter the degree of their first or second choice.

This issue is common not only in sociology but in many other disciplines depending on the territorial location of the faculty and the potential demand of students. It reflects the traditional policy in the Spanish University System that favors the inclusion of a wide number of students, allowing them to enter into degrees that are not their first choice. In this situation, universities are increasingly competing for students. Some of them offer double-bachelor degrees, which usually have a higher demand and therefore attracts students with better grades (the three double degrees included in Table 1 have access scores higher than 8).

Table 1. Main indicators of Universities offering the degree of Sociology (academic year 2013-14) (*)

University	Name of undergraduate degree ("Grado")	Supply of places	First-time enrollment	Enrollment as a first choice	Occupancy rate	Minimum score for admission
Universidad A Coruña	Sociology	95	98	73 (74%)	103.16%	5.01
Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona	Sociology	140	134	107 (80%)	95.71%	5.00
Universidad Carlos III de Madrid	Sociology	40	46	15 (33%)	115%	5.58
	Political Science + Sociology	40	35	30 (86%)	87.50%	8.625
Universidad Complutense de Madrid	Sociology	240	209	117 (56%)	87.08%	5.00
Universidad de Alicante	Sociology	60	45	29 (64%)	75%	5.87
Universidad de Barcelona	Sociology	160	163	135 (83%)	101.88%	5.00
Universidad de Granada	Sociology	160	158	77 (49%)	98.75%	5.00
Universidad de La Laguna	Sociology		71			
Universidad de Valencia	Sociology	100	98	43 (44%)	98%	5.96
Universidad Pablo de Olavide	Sociology + Political Science and Administration	40	40	24 (60%)	100%	5.00
	Social Work + Sociology	60	57	11 (19%)	95%	5.25
Universidad País Vasco	Sociology	80	70	30 (43%)	87.50%	6.53
Universidad Pública de Navarra	Applied Sociology	50	51	27 (53%)	102%	5.06
Universidad Rey Juan Carlos	Sociology (<i>blended learning course</i>)	40	33	10 (30%)	82.50%	5.67
	Sociology + Business Administration	10	11	5 (45%)	110%	8.69
	Sociology + Labour Relations	10	11	5 (45%)	110%	8.44
Universidad de Salamanca	Sociology	60	59	36 (61%)	98.33%	5.00
TOTAL:		1385	1389	774 (56%)	97%	5.92

Source: Indicadores de admisión en el Registro de Universidades, Centros y Títulos (RUCT), Ministerio de Educación, curso 2013-14.

<http://www.mecd.gob.es/educacion-mecd/areas-educacion/universidades/estadisticas-informes/estadisticas/universidades-centros-titulaciones/curso-2013-2014.html>

(*) The National Distance-Education University (UNED) is not included because official data is not available; it also, however, offer an undergraduate degree in sociology.

Master's Degree

There is a great and varied offer of master's degrees in sociology, with different durations (60-90-120 ECTS credits) and tuition fees as well as diverse contents that cover various areas of specialization in sociology and related subject areas. The access system is also based on the supply of places. A minimum score from the bachelor degree is required when the number of applications exceeds the number of places. At the end of the course-work, students must submit and defend their Master's Dissertation (*Trabajo de Fin de Máster*, TFM).

An important issue for master degrees is tuition fees. In April 2012, the State Government issued a law that forced the different autonomous communities to raise the price in order to cover between 15% and 25% of the cost of studies. This policy particularly affected the enrollment in Master Courses, since some universities increased the tuition up to 50%. As a consequence, there is a wide range of tuition fees between universities; for example a master

degree in sociology in a university in Madrid costs 3,900 € while in Galicia the tuition is around 1,500 €.

Table I in the annex shows the main offer of master degrees related to sociology in public universities. It includes 49 masters that have sociology as a main core competence, although many of them also share their core competences with other disciplines. This list does not include all masters because there is not a unified catalogue for the whole university system. Masters also evolve quicker than bachelor degrees and constantly there are new ones as well as others that cease to exist. Nevertheless, the information available is useful for finding the main options. It also shows some interesting trends. For instance, in the social sciences, multidisciplinary has become quite common in postgraduate education. By combining subjects from several disciplines, many universities are trying to connect master degrees with specific social problems and areas of practice. The orientation of masters to segments of the labor market also reflect the strategies of universities for finding students in order to fill their offer of postgraduate education, especially those with higher tuition fees.³ In this context, students wishing to enroll in a master degree should consider carefully if the master specifically matches their interests (for instance, if he/she prefers a professional orientation vs. a research orientation), the existence of an active internship program, tuition fees, and the associated costs depending on the location.

