

# Sociological research in Norway

An evaluation

Evaluation  
Division for Science





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Division for Science**

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## Preface

The panel for the evaluation of sociological research in Norway hereby submits the following report to the Research Council of Norway. The panel is unanimous in its assessments, conclusions and recommendations.

Thirteen research units were included in the evaluation, comprising five university departments, two departments at university colleges and six institutes for applied research. Altogether, 177 researchers at these units were involved in the evaluation process.

The panel wishes to thank the representatives of the 13 research units for their participation in the evaluation and for interesting discussions during the interview sessions. The panel also wishes to thank the researchers for their participation, as well as the Ph.D. students for sharing their views in meetings with the panel. Last but not least, the panel wishes to thank the Research Council of Norway for providing this opportunity for discussion and reflection about sociology in Norway and sociology as a discipline.

Oslo, December 2010

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## Summary

The overall objective of this evaluation was to review current research activities within the field of sociology at Norwegian universities, university colleges and research institutes. The evaluation was undertaken in 2010 by a panel appointed by the Research Council of Norway.

This report was prepared on the basis of internal evaluations provided by the institutions, discussions with staff members and Ph.D. students, and various other sources of information submitted to the panel, such as CVs, publications, factual reports and a publication analysis.

The panel has found a substantial amount of high-quality research that has attracted international attention, as well as some research that does not achieve the same standard. Although the overall quality of the research varies, the panel's conclusion is that Norwegian sociological research maintains a high standard and generates important knowledge about social conditions in Norway.

With regard to the individual units, the sociology departments at the University of Oslo, the University of Bergen and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) are in the view of the panel excellent research environments with the capacity to produce research of a high international standard. However, the panel recommends that these departments intensify their efforts to develop theoretical and methodological research within sociology. The departments at the recently-designated universities and the university colleges have limited resources at their disposal, and the panel suggests that these units focus their activities on selected areas of sociological research in order to maintain the desired standard of research. Independent research institutes that are not affiliated with a higher education institution play an important role in Norwegian sociology. However, the quality of the research varies substantially both within and between the individual units. Some of the research holds a high international standard, but most of the research carried out at these institutes is applied research, and results are often published in the form of reports that are intended for the commissioners of the research rather than for the academic community in the field of sociology. The researchers at these institutes possess considerable competence and knowledge, which is not, unfortunately, currently given sufficient visibility.

In general, Norwegian sociology is characterised by the fact that most researchers work in multidisciplinary environments or on interdisciplinary projects, or have long experience of conducting interdisciplinary research. In many respects this is a strength of Norwegian sociology and gives sociology a vital role in problem-oriented social science research. However, such extensive focus on multidisciplinary brings with it a risk that core issues of sociology and further theorising around these issues will not be given sufficient attention. If sociology is to be a sought-after discipline in interdisciplinary research, care has to be taken to develop its core theoretical concepts and knowledge about how to study and

understand social structures, social relations and social change. Good interdisciplinary research is only possible through a meeting of strong disciplines.

The Research Council of Norway and various government ministries are the most important external funding sources for all of the units included in the evaluation. A major portion of this funding is allocated to problem-oriented research, not basic research. This may create pressure to conduct interdisciplinary research and does not adequately support the development of basic research within the discipline of sociology. In the opinion of the panel, theory-driven sociological research needs to be strengthened in Norway. To this end, the panel recommends that the Research Council set aside more of its resources to fund research in non-pre-defined areas rather than chiefly supporting policy-oriented research under thematic programmes.

The panel has identified a number of other general problems that need to be addressed in order to enhance the quality of sociological research in Norway. One such problem is the low geographical mobility of sociologists in Norway. Another issue is related to Ph.D. programmes. The majority of Ph.D. students in sociology spend a large part of their training working in multidisciplinary research environments, which threatens to weaken sociological competence in Norway in the long run. To avoid this, the relationship between the departments of sociology that educate Ph.D. students and the Ph.D. students themselves must be strengthened.

It is the panel's hope that this evaluation report will provide a constructive basis for improvement, development and change at the national level and at the level of the individual research unit and individual researcher alike.

# Part I

## 1. Terms of reference and panel

In 2009, the Research Council of Norway decided to conduct an evaluation of the research activities within the field of sociology at selected Norwegian universities, university colleges and research institutes. The main objective of the evaluation was to assess the strengths and weaknesses of sociological research in Norway, identify research groups of a high international calibre and gain an overview of the situation regarding recruitment to research positions. The terms of reference for the evaluation panel are given in Appendix I. A panel comprising the following members was appointed in 2009 to perform the evaluation:

- Professor Göran Ahrne, Department of Sociology, Stockholm University, Sweden (Chair)
- Professor Thomas P. Boje, Department of Society and Globalisation, Roskilde University, Denmark
- Professor Johanna Esseveld, Department of Sociology, Lund University, Sweden
- Professor Peter Gundelach, Department of Sociology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
- Professor Elianne Riska, Swedish School of Social Science, University of Helsinki, Finland

The panel was given the deadline of December 2010 for submission of its evaluation report. Senior Researcher Dag W. Aksnes at the Norwegian Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU STEP) has served as secretary to the panel and has also conducted the publication analysis.

The panel has based its report on the following material obtained by the Research Council:

- A background report with data on personnel, financial resources and international publishing related to Norwegian sociological research prepared by Hebe Gunnes and Stig Slipersæter. The report, entitled *Research within geography, social anthropology and sociology in Norway: Institutions, personnel and economic resources* (NIFU STEP, December 2009), was prepared prior to the start-up of the evaluation.