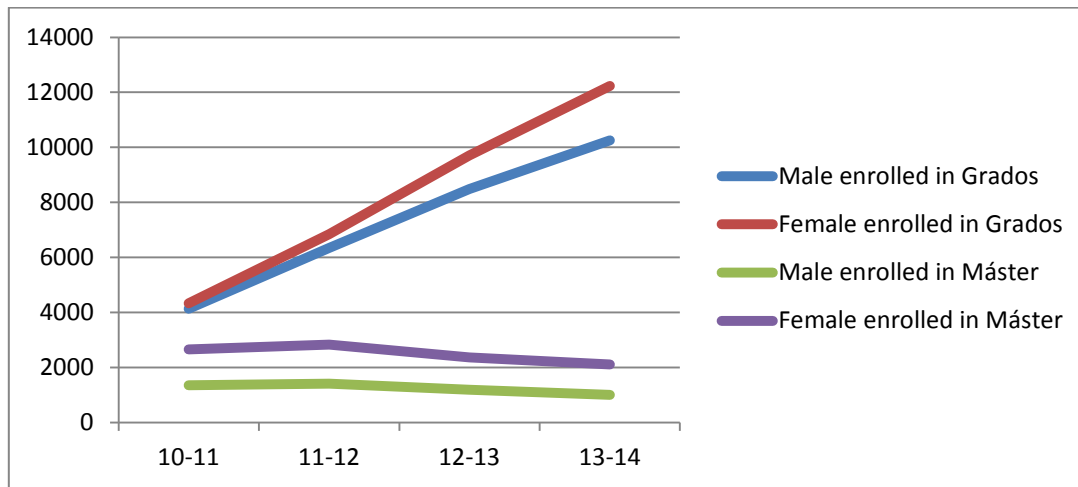
Some figures on students' enrollment

Considering that EHEA has only been introduced in Spain quite recently, it is more advisable to analyze the enrollment in bachelor and master degrees, rather than the number of graduates⁴. Figure 1 shows the evolution of the combined enrollment in sociology, anthropology as well as social and cultural geography, since we do not have separate data for sociology. Given the fact that the other two degrees are not as common in our country, it is important to consider the trend: in the last four years there has been a very significant increase in the number of students enrolled in bachelors (*Grados*) and a decrease or stagnation in the masters, possibly due to the higher fees that we mentioned. In both cases, there are more female than male students: 16% more in *Grados* and 53% more in masters. The feminization of the field has also been highlighted in relation to the gender of those who teach sociology: in the 46 Spanish universities, women account for 57% and men for 43% of the academic staff (Beltrán Llavador, 2014).

³ There is no unified official data for master degrees regarding the supply of places, number of applications, occupancy rates and scores for admission. However, it should be noted that there is a great diversity of situations. Some masters receive many applications, while others are not able to fill the places and have to readapt their orientation. Important features shaping the demand for a given master degree depend on the location (usually masters in big cities receive more applications), and the "quality distinction" attributed by evaluation agencies.

⁴ Our estimation is that every year, all Spanish universities issue between 800 and 1,000 bachelor degrees in sociology (based on ANECA, 2006 and current figures of enrollment). It should be taken into account that the first class of four-year bachelor degrees are from the year 2012-13. The previous university system had five-year degrees (*licenciaturas*). Masters degrees were non-existent as formal qualifications. Therefore, for several years sociology graduates have been entering into the labor market from different curricular systems.

Figure 1. Students enrolled in Sociology, Anthropology and Social and Cultural Geography, by gender.



Source: Own elaboration. Estadísticas de Estudiantes Universitarios. Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte.

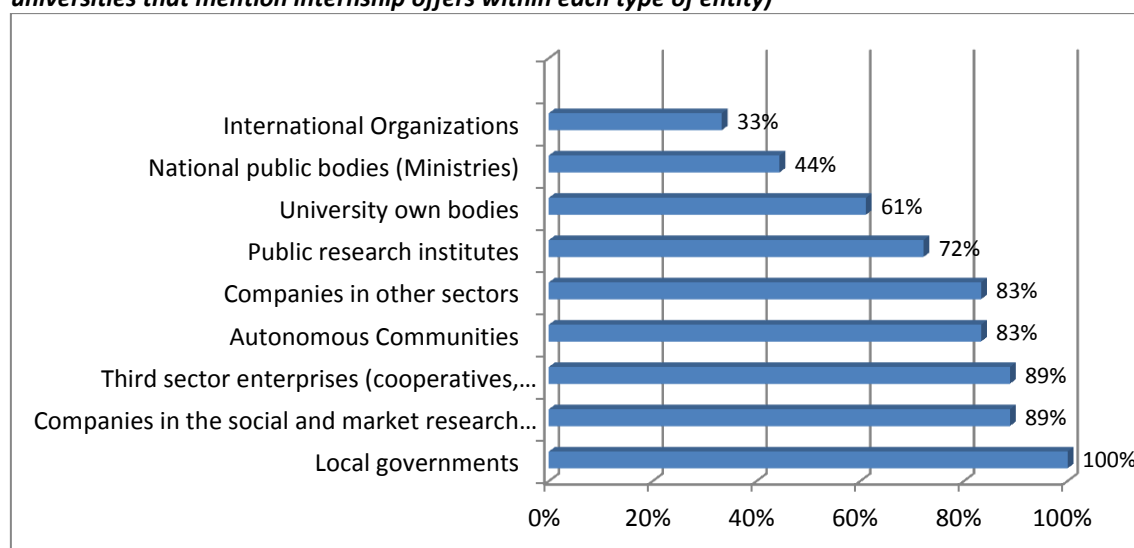
Academic Internships

External academic internships, which bachelor and master's students carry out during their senior or last year, are gaining increasing importance in the new curricula according to the EHEA requirements. In a recent study conducted among the 14 universities that offer at least an undergraduate degree in sociology (plus two that have a Department of Sociology), it was revealed that in 56% of the cases internships were considered mandatory and in the other 44% it was optional (Finkel, 2014).

The average number of actual hours for the internships was 240, which mainly corresponds to courses of twelve ECTS credits and are equivalent to approximately three months in practice. In general, students might begin with their internships when they have reached a minimum number of credits (71% of cases), although some universities (47%) also take their overall record of grade point average into account. Students do not receive a formal payment during their internships, although there are organizations that provide some voluntary funding.

Figure 2 shows the types of entities in which sociology students carry out their academic internships. This information may be of interest for detecting potential employment niches in the future. The main entities that offer internships are local public governments (city councils and provincial entities), followed by companies from the research and market studies sector, which together make up 29% of all the offers received in the past year. In the opinion of the managers of the programs at the universities, it is precisely in these first two areas where the offers for sociological internships should be concentrated, although other types of companies and organizations should be promoted in the future.

Figure 2. Types of entities that offer internships for sociology students (multiple choice: % of universities that mention internship offers within each type of entity)



Source: Las prácticas curriculares en Sociología: diagnóstico sobre su gestión y funcionamiento en las universidades españolas (Finkel, 2014).

The average number of undergraduate students in internships each year was 33.8 (average figure for universities with a degree in sociology), a figure that drops to 26.7 in the case of master's degrees. Since the average number of positions offered by institutions and firms was 64, it can be said that there is a greater supply of posts than there is student demand. This fact in principle could be an advantage for students given their possibilities of choice. Nevertheless, the academics in charge of internships programs point out that one of the main problems they encountered is that in 32% of cases the proposed internship positions were not really interesting for students. In other cases the positions involved moving to another location (19%), some are not really related to sociology (16%) or have language requirements that cannot be met (8%).