- Written documents submitted by the units, including annual reports and strategy plans, as well as overviews of personnel, funding, Master's and Ph.D. students, research stays abroad, participation in larger-scale research projects and conferences, etc.
- CVs as well as publication lists for the 10-year period 1 January 1999-30 June 2009 for each researcher encompassed by the evaluation.
- Two scholarly publications selected by each researcher encompassed by the evaluation which are central to their scientific production during the past five years, including an explanation of why these are central works.

The panel has obtained additional information in the form of:

- Internal evaluations prepared by the 13 research units included in the evaluation. The units were asked to critically assess their current situation, challenges they face and plans for the future. Major items covered in the internal evaluation include research profile and output, research cooperation, funding, researcher training and recruitment, and public outreach (see Appendix II).
- A bibliometric analysis of the publication output during the period 2004-2008 (based on the information provided in the submitted publication lists), published as a separate report.
- Interviews in May/June 2010 with representatives of the leadership and staff (one experienced researcher and one junior researcher) from all units included in the evaluation, as well as a group of Ph.D. students from some of the units.
- Other material, including the institutes' webpages, Norwegian sociology journals and magazines.

The Research Council invited a number of units conducting sociological research at universities, university colleges and applied research institutes to participate in the evaluation. Only units with at least five or six sociologists with senior research competence (a doctoral degree or equivalent) who hold the position of Professor, Associate Professor, Researcher 0, I, II, Senior Researcher or post-doctoral fellow within the subject area of the evaluation were selected for participation. Thirteen units decided to take part (see the list below). It was up to the units themselves to select which of their researchers to include. Most of the units have included all of the researchers who fulfil the criterion above. However, there were differences in how the units interpreted "the subject area of the evaluation". In addition, staff participation was not made compulsory at one unit. All this affects the comparisons between the different units to some degree.

A total of 177 persons at the selected units are included in the evaluation. This means that this is not an examination of all sociological research being conducted in Norway.

Sociologists working at institutes or research centres with smaller groups of sociologists have not been included.

According to the terms of reference (see Appendix I), the panel was to focus particular attention on: i) research quality and relevance, ii) organisation, cooperation and Ph.D. programmes, iii) publication activity and public outreach/dissemination, and iv) capacity and funding. The report is structured in a manner that addresses these issues systematically and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of sociological research in Norway.

The report has three parts. Part I contains three chapters. According to the terms of reference, the panel was expected to consider the quality of sociological research in Norway in relation to an international standard of research. To this end, the panel has provided a short summary of the historical development of sociology internationally and its status today, as well as a brief overview of the development and organisation of sociological research in Norway (Chapter 2). The chapter concludes with five sets of questions that the panel returns to in its discussion of its conclusions (Chapter 7). This is followed by a chapter (Chapter 3) that provides descriptions and analyses of the organisation, funding, personnel and scholarly publication at the research units encompassed by the evaluation.

Part II provides an evaluation of each of the 13 units (Chapter 4). In addition to the evaluation, the panel has made some recommendations for each of the units. The chapter concludes with a short comparative summary of all of the units.

Part III begins with an analysis of the recruitment patterns for sociologists in Norway and mobility among institutes/institutions, and offers views on the Ph.D. programmes in sociology in Norway (Chapter 5). When it comes to the assessment of the Ph.D. programmes, the panel has not had the opportunity to conduct a systematic examination of the written output in the form of dissertations, nor has it been able to study course descriptions or the content of courses taken by Ph.D. students. The panel's assessment of the Ph.D. programmes in sociology is based solely on three sources: 1) statements in the units' internal evaluations regarding their involvement in Ph.D. programmes, 2) information obtained during the panel's interviews with representatives of the units, and 3) meetings with eight Ph.D. students from various units.

In its evaluation of the quality of sociological research in Norway, the panel is expected to give due consideration to the financial resources and standing of the units. Therefore Chapter 6 includes a comparison and discussion of the differences between the units in this regard as well as of the interaction and relationships between the units in terms of cooperation on and/or competition relating to research or educational activities. In Chapter 7, the panel formulates conclusions concerning the current state of sociological research in Norway and provides recommendations for the future direction of this research.

The following departments and institutes were included in the evaluation:

## **Universities**

Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) – Department of Sociology and Political Science

University of Bergen (UiB) – Department of Sociology

University of Oslo (UiO) – Department of Sociology and Human Geography

University of Stavanger (UiS) – Department of Media, Culture and Social Sciences

University of Tromsø (UiT) – Department of Sociology, Political Science and Community Planning

## **University college**

Oslo University College (HiO) – Faculty of Social Sciences

## **Applied research institutes**

Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research

Institute for Social Research (ISF)

National Institute for Consumer Research (SIFO)

Norwegian Social Research (NOVA)

Statistics Norway (SSB) – Research Department, Division for Social and Demographic Research

Work Research Institute (WRI)

## **University college and applied research institute (joint evaluation)**

Bodø University College (HiBo) – Section for Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences – and Nordland Research Institute (NF)

It should be noted that in some cases the evaluation encompasses an entire department (limited to persons with senior research competence), while in other cases it covers only a section or unit within a department or institute. The latter category includes units which do not have an organisational structure corresponding to a sociology department, where certain individuals have been selected for inclusion in the evaluation. In addition, Nordland Research Institute and Bodø University College have been evaluated as a single unit. There are strong links between the two organisations and they considered it most appropriate to be evaluated together.