Finally, given that the number of interns is not high, in most cases academic tutors can perform a very individualized follow-up. Most universities (72%) have a formalized monitoring and mentoring system. A common opinion shared by practitioners is that mentoring is a requirement for external internships to have a real learning dimension (an opinion that is also supported by the authors of this chapter) and therefore should be mandatory. The above data provides relevant information for students wishing to become an intern. The offers cover a wide range and it is easy to get into a program, although they have to carefully choose the position they want and apply according to their learning needs. It is important to apply for internships that are related to sociology skills, although some times the specific sociological content is not necessary when some positions offer an exposure that is useful for obtaining transversal competences, as will be showed in section four.

Language

Some words about language requirements are necessary for foreign students. More and more English is becoming a common language in the university system, especially for reading

materials. There are some master degrees in English, usually the ones directed to an international audience. Some masters and bachelor degrees have subjects in English depending on the presence of foreign students, which typically is owed to agreements with foreign universities, and provide help for the subjects in Spanish. Students fluent in English, but with no or very little knowledge of Spanish, should look for this academic offer.

On the other hand, most of the classes in sociology (as is true for degrees) are in Spanish. In autonomous communities (Catalonia, País Vasco, Galicia, Valencia and Baleares Islands) that have their own official languages, some classes are taught in these languages. This means that students who know only English (in addition to their native language) could be able to manage in English regarding administrative processes, relations with their professors, and personal relationships with other students. Nevertheless, in order to attend classes properly and when interested in internships and scholarship, an intermediate level of Spanish is needed.

3. SOCIOLOGY GRADUATES AND THE LABOR MARKET⁵

Employment

The employment situation of sociologists follows the pattern of the labor market integration of university graduates in Spain. For sociologists the unemployment level is a bit higher than the average for all university graduates, and the integration trajectories are a bit longer, although the situation is similar in many other social and natural sciences⁶.

The percent of sociologists included in the sample declaring themselves as unemployed is 18%, while the figure for university graduates in Spain is 14.5% (according to EPA-Official Survey for Active Population, third semester 2014). The main difference can be seen in the graduates from the last five years. 32.6% of recent graduates declared that they were looking for a job, a figure which is quite similar to the 35.6% of recent graduates of the whole university system that declared themselves as unemployed (Gomendio, 2014).

A detailed analysis can be seen in Table 2. Most sociologist (57% of the sample) work as employees (in firms or public administrations) with no other occupation, while another 10%

⁵ The data for this section and section 4 comes from the survey titled "The professional situation of sociology graduates and postgraduates in Spain". It was conducted as an on-line survey directed at people with a degree in sociology (license, bachelor, master and doctorate) and who are registered within the registries of the participating institutions. It was carried out between October and November of 2014. The sample includes 1,033 sociologists. The survey was a joint project of the Professional College for Graduates and Doctors in Sociology and Political Sciences, The Spanish Sociological Federation and the Conference of University Departments of Sociology.

⁶ Employment levels should be understood in the specific context of labor market in Spain. Measurement of unemployment traditionally results in a much higher figure than the European average. It is estimated that an important segment of people declared as unemployed occasionally works in the informal economy and in family businesses, although the figures are unclear. Since 2008 unemployment levels have increased, especially for young people (in 2014 the official rate for people between 16 and 29 was 38%, while for people over 29 it was less than 20%. www.ine.es). Having a university degree is the main fact that reduces unemployment levels.

combine this work with other activities, mostly projects. Entrepreneurs and free-lance workers make up 10% of the sample. Again, a sharp difference can be observed in graduates from recent cohorts, especially graduates from 2009 and after. About 20% of them are interns or are studying.

Table 2. Work situation of sociologists by final year of the degree

Work situation	Year of the degree				Total
	Until 1993	Between 1994 and 2002	Between 2003 and 2008	2009 and after	
Working as an employee (public or private sector), full time	57.7%	53.6%	43.0%	25.0%	44.7%
Working as an employee (public or private sector), combined with project participation	10.3%	14.4%	16.3%	10.6%	12.9%
Entrepreneur	3.2%	3.0%	0.8%	0.8%	1.9%
Free lance, regular activity	8.7%	3.0%	2.4%	0.8%	3.7%
Free lance, non regular activity	4.0%	5.3%	4.8%	3.4%	4.4%
Non active	5.9%	1.1%		1.1%	2.0%
Doing an internship	0.4%	1.5%	4.8%	13.6%	5.1%
Studying (with no internship)	0.8%	1.1%	3.2%	5.7%	2.7%
Apprentice with no payment	0.8%	0.8%	1.2%	3.0%	1.5%
Looking for a job	7.1%	12.9%	20.3%	32.6%	18.3%
Others	1.2%	3.0%	3.2%	3.4%	2.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Another form of looking at labor integration of sociologists is to observe the occupational trajectory in relation to their degree. Table 3 includes the results of a question about the first occupation after obtaining the degree in sociology. It distinguishes between jobs related and not related to the training obtained through the degree, and occasional and regular jobs for each of the former categories. Overall, around 60% of graduates started to work on jobs related to sociology, most of them in regular jobs. Once again the results for younger graduates show important differences. They started to work in occasional jobs to a higher percentage. Their jobs were not related to their degree in 65% of the cases, a figure that is higher than the 55% found for all university graduates (Gomendio, 2014).

This figure shows that sociology graduates progressively integrate into the labor market in stable jobs, although about a quarter of them are under the impression that they will remain in occupations that are not specific for sociologists. The main break is occurring in the younger generations which obtained their degrees after the beginning of the economic crisis, for them the integration into a specific and stable professional trajectory seems much longer.