## 2. Sociology

### **Sociology and its object of study**

While sociological thinking has a longer history, the discipline of sociology was first established during the second half of the 19th century (Swingewood 1991), when the social sciences were organised into five disciplines: history, economics, political science, anthropology and sociology. An area of focus was delineated for each of these social sciences, with the focus of sociology on society and social structures, processes and relations.

Sociology evolved as a response to the social changes and social problems arising from processes of modernisation, industrialisation, urbanisation and secularisation. The three following historical aspects indicate that sociology was not a homogeneous discipline at its inception.

First, the early sociologists differed on how to analyse the above-mentioned processes and problems and as to whether greatest importance should be given to capitalism, industrialisation or rationalisation. Giddens (1984) suggests that sociology has been a multidimensional discipline from the outset.

Second, sociology was a broad discipline, not only theoretically but also methodologically and in relation to its topics of study. As sociology deals with society and because societies differ, the focus and themes of sociology will naturally vary among different countries and continents. While class relations were of central importance to classical sociologists in Western Europe, such as Durkheim, Marx and Weber, the question of difference – due to race and ethnicity – was a central theme for sociologists in the US, such as DuBois and Thomas and Znaniecki. However, despite these distinctions there were similarities, particularly with regard to the main topics studied. Key importance was placed on questions of social stratification, social inequality, social mobility and social integration as well as on discussions about the relationship between human agency and social structures.

Third, sociologists also have divergent views on methodological issues and in their choice of methods. Whereas some adhered to the view that sociologists could or should uncover universal laws and that sociological studies could be carried out in the same way as studies in the natural sciences, others preferred more interpretative approaches that attached importance to historical and cultural contexts.

### *Institutionalisation of sociology*

Although sociology was originally closely tied to particular individuals, the discipline gradually achieved relative institutional autonomy in the form of own departments, chairs and journals. A few departments of sociology, for example in Chicago, London and Bordeaux, were created as early as the 1890s, but it took longer for sociology to be institutionalised in

separate departments in other places. In the Nordic countries, for example, sociology departments were first established after 1945, when most Western countries already had sociology departments and “the institutional structure of the social sciences seemed for the first time fully in place and clearly delineated, [and] the practice of the social sciences began to change” (Wallerstein et al. 1996: 32).

The change in the practice of sociology resulted in the professionalisation, specialisation and fragmentation of thematic areas through the introduction of sub-disciplines such as historical sociology, economic sociology and environmental sociology etc. In addition, new programmes, departments, journals and scholarly associations began to emerge in the 1960s. Many of these new initiatives were either cross-disciplinary or related to specific topics. Topics that were previously part of – but more peripheral to – the discipline came to have a more central place, such as environmental studies, cultural studies, area studies, and women’s (and gender) studies. This represents an attempt to renew the discipline by introducing new questions, topics, theories and methods, and the trend continues today. In the Gulbenkian Commission’s report on the social sciences, Wallerstein et al. (1996) suggest that sociology should reflect on its Eurocentric orientation (in its historiography, view of universalism, assumptions about civilisation and focus on progress) by creating a dialogue with sociologists from other continents. This proposal has been further explored more recently by Raewyn Connell (2007).

Anyone who surveys institutions where sociology is conducted or participates in one of the larger national or international sociology conferences will find that sociology has a broad and diverse character. (For example, the International Sociological Association (ISA) has 55 sections, the American Sociological Association (ASA) has 48 and the European Sociological Association (ESA) has 33.) Such developments have again raised the question about what sociology is and whether it is still possible to identify the core of the discipline.

During more than 100 years as a formal academic discipline, sociology has had an impact on spheres beyond the other social sciences (and the humanities). Sociologists have also developed their thinking through contact with politicians and practitioners. In the late 1950s and the two following decades in particular, the sociological agenda addressed players outside of academia. Sociology was presented as a relatively new discipline that would generate knowledge to provide not only data but also ideas for use in planning modern society. Quantitative methods, survey data, statistical analyses and even mathematical models were considered particularly useful in this context. Quantitative sociologists of the 1950s as well as Marxist sociologists of the 1970s were eager to offer solutions to existing social problems and supply knowledge on how to develop society in new and different ways. Some sociologists still follow this path and carry out studies grounded in current social problems. Representatives of other fields and disciplines, such as social work, peace and conflict research and human rights research, have descended from sociology and have taken over their tasks to some extent. Contemporary neoliberal policies have assigned the task of developing



new, more efficient ways of organising public services to economists. This has led to lesser interest among politicians for sociological studies, and sociologists' role as active practitioners has faded in many countries.

### *Sociology and its relationship to other social science disciplines*

Although sociology has its own object of study, theories and methods, it is a discipline with open boundaries. Sociology has been characterised by a low degree of closure from the time it was established, as some of the “founding fathers” had received their formal education in other closely related fields/disciplines. This is true for other influential scholars in the history of sociology. Bourdieu and Foucault, for example, received their Ph.D. degrees in anthropology and philosophy, respectively. In addition, the proportion of sociologists working closely with other social scientists has always been large.

Sociology has not been restricted to its own practitioners. Sociologists and sociological thinking have provided inspiration for and played an important role in many other disciplines, and sociological theories have been integrated into other disciplines and fields of study. Social scientists in fields such as political science, gender studies, cultural studies, and media and communication make use of qualitative and quantitative sociological methods in addition to sociological theories and concepts. Sociological thinking has also had a vast impact on public and political discourse in which sociological concepts have become part of everyday language. There are more sociologists, more books on sociology and more sociology-related research than ever before.

One of the consequences of a low degree of closure is that it may be difficult to specify precisely what characterises sociology today (in relation to the other social sciences). Sociology has lost the unique position it held during the 1960s and 1970s. Many aspects of sociological theory (even the sociological classics) are shared with other social sciences. Social science methods that were once used almost exclusively by sociologists (in-depth interviews, focus group interviews and surveys, in particular) are now used by other disciplines as well. At the same time, sociology is still caught in the trap of methodological nationalism to a certain extent (Beck 2000). But this, too, it shares with the other social sciences.

### *Challenges facing contemporary sociology*

The concomitant success and openness of sociology may lead some to argue that sociology has lost its *raison d'être* as a social science discipline. The question is, what is left for sociologists to do when a large number of its theories and methods have been appropriated by other social science disciplines and some of its specific objects of study have been taken over by new (sub-)fields and (sub-)disciplines such as criminology, social work, women's studies, media and mass communication, migration studies, and work and organisation studies.

In addition to the challenges posed by changes taking place outside of the discipline of sociology, there are also challenges within the discipline itself. First, there are ongoing processes of professionalisation and specialisation, which have led some critics to suggest that sociology has become too specialised and has lost its coherence as a discipline (Collins 1994). But there are also those (e.g. Wallerstein et al.1996) who posit that sociology is more vibrant than ever and is one of the few social science disciplines that can answer many of the current problems facing societies around the globe due to its openness to new ways of thinking and its willingness to listen to and include “voices” outside of academia in its studies. Second, there is the challenge posed by the scepticism of post-modernists, post-structuralists and deconstructivists towards sociology (and social science in general) as a science. Again, reactions differ, but this challenge has meant that the question of whether it is possible to generate scientific knowledge about social processes has been re-addressed.

Sociologists of the classic era defined society and social relations as their objects of study and studied entire societies, often in the form of nation-states. This is no longer the case. Society as such has lost its taken-for-grantedness and there is a growing awareness of the importance of globalisation. Furthermore, there is the insight that we cannot understand what happens in one particular society without studying social structures in other countries/regions. This raises questions about the relevance of traditional sociological theories and methods and about whether there are other theories and methods that are better suited to studying the relationships at and between the local, national and global levels. If we maintain that social integration is an important dimension in sociology, then contemporary sociology is facing problems that differ widely from those encountered by classical sociology. In classical sociology, problems of integration were primarily related to the working class (with some emphasis on women and immigrants, particularly in the US) and economic inequality. While inequality remains a fundamental characteristic of society, the working class and class-based organisations have changed. In contemporary Western societies, social integration problems are primarily related to other social categories, such as citizenship, ethnicity, religion and gender. Whereas sociological enquiries earlier often stayed within the boundaries of the nation-state, topics are now studied at the local, national and global levels. The issue of race/ethnicity has raised anew older sociological questions about social inclusion, social participation and citizenship and about bringing new members into existing collectives, including questions about what is a collective, what are its boundaries and who can be included.

A major challenge to sociology is its object of study. Compared to the objects of study of other social sciences such as political science, economics, education and social work (as well as newly developed fields such as gender studies and migration studies), the object of study of sociology is more abstract and cannot be defined as a specific sphere or part of social life. Sociologists are interested in social processes such as social interaction, forms of dependence, power, social inequalities and cooperation between people. They identify and

analyse relevant institutional settings, such as the political sphere, the economic sphere, the labour market and the family. Sociologists study social processes, social mechanisms and social structures, and global processes of social change – not entire societies. This means that sociologists need to discuss conceptualisations and choice of units of research to a larger extent than other disciplines where the objects of study are less abstract. In sociological research and analysis there are many questions that need to be addressed. For example: Which are the important units of analysis: individuals, dyads, networks, organisations or social institutions? How is it possible to describe, analyse and measure social processes, power and loyalty? How can we gain knowledge about people's feelings, emotions and attitudes?

The key question to be explored by sociology today is not, perhaps, how society is possible, but rather how to study social processes and changes at local, national and global levels. Answering this question will be a major task and will require continued discussion about theoretical, methodological and topical issues and about sociology's specific contributions to the study of society.

The ongoing debate among sociologists concerning the character of the discipline – whether it has a core, what its boundaries are and its relationship to the public debate – is a strong aspect of the discipline. Vibrant debate is what is keeping the discipline young (Scott 2005). Besides stressing the need to maintain the discussion about the character of sociology, the panel emphasises the need to view sociology as a discipline and sociology as an institution as two sides of the same coin. Sociology is not just a way of thinking or carrying out research, it is also sociology departments, journals and other institutions. It is important that sociology institutions develop and protect the discipline of sociology in the multidisciplinary environment of today (Scott 2005). The panel agrees with Scott (2005, section 5.4) when he argues that “the time has arrived when the task of consolidating and maintaining the sociological imagination must be re-affirmed”. It is also important to develop sociology's contribution to trans- and multidisciplinary research in order to keep the boundaries of sociology open and flexible. But as Urry (2005, section 1.2) asserts, a precondition for “transdisciplinary studies ... [is] ... strong and coherent disciplines. There is nothing worse than a lowest common denominator interdisciplinarity”. Thus, sociology should follow two paths at the same time, continuing the debate about the discipline's focus and engaging in discussions with other disciplines.