Table 3. Ways of entering into the occupational trajectory after obtaining the degree, by year of the degree

	Year of the degree				Total
	1993 and before	Between 1994 and 2002	Between 2003 and 2008	2009 and after	
Occasional jobs, related to training obtained in the degree	6.0%	9.4%	14.3%	17.5%	11.7%
Regular jobs, related to training obtained in the degree	68.3%	58.6%	43.9%	17.5%	47.6%
Occasional jobs, nonrelated to training obtained in the degree	1.2%	2.3%	9.0%	28.2%	9.9%
Regular jobs, nonrelated to training obtained in the degree	24.5%	29.7%	32.8%	36.8%	30.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Typical fields of work for sociology graduates

Regarding sectors of work, 42% of sociologists work for private firms, mostly as employees. 51% of them work for public bodies (including public administrations -23%-; and universities and academic centers -28%-). About 4% work in non-university education, and about 8% in non-governmental organizations. In the following charts the main types of activities and professional categories, both in private firms and private administrations, are shown.

The main occupational categories are showed in Figure 3. Higher education is the main occupation of sociologists (28.5% of all sociologists in the sample), followed by technical and professional occupations (18.5%), including research, consultancy and professional practice. Other important occupations are related to public administration duties and management (14.5), and other services (11.5). Social services and health related activities are developed by 7.4% of sociologists.

The specific categories of sociologists working for private firms are shown in Figure 4. They are mostly integrated in technical work teams (48%). About 18% are executive staff or managing directors overseeing other personnel. 10% are co-owners of the firm as well as workers, in addition to 16% of free lancers. These two figures show that entrepreneurial trajectories are common in sociology. On the other hand, some sociologists working for private firms seem overqualified, specially the 11% working on administrative and related duties. Finally, Figure 5 includes the main categories in public administrations (including the three levels: cities, autonomous communities and central state administration). The key positions are related to the implementation and monitoring of projects and programs (40%), and the management and overseeing of the general functioning of public administrations (48%). Other positions are political assessment (6.3) and training (4.7).

The above data show that, despite the high unemployment level in current years, in both the medium and long term sociology has become a profession well integrated in certain segments of private firms and public administrations. Progressively sociology is extending beyond the realm of university; university careers used to attract many sociologists in periods that coincided with the expansion of the public university system. According to the Professional

Association of Sociologists, currently most of the jobs offer for sociologists are found in larger firms (mostly in positions related to human resources management, organization of work and marketing departments), in small and medium-sized firms (related to consultancy, applied research and commercial strategies) and in non-governmental organizations.

Figure 3. Main fields of work of sociologists

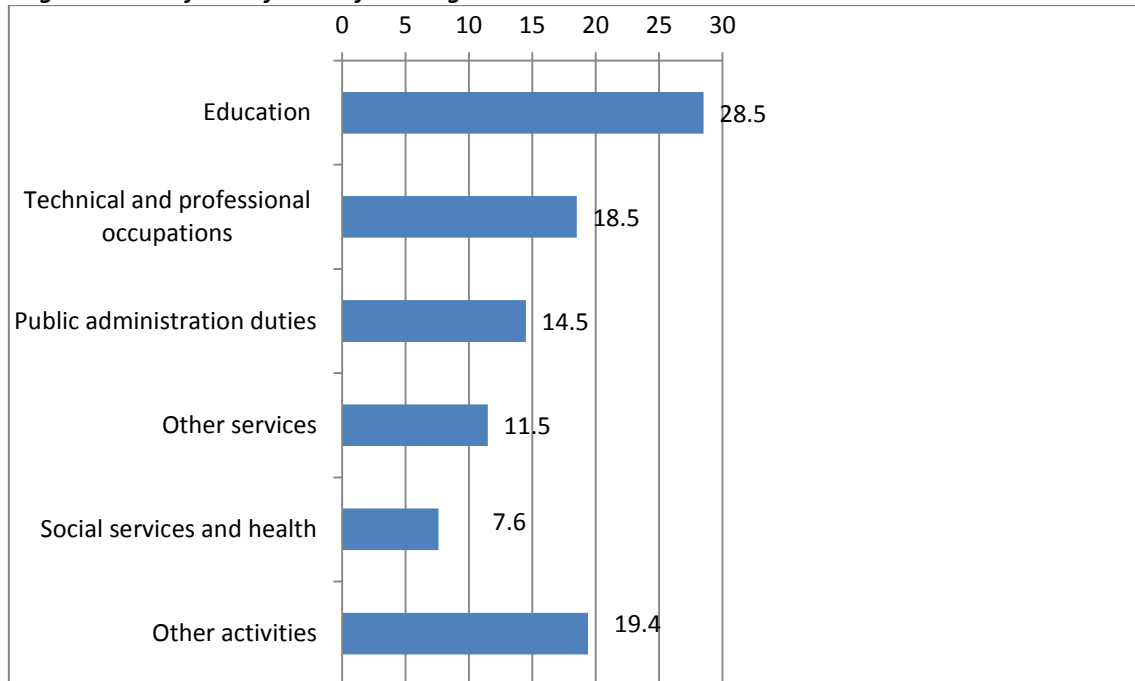


Figure 4. Private firms: main occupational categories

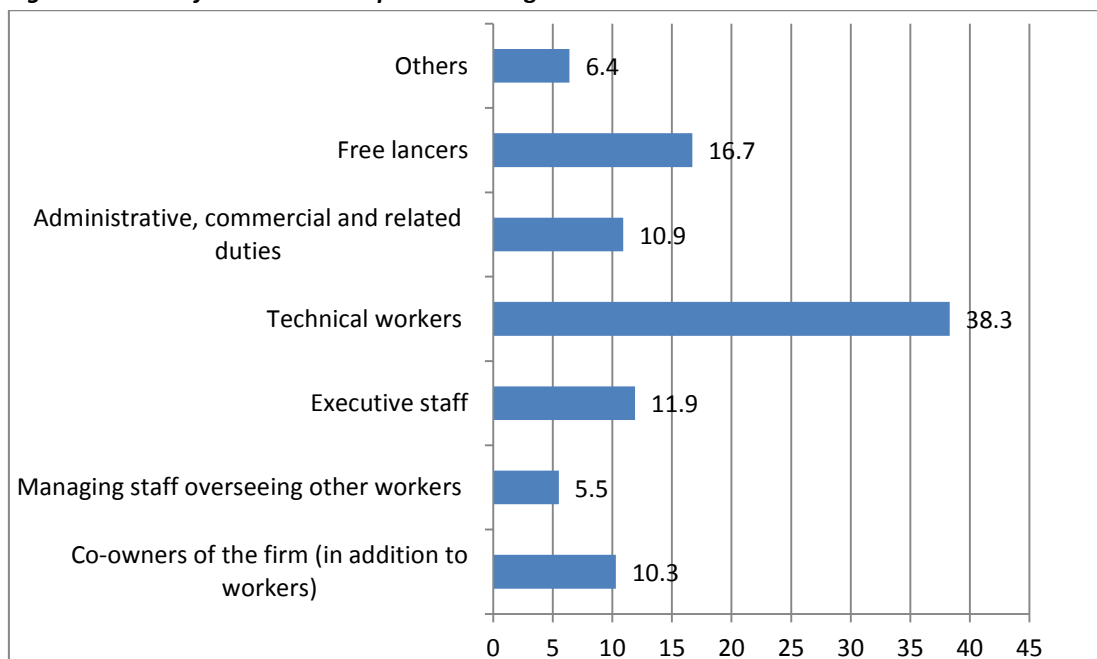
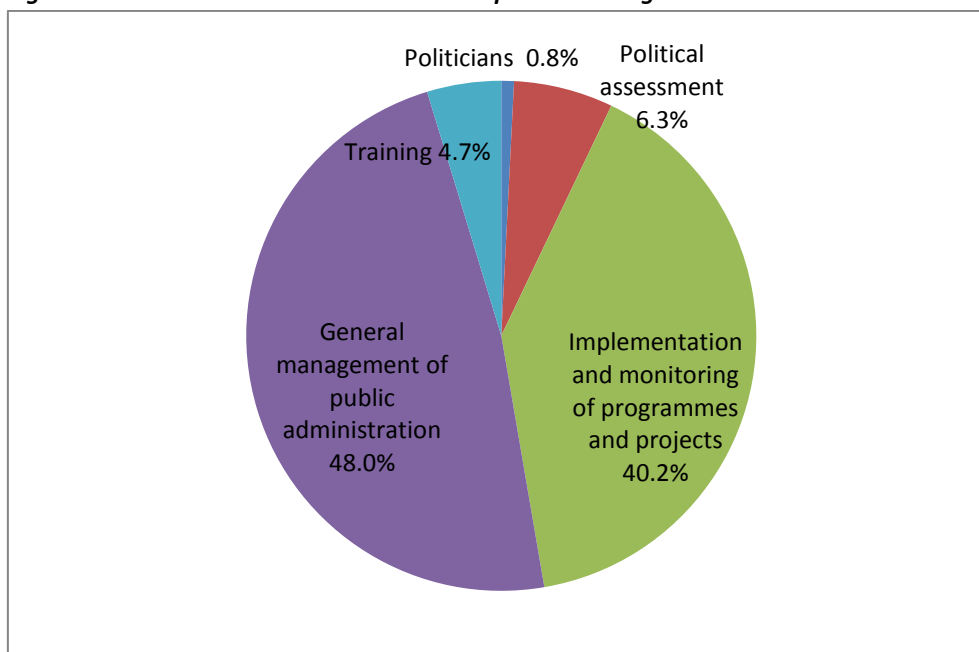


Figure 5. Private administrations: main occupational categories



4. CRITICAL COMPETENCES FOR SOCIOLOGISTS

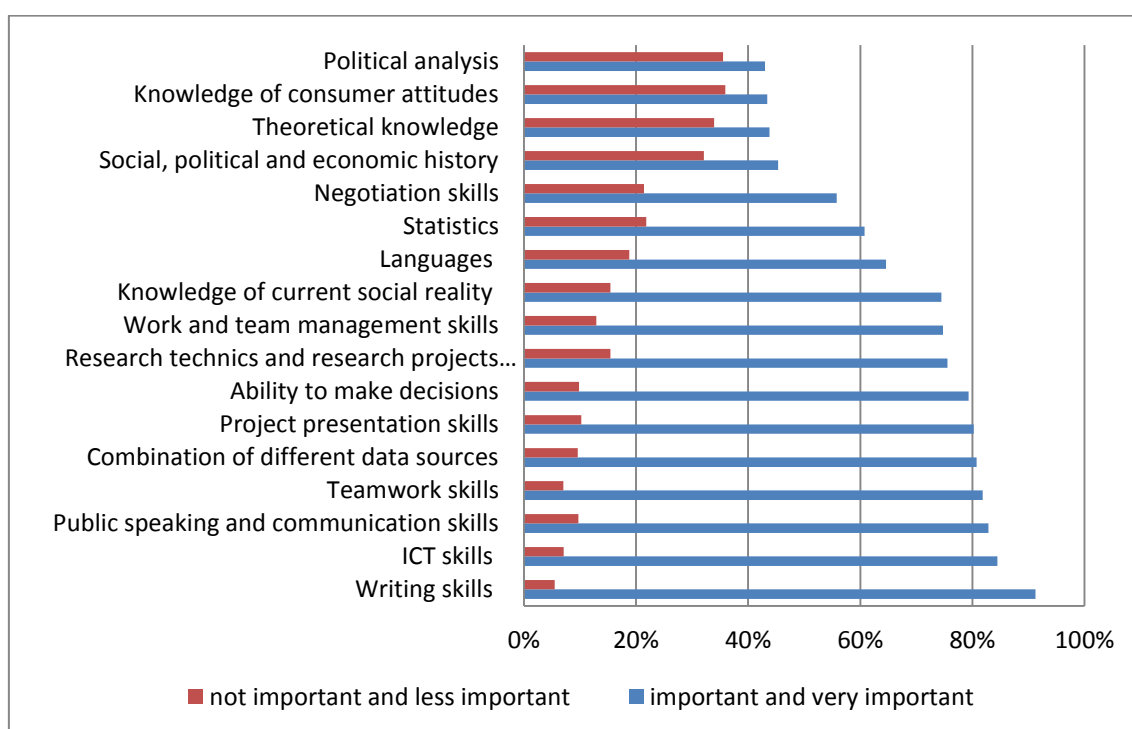
The professional profile of sociologists shows that the discipline offers a wide and diversified array of opportunities for career development. Nevertheless, it is especially important to take the specific competences into account, understood as the results of the apprenticeship process. That is, what a graduate really knows and is able to show after finishing his/her studies. In this section competences are analyzed in accordance with the framework defined in the project *Tuning Educational Structures in Europe*, which offers an expedient approach for measuring competences of people holding a degree vs. the demands from the labor market. Figure 6 includes generic competences, personal attitudes, and specific competences. In particular, sociology graduates answering the survey were asked if different competences have been essential for their occupational careers.