### **Sociology in Norway**

Sociology in the Nordic countries has its roots in the European social science tradition prior to World War II. The same applies to the development of sociology as a discipline in Norway (Lindbekk and Sohlberg 2000; Lindblad 2010). The first Norwegian sociologists were trained in the tradition of Ferdinand Tönnies and Max Weber, but World War II changed the theoretical and methodological direction of the discipline. A cohort of young Scandinavian

sociologists went to the US after World War II. For many of them, the Department of Sociology and the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University served as an entry point to learn about new approaches in American sociology. At that time the field of sociology in the US had embarked on a new path, moving away from its legacy and bringing other theories and methods to the fore (Connell 1997). The transatlantic knowledge transfer included not only the returning Norwegian sociologists but also American sociologists who visited Oslo, many on Fulbright scholarships.

A turning point and foundational moment in the development of sociology in Norway was the visit of Paul Lazarsfeld, the director of the Bureau of Applied Social Research, who spent half a year at the University in Oslo in 1948. His ambition was to establish a social-engineering type of sociology but his own project was never completed. However, his stay created a discussion forum and served as a catalyst for a generation of young Norwegian sociologists who would later shape the vision of the future tasks of sociology in Norwegian society. The outcome of their efforts has been called “problem-oriented empiricism” – a blend of the Norwegian philosophical debate and imported sociological knowledge skills recontextualised in the Norwegian setting (Kalleberg 2000). The view of the task of sociology as problem-oriented and grounded in social reality is the central legacy and characteristic of sociology in Norway. This legacy is composed of constructed memories of the origin of modern sociology in Norway, often referred to as the “Golden Age”. It originates in a small group of eminent Norwegian sociologists: Vilhelm Aubert, Yngvar Løchen, Johan Galtung, Nils Christie, Sverre Lysgaard and Thomas Mathiesen. Contributions were also made by prominent women sociologists such as Harriet Holter, who raised gender-sensitive concerns (Widerberg 2000).

There were, however, some striking paradoxes in this Golden Age, which may be of some importance to understanding sociology in Norway today. In terms of organisational belonging, the primary ties of the above-mentioned group of sociologists were not to a university department of sociology but to an independent research institute, the Institute for Social Research (ISF), which was established by the researchers themselves and funded largely by sponsors in the private sector. Moreover, the ISF was an institute for social science, not a dedicated sociological research institute, and from the beginning it provided a multidisciplinary research environment, fostering strong connections between sociology, political science and (social) psychology. The ISF also implemented the problem-oriented aims of sociological research in practical research in fields such as the sociology of work, sociology of law and sociology of the family and with regard to social questions related to political experiences during World War II. Nevertheless, the identity of most of the researchers as sociologists appears to have remained very strong. This identity, however, was never codified or institutionalised.

Despite the influence of Paul Lazarsfeld and American sociology during the 1950s, the pioneers of sociological research in Norway were not particularly strong supporters of

quantitative methods. Most of the renowned studies by Wilhelm Aubert, Yngvar Løchen, Thomas Mathiesen and Sverre Lysgaard were qualitative case studies. The influence of American sociology on social theory was stronger. The concept of theories of the middle range developed by Robert Merton has had a lasting impact, despite the efforts of several researchers during the late 1960s and 1970s to broaden the theoretical scope.

In short, three factors that existed at the time sociological research got underway in Norway have left a lasting impact: first, the use of an empirical approach embracing both quantitative and qualitative methods; second, the emergence of a strong identity as sociologists, albeit in a multidisciplinary environment; third, sociology developed, thanks to support from private funding sources, as a critical discipline with a certain independence from the state.

The major contributors to the Golden Age of sociology in the 1960s in Norway defined and provided the symbolic legitimation of the field for subsequent generations of Norwegian sociologists. This identity-defining function of canonical texts is not unique for Norwegian sociology; it is a special feature of sociology in general (Outhwaite 2009). Sociology, unlike many other disciplines, has not developed as a body of accumulated knowledge. Instead, sociology has reoriented itself several times during its history. Sociology has more than any other field of science had a need to reconstruct its foundation narrative and return to the contributions of certain texts, elevating them to the status of “classical theory” that defined the core and identity of the discipline (Connell 1997). In Norway, consensus has been constructed around the domestic canon of sociological texts and this shared legacy has allowed sociologists to diverge on other major issues.

Sociology in Norway became institutionalised at a late date, but it had a strong identity from the start compared to the other Nordic countries (Allardt 1973; 1989; Mjøset 1991). Sociology in Norway emerged as a discipline with a strong professional profile and legitimacy and has not had a need to position itself vis-à-vis other disciplines. This strength is reflected in the research institutes, which have considerable independence and serve as academic training grounds not only for the university sector but for the public sector as well. During the past decades, sociology has become integrated into the discourse of civil servants and the state administration. In Sweden, for example, sociologists provided extensive assistance in the planning and evaluation of the welfare state project. However, in Norway most sociologists have remained intellectuals and professionals who maintain a certain distance from the state and public sector. Sociologists have participated in the public debate and influenced the conceptualisation of the consequences of social changes.

The creation of public sociological discussion fora for sociologists has also helped to strengthen the discipline. The Norwegian Sociological Association brings together sociologists and Master’s students in sociology. Its main objective is to promote contact between sociologists and circulate relevant information to its members. Founded in 1949, the association currently has about 850 members. The association organises an annual winter

seminar where sociologists meet to discuss sociology and socialise for three days in January. The seminar provides an informal meeting place and is a very popular event attended by several hundred sociologists each year.

There are also several Norwegian journals which directly address questions of importance to sociology as a discipline. *Sosiologi i dag* (“Sociology Today”), *Sosiologisk Tidsskrift* (“Journal of Sociology”) and *Sosiologisk årbok* (“Sociology Yearbook”) are peer-reviewed journals, each with a distinct profile. *Sosiolognytt* (“Sociologist News”) is the membership magazine of the Norwegian Sociological Association, providing information to and fostering discussion among members. The panel does not have information about the number of subscribers or readers of the journals but their sheer number is impressive and indicates that sociology is a well-established discipline in Norway and that the Norwegian sociological community has created a “public sphere” for sociology.

Wars and political ideologies, such as World War II and the social movements of the 1960s, influenced the course of sociology in the mid-to-late 20th century. Sociology in the 21st century will face challenges posed by new, more subtle trends in society. The Golden Age of Norwegian sociology continues to serve as a shared heritage and a basis for a strong professional identity for Norwegian sociologists. It has therefore been argued that the position of sociology as a discipline in Norway remains strong and unchallenged. This argument is often expressed in terms of numbers: it is claimed that there are more sociologists in Norway than in any other Nordic country (Kalleberg 2000:400). Others see this strength in paradigmatic terms: sociology as a discipline has an established legitimacy and there is widespread consensus about its object of study and usefulness (Engelstad 2000). However, this strength could bring the development of the discipline to a standstill and an acceptance of sociology’s unthreatened position leaves the discipline with few channels and processes to rejuvenate itself. In 2000, Engelstad suggested that “the daily activities go so well that there is no need to be concerned about the whole” (Engelstad 2000: 23), and he lamented the lack of critical theory or critical research and the sometimes provincial and fragmented character of Norwegian sociology.

Ten years later, the panel sees a need to address some of the above-mentioned issues in its evaluation of sociological research in Norway. At least five sets of questions related to the quality of research and the future of the discipline of sociology in Norway can be raised.

First, to what extent is sociology in Norway still characterised by key questions – theoretical, methodological and topical – raised by early sociologists? To what extent do Norwegian sociologists take for granted the strength of sociology as a discipline and its high legitimacy in Norwegian society? How fragmented is sociology in Norway today? What are the arenas for reflection and renewal?

Second, to what extent do Norwegian sociologists feel a need to set – and defend – the boundaries of sociology? This question is related to the multidisciplinary research institutes which have become important training grounds and workplaces for sociologists. Have

sociologists at university departments, research institutes and university colleges become broader social scientists or is sociology still their primary focus? Furthermore, are sociologists today “farming out” their knowledge about society, such as their methodological and theoretical skills in understanding groups, institutions and social processes and structures, to other disciplines, sub-disciplines and interdisciplinary fields? Which types of knowledge do sociologists absorb from others?

Third, how is the sociological knowledge base disseminated to society?

Fourth, what are the consequences of the new funding and planning structures? How do these affect cooperation and interaction between the academic institutions and the independent research institutes? Has the character of the research carried out by the research institutes and academic departments been altered?

Fifth, which steps are being taken and which plans are being made to recruit a new generation of sociological researchers? What characterises the career mobility of sociologists today?

These five sets of questions are further explored in this report.

### 3. Units evaluated: organisation, personnel, funding and scholarly publication

There is substantial heterogeneity among the 13 units encompassed by the evaluation in terms of institutional structure and size. The units selected include large traditional university departments, smaller departments (mostly at university colleges), independent research institutes and units that conduct more applied research, some of which are an integral part of larger organisations. They range from university departments seeking a position on the research front within their field(s) of specialisation to applied institutes using recent research results and best practices to address applied issues. The higher education institution departments have teaching obligations, whereas the applied institutes have some degree of formal ties with users of applied research. Within the higher education sector there are also important differences between the traditional universities, on the one hand, and university colleges and the institutions that have recently obtained university status, on the other. While the main activity of the latter has traditionally been teaching, many of them – particularly the newly-designated universities – are focusing increasing attention on developing their research activities. In its evaluation, the panel will take into account differences in the size and primary obligations of the units in addition to research (teaching and/or administrative duties), as well as the specialisation of and division of labour between the units.

Table 3.1 provides an overview of the academic positions of the 177 researchers included in the evaluation. It should be noted that some of the researchers have changed both position and place of work during a five-year period. The researchers are classified according to their current main position, based on the information in the CVs submitted in 2009.

**Table 3.1** Number of researchers included, by department and position

<i>Department/unit</i>	<i>Full Professor</i>	<i>Associate Professor</i>	<i>Post-doc.</i>	<i>Researcher</i>	<i>Other*</i>	<i>Total</i>
NTNU	16	6	1			23
UiB	6	8	1		1	16
UiO	18	1	3	1	1	24
UiS	3	4			1	8
UiT	4	3			1	8
HiO	3	5				8
Fafo				11		11
ISF				13		13
SIFO				10		10
NOVA				22		22
SSB				7		7
WRI				9		9
HiBo - NF	5	8		5		18
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>177</b>

\*Other includes persons with positions as head of department or rector. At the research institutes, the heads of units are classified as researchers.



At the higher education institutions the majority of the personnel encompassed by the evaluation are full professors or associate professors; there are only a few post-doctoral fellows. At the research institutes most personnel have positions as researcher or senior researcher.

### **Funding**

In recent years, the higher education sector has undergone comprehensive restructuring (“the Quality Reform”), which also includes a reform of the funding system. Whereas the Ministry of Education and Research previously calculated its funding to higher education institutions almost entirely on the basis of overhead for teaching, funding allocations are now determined on the basis of three components. Of the total annual allocations from the Ministry, 60 per cent are basic funding on average, and the remaining funding is results-based (educational component: 25 per cent (“student taximeter”), research component: 15 per cent). The research component consists of two parts: a strategic component and a results-based component. The latter includes indicators of Ph.D. production, external funding and scientific/scholarly publication.