The key competences for their professional trajectories, with over 80% of respondents answering “important” or “very important”, are the more generic and transversal ones that have to do with instrumental capacities. These are writing skills, skills for presenting information, ICTs, public speaking, and managing information from different sources. Other important competences are related to personal abilities: teamwork and the abilities for decision making. A second group of competences, considered to be important by 50% and 75% of the respondents, have to do with disciplinary training, but oriented to the application of knowledge and skills to sociological practice. They are related to research methodologies and project management (including the design of research, goal definitions, techniques, timing, budgeting, etc.), the organization of work and team management (such as leadership and motivation skills) and specific knowledge of the surrounding social reality (social structure, conflicts, etc.). Other important skills in this group are foreign languages, statistics and negotiation techniques. Finally, a third group of competences are considered to be important such as theoretical and conceptual components of the discipline (social theory, social and

economic history, political analysis and knowledge about consumer behaviors), albeit by less than 50% of the respondents.

It is important to take into account that the competences that reflect the core disciplinary knowledge of sociology are acknowledged (in a different question of the survey) as being the subjects that concentrate the most intensive training during the current degree. On the contrary, sociologists up to date feel that their degrees are not focused enough on the more practical subjects. Sociologists usually think that the core sociological knowledge obtained is good and adjusted to the professional demands, although they also think that the labor market demands additional abilities in order to make the accumulated knowledge useful for specific situations. This reflects a certain lack of adjustment between the orientation of university degrees and the practical knowledge that is needed for competing in the labor market.

Figure 6. Competences considered by sociologists as necessary for their professional trajectories.



Note: Responses from a 4-item scale have been grouped in “not important and less important” and “important and very important” for the professional trajectory.

5. THE INSTITUTIONAL LANDSCAPE OF SOCIOLOGY: RESOURCES FOR GRADUATES

Professional and scientific institutions

A useful criterion for understanding the role of institutions supporting sociology is to distinguish between the “scientific tier” (scientific associations) and the “professional tier” (professional colleges or associations). Spain has a multilevel state that shares many similarities with the federal states (there is a State Government and several regional governments called Autonomous Communities). This means that both institutions can be found at state level and in different territories.

- *Scientific institutions.* The official sociological association on the national level is the Spanish Sociological Federation (FES). Its main activities are related to the advancement of sociological knowledge and sociology as a scientific field, including conferences, dissemination, publications and special training. FES has individual members and collective members. Collective members are the scientific associations of the autonomous communities, university departments, faculties, research centers and other professional associations related to sociology.

The typical way for individuals to contact FES is through research committees (similar to the International Sociological Association, the European Sociological Association and other scientific associations). They are groups of specialists that carry out meetings, publications, and networking activities. For advanced students and practitioners to contact to research committees may be a good way of knowing the state of a sociological specialty. Another important event organized by FES is the Spanish Congress of Sociology, which is held every three years and comprises around 1,500 presentations. It is open to paper proposals and also to students wishing to attend.

On the regional level the main activities are carried out by the 13 sociological associations of the autonomous communities (a list of scientific associations is included in Table II of the Annex). Sociologists living in a specific city, or visiting for purpose of study and professional development, may find it useful to join the regional association in order to participate in meetings, attend conferences, and to interact with their colleagues. Most of the associations hold congresses on a regular basis (usually every two years) focusing on more specific social problems. They also may provide assistance for finding colleagues and places to study.

- *Professional institutions.* Regarding the “professional tier”, the professional associations (known as “professional colleges” or *colegios profesionales*) in Spain are by law the bodies that protect and regulate the professional development of disciplines. In the sociology field it is not compulsory to be a member of a professional association in order to practice the profession, as is the case in medicine or engineering, although the associations have the goal to provide help and defend the practitioners sharing the degree of sociology. In line with the multilevel state, there is also an association at the national level (see names in Table II of the Annex), and several ones in the Autonomous Communities. In those cases, the professional services are provided through an established association on the regional level (for the Autonomous Communities that do not have established a College, the services are provided by the one at the national level).

The most common services provided to individual sociologists are specialized training related to professional development, networking, and help to integrate into the labor market. A useful support for sociologists wishing to find a job is the “occupational service”, which connects sociologists to companies and public institutions that send in job openings. Sociologists affiliated to professional colleges who have provided their CV and expressed their interest for specific job offers may be selected as candidates and are put in contact with firms and public administrations.

Another useful association is the one related to market research and public opinion research (AEDEMO). Most of the firms working on these issues are members. Individual sociologists

working in private firms or as freelance consultants can also join this association. Its services for individuals concentrate mostly on training. AEDEMO also holds conferences and publishes a journal. Through their web page sociologists can find information on many companies that specialize in this field and specific job offers.

Key resources in the R&D system

This section explains the main opportunities for graduates wishing to engage in research and postgraduate education supported by official human resources programs. An important feature is that programs are arranged in public “calls for applications” and are organized on a competitive basis (the calls are the way in which public institutions advertise that candidates can apply for specific positions. They usually are issued once a year, and specify the positions offered, the dates for applications and the conditions that the candidates should fulfil). Applicants compete for available positions based on scores in their degrees, plus scores based on specialized training and previous experience. The programs included below are the ones funded by public administrations, the Centre for Sociological Research (CIS), and the main private foundations.⁷

- *Predoctoral scholarships from the public sector.* The scholarships are sponsored by the public administration issuing the call for applications, either through the central state or an autonomous community. The actual work places are institutions that perform R&D: university departments, research centers, and in some cases a private institutions. Scholarships for university graduates are usually set up for four years. Most of them are linked to the PhD process. Scholars are provided with a monthly salary, social security, free tuition for university PhD programs, and some support for short visits to other countries.

Sociologists wishing to apply for a scholarship need to pay attention to the conditions for each call for applications issued by each administration. Usually they need to be engaged in a doctoral program while applying.⁸ Although most of the degrees from inside the European Higher Education Area are recognized, graduates from foreign countries have to pay attention to what is required when presenting the information on their degrees. An important condition is that many available positions are attached to funded projects and the principal investigator of the project is in charge of the selection process. Therefore it is useful to contact in advance to researchers who usually are in charge of funded projects.

⁷ These calls are not the only opportunity for graduates. Other possibilities depend on single projects developed in universities and research centers, and calls issued by universities themselves. In these cases, applicants should investigate the scholarships offered by each institution, usually through their services for postgraduates.

⁸ The main official program for pre-doctoral scholarships is funded by the “State R&D and innovation scheme” (*Plan Estatal de I+D+I*), currently managed by the Ministry for Economic Affairs. Other official important programs are funded by the governments of the autonomous communities as parts of their regional R&D plans. The specific calls from regional governments are usually organized by the departments in charge of higher education and research. The “Guide for the Management of the Mobility of the Foreign Researcher in Spain, 2014” (MINECO, 2014) is a useful source of information for foreign researchers who are wishing to move to Spain.

- *The Centre for Sociological Research (CIS)*. CIS is the official center for research on public opinion. It is well known through the periodical surveys carried out almost every month about politics, social issues and public opinion on social problem, in addition to publications and specialized services for the social sciences. CIS is a unique and interesting institution because of the resources offered to sociologists. It has an active program for scholarships. The duration of a CIS scholarship is one year. They are developed internally at one of CIS departments and are oriented to practice. Therefore they are especially useful for obtaining training in quantitative methodologies related to surveys and the organization of sociological research. Other important CIS resources are a program for supporting research projects (including a modality for people developing a PhD), specialized courses on methodology, and free access to the data archive of surveys.

- *Pre-doctoral scholarships from private institutions*. Finally, another useful resource for scholarships comes from foundations supported by the major banks and private corporations. An important group of foundations has specific programs for the social sciences including support for scholarships. The organization of their calls for applications is somewhat similar to the those of public programs: the calls are issued once a year, with positions awarded on a competitive basis. The people receiving scholarships usually develop their work in an academic institution. Nevertheless, the selection process, salaries and conditions depend on the funding institution (The main social science programs are found in Fundación Areces, Fundación BBVA, Fundación La Caixa, and Fundación Rafael del Pino).

6. CONCLUSIONS

The portrait of sociological studies and sociological practice in Spain offers important information for students and graduates in gaining insights into what can make their studies successful and how to best integrate into the labor market. As has been shown, the university system is diverse and there are many places to study. As a profession, the opportunities are also diverse. That means that in Spain there is a “critical mass” of professors and researchers, and accumulated sociological expertise for studying most of the theoretical approaches, methodologies and specialties of sociology.

Sociology can offer lots of opportunities but to take advantage of the system there are things that need to be taken into consideration. First and foremost one should have a “strategy” when choosing a specific degree, an academic internship, an apprentice position, or when engaging in specialized training. Given that the university system is very diverse, students should select the studies carefully and determine which program best fits with their interests and circumstances. They have to compare the contents of the curricula, the connection of the subjects to the labor market and the services provided, especially the practical training through internships.

Second, while working on their degrees, students also need to pay attention to strategies for study-to-work transitions. For that matter they need to take into account the experiences voiced by their colleagues, as has been shown in the survey referred to in this chapter. We all know that the core competences of sociologists are based on applying the sociological perspective: a combination of assumptions on social phenomena supported by evidence, analytical skills, proper research methodologies, and original and alternative ways to look at

social problems and to find solutions that often challenge common sense knowledge. Nevertheless, these competences have to be combined correctly with personal and professional abilities in order to make sociology useful. When studying, they need to pay attention to writing and communication skills, managing qualitative data and statistics, arranging and organizing projects, and developing teamwork skills.

Third, when entering into the labor market sociologists compete with people from other disciplines. There are occupational niches for sociological practice. Often what employers are really looking for, especially when dealing with complex issues, is a sociologist. Given that the job positions usually are not classified as “sociology jobs”, sociology graduates have to be proactive and to show the potential benefit of their competences.

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WEB RESOURCES

Universities in Spain: <http://universidad.es/>

-Sociology Departments and Faculties: <http://www.uv.es/uvweb/departamento-sociologia-antropologia-social/es/recursos/sociologia-antropologia-universidades-espana-localidad-1285860099778.html>

- Spanish Sociological Federation (FES-Federación Española de Sociología): <http://fes-web.org/>
- Sociological associations of the Autonomous Communities (Asociaciones territoriales de sociología federadas en FES): <http://www.fes-web.org/miembros/asociaciones-territoriales/>
- Centre for Sociological Research (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas): <http://www.cis.es>
- National Professional Association for Graduates and Postgraduates in Sociology and Political Sciences (Colegio Nacional de Titulados y Doctores en Sociología y Ciencias Políticas): <http://colpolsocmadrid.org/>
- Professional associations of the autonomous communities: <http://colpolsocmadrid.org/otros-colegios-profesionales/>
- Professional Association for Public Opinion and Market Research (AEDEMO) <http://www.aedemo.es/>
- National Institute of Statistics (Instituto Nacional de Estadística): <http://www.ine.es>
- Sociology Journals: <http://fes-web.org/guia-sociologia/revistas-nacionales.php>
- State Scheme for R&D and innovation (Plan Estatal de I+D+I):
<http://www.idi.mineco.gob.es/portal/site/MICINN/menuitem.29bfd64be21cddc5f09dfd1001432ea0/?vgnextoid=f95505e42afee310VgnVCM1000001d04140aRCRD>