As from 2009, the funding scheme for independent research institutes receiving basic allocations from the Research Council of Norway has been adapted to comply with some of the principles for basic allocations to higher education institutions. Basic funding is now allocated to research institutes according to a formula based on scientific results (number of publications, competitive funding obtained etc), as well as strategic institute initiatives. The new regulations do not apply to certain institutes working directly under the public administration.

The funding structures of the units included in the evaluation differ significantly. The typical funding mode for the higher education units is basic institution-oriented funding from the Ministry of Education and Research, which accounted for 87 per cent of the total funding for the sociology departments in 2007 (on average) (Gunnes & Slipersæter 2009). There are variations between the departments, ranging from 65 to 89 per cent.

In contrast, the basic allocation is usually a marginal funding source for independent research institutes (generally 10-30 per cent). Their most substantial funding sources appear to be tenders and other commissioned research activities, which are of limited importance to most of the higher education units. This pattern is, however, not clear-cut. Some of the institute sector units receive a substantial amount of basic funding. Moreover, the higher education departments are applying for external funding more frequently. Thus, the traditional division of labour and research profiles between higher education institutions and independent research institutes has become rather diffuse.

With regard to units that are part of the research institute sector, figures are only available for the institutes as a whole. These show that the proportion of basic funding (in

2007<sup>1</sup>) is particularly low at Fafo and Nordland Research Institute (13 and 18 per cent, respectively), followed by the Work Research Institute (WRI) and the Institute for Social Research (ISF) (23 per cent) and NOVA – Norwegian Social Research (35 per cent). Two units have a significantly higher proportion of basic funding: the National Institute for Consumer Research (SIFO) (63 per cent, including funding for a test laboratory) and Statistics Norway (SSB) (40-50 per cent, exact figures not available) (Gunnes & Slipersæter 2009).

Thus, there are large variations among the units in terms of the amount of basic funding received. It should be noted that there are also important differences in how basic funding is used. Some of the units in the research institute sector carry out specific tasks for the public authorities for which they receive basic funding (SSB and SIFO), while a major portion of the basic funding received by the university colleges is used to fund educational activities. It is therefore difficult to compare and draw conclusions concerning conditions for research based on funding figures. Nevertheless, the panel notes that the differences in the amount of basic funding received by the institutions do have an impact on their ability to conduct (basic) research. This has implications for the research strategies they are able to pursue.

With regard to the units in the higher education sector, there are important differences between the departments at the four traditional universities (Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), University of Bergen (UiB), University of Oslo (UiO) and University of Tromsø (UiT)) and those at the university colleges and newly-designated universities. At the traditional universities, tenured personnel devote, in principle, approximately 50 per cent of their time to research (including administration of research). At the university colleges and newly-designated universities, however, there is great variation in time spent on research at both the individual and the institutional levels. On average, personnel at these institutions are allocated significantly less time for research activities. Moreover, the tenured personnel are usually not offered the opportunity to take research sabbaticals, in contrast to the traditional universities where such sabbaticals may be granted every five to six years. These differences are related to the fact that university colleges are primarily funded as teaching institutions. The former university colleges that have obtained university status do not receive additional core funding from the Ministry in connection with their new accreditation.<sup>2</sup>

The Research Council of Norway is the most important external funding source for the majority of the units included in the evaluation. With two exceptions (UiT and Bodø

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<sup>1</sup> More recent figures for some of the institutes are lacking, therefore figures from 2007 have been used.

<sup>2</sup> In 2007 the (public) university colleges in Norway together received 44 per cent of the educational component in the annual allocations to the higher education sector and 6 per cent of the research component (Econ Pöyry AS 2008).

University College (HiBo)), the Research Council provided almost all of the external funding received by the departments in the higher education sector in 2007 (Gunnes & Slipersæter 2009).