Foundations:

- Fundación Universia: <http://fundacionuniversia.net/>
- Fundación La Caixa: <http://obrasocial.lacaixa.es/>
- Fundación BBVA: <http://www.fbbva.es/>
- Fundación Areces: <http://www.fundacionareces.es/>
- Fundación Rafael del Pino: <http://www.frdelpino.es/>

ANNEX

Table I. Selection of Master Degrees with Sociology as one of the core fields offered by some of the main universities in Spain

University	Master Degree	ECTS Credits
Universidad Complutense de Madrid	Metodología de la Investigación en Ciencias Sociales: Innovaciones y Aplicaciones	90
	Sociología de la Población, del Territorio y de las Migraciones	60
	Igualdad de Género en las Ciencias Sociales	90
	Análisis Sociocultural del Conocimiento y de la Comunicación	60
	Máster Internacional en Estudios Contemporáneos de América Latina	120
	Sociología Aplicada: Problemas Sociales	90
	Estudios Avanzados en Trabajo y Empleo	90
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid	Estudios Interdisciplinarios de Género	60
Universidad Carlos III	Liderazgo Político y Social	60

Universidad Rey Juan Carlos	Investigación aplicada a los medios de comunicación	60
	Comunicación, Cultura y Ciudadanía Digitales	60
	Comunicación Social y Accesibilidad	60
	Comunicación y Problemas Socioculturales	60
	Estudios Interdisciplinarios de Género	60
Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia	Problemas Sociales	60
	Comunicación, Cultura, Sociedad y Política	60
Universidad de Granada	Problemas Sociales. Dirección y Gestión de Programas Sociales	60
	Cooperación al Desarrollo, Gestión Pública y de las ONGs.	60
Universidad del País Vasco	Estudios Feministas y de Género	60
Universidad de A Coruña	Migraciones Internacionales: Investigación, Políticas Migratorias y Mediación Intercultural	60
	Planificación y Gestión de Destinos y Nuevos Productos Turísticos	60
Universidad de Valencia	Sociología y Antropología de las Políticas Públicas	60
	Interculturalidad, comunicación y estudios europeos	120
	Género y políticas de igualdad	90
	Ocupación e Intervención en el mercado laboral	90
Universidad de Málaga	Sociología aplicada	
Universidad de Sevilla	Estudios de Género y Desarrollo Profesional	60
	Ciencias del Trabajo	60
Universidad Pablo de Olavide de Sevilla	Género e Igualdad	60
	Ciencias Sociales e Intervención Social	60
	Investigación social aplicada al medio ambiente	60
	Estudios socio-políticos	60
	Sociedad, administración y política	60
Universidad de Salamanca	Estudios interdisciplinarios de género	60
	Estudios sociales de la ciencia y la tecnología	60
	Estudios latinoamericanos	90
Universidad Pública de Navarra	Dinámicas de Cambio en las Sociedades Modernas Avanzadas	60
Universidad de Barcelona	Criminología, Política Criminal I Sociologia Juridicopenal	90
	Educació En Valors I Ciutadania	60
	Estudis Avançats En Exclusió Social	60
	Intervencions Socials I Educatives	60
	Sociologia: Transformacions Socials I Innovació	90
Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona	Erasmus Mundus En Polítiques Educatives Per Al Desenvolupament Global / Erasmus Mundus In Education Policies For Global Development	120
	Estudis territorials i de la població	60

	Política Social, Treball I Benestar	60
	Polítiques I Planificació Per A Les Ciutats, l'Ambient I El Paisatge	120
Universitat Pompeu Fabra	Democràcies Actuals: Federalisme, Nacionalisme I Multiculturalitat	60
	Gestió de la immigració	60
	Sociologia I Demografia	60

Table II: Scientific associations and professional institutions

	<i>Scientific Associations</i>	<i>Professional Institutions</i>
State Level	Federación Española de Sociología	Colegio Nacional de Titulados y Doctores en Sociología y Ciencias Políticas
Autonomous Communities		
Andalusia	Asociación Andaluza de Sociología	Colegio Oficial de Ciencias Políticas y Sociología de Andalucía
Aragón	Asociación Aragonesa de Sociología	Colegio Aragonés de Políticas y Sociología
Asturias	Asociación Asturiana de Sociología	Colegio Oficial de Ciencias Políticas y Sociología del Principado de Asturias
Baleares Islands	Asociació de Sociologia des Illes Balears	
Basque Country	Asociación Vasta de Sociología y Ciencia Política	
Cantabria		Colegio Oficial de Doctores y Licenciados en CC. Políticas y Sociología de Cantabria
Catalonia	Asociació Catalana de Sociologia	Col·legi de Politòlegs i Sociòlegs de Catalunya
Castilla La-Mancha	Asociación Castellano-Manchega de Sociología	Colegio Oficial de Ciencias Políticas y Sociología de Castilla-La Mancha
Castilla-León		Colegio Oficial de Doctores y Licenciados en Ciencias Políticas y Sociología de Castilla y León
Extremadura	Asociación de Ciencias Sociales de Extremadura	
Galitzia	Asociación Galega de Socioloxía	Colexio Políticas e Socioloxía de Galicia
Madrid	Asociación Madrileña de Sociología	Colegio de Politólogos y Sociólogos de Madrid
Murcia	Asociación Murciana de Sociología y Ciencia Política	Colegio Oficial de Ciencias Políticas y Sociología de la Región de Murcia
Navarra	Asociación Navarra de Sociología	Colegio de Sociólogos/as y Politólogos/as de Navarra
Valencia	Asociación Valenciana de Sociología	Colegio Oficial de Doctores y Graduados en Ciencias Políticas y Sociología de la Comunidad Valenciana