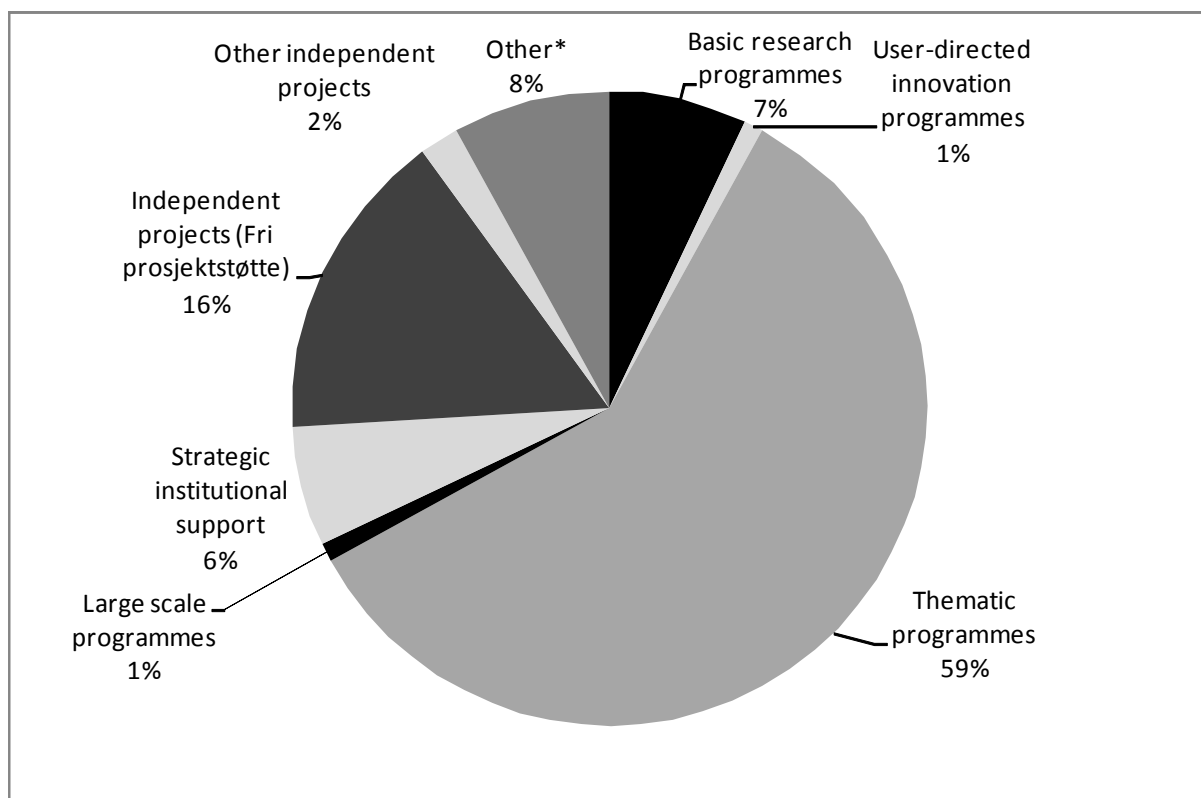
During the 2001-2008 period, the Research Council allocated NOK 410 million to projects classified as sociology research (Gunnes & Slipersæter 2009).<sup>3</sup> Almost 70 per cent of the funding from the Research Council was channelled to a variety of research programmes, primarily thematic programmes, cf. Figure 3.1. The main thematic programmes during the 2001-2008 period were Welfare Research (VFO) and Working Life Research (ARBEIDSLIV). The Programme for Gender Research was the largest programme under the category basic research programmes.

Eighteen per cent of the total funding from the Research Council was allocated as funding for independent, researcher-initiated projects.

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<sup>3</sup> Although basic funding allocated to the Centre for Rural Research is classified as funding for sociology research by the Research Council (and accounted for 5 per cent of total funding within the field of sociology in the period from 2001 to 2008), the figures have not been included here because the centre does not fall under government regulations for funding of research institutes. In addition, there are some projects classified by the Research Council as interdisciplinary that have not been included in the figures here even though they may contain sociological components.

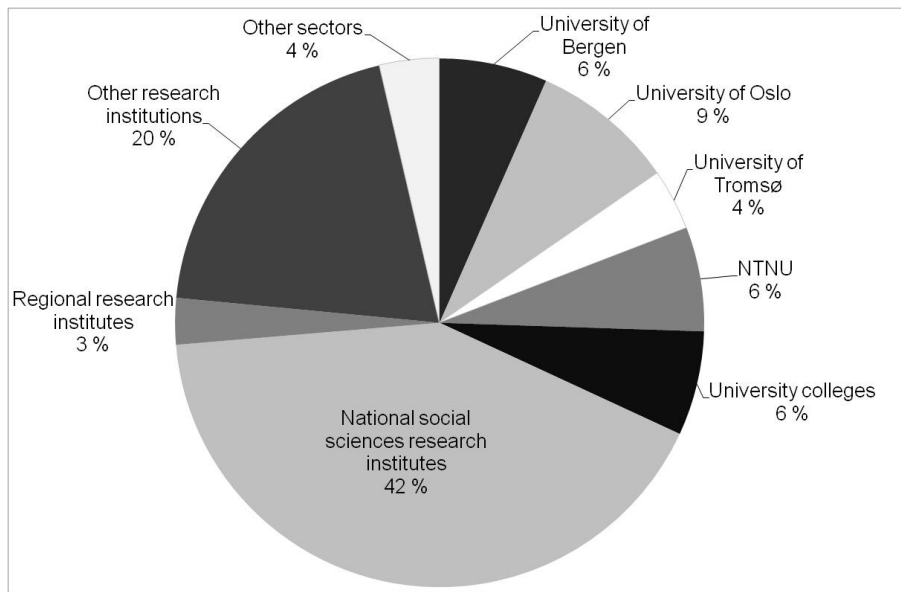
**Figure 3.1 Funding from the Research Council within the field of sociology by type of funding, 2001-2008.**



Source: Research Council of Norway, revised budgets 2001-2008. \*) Includes: special management tasks, information/communication/publication and network measures.

The distribution of Research Council funding by institution shows that social science research institutes received more than 40 per cent of the NOK 410 million allocated for activities classified as sociology research during the 2001-2008 period (Figure 3.2). Of the national social science research institutes, NOVA received the largest amount of funding within the field of sociology. Of the higher education institutions, UiO received 9 per cent, while UiB and NTNU received 6 per cent each.

**Figure 3.2 Funding from the Research Council within the field of sociology by receiving institution, 2001-2008.**



Source: Research Council of Norway, revised budgets 2001-2008.

### Research personnel in sociology

The average age of the research personnel is an indicator of the recruitment situation. A high average age for the researcher population may mean that the current academic staff is getting close to the retirement age and that there are few new recruits to fill vacant positions. In the units encompassed by this evaluation, the average age of research personnel with a degree in sociology (N= 227) is 47 years. The average age of the persons included in the evaluation (N=177) is 54 years. At the higher education institutions, the average age for personnel in tenured positions in sociology is 55 years. Of 47 full professors in sociology, 72 per cent are 55 years of age or older. In other words, 72 per cent of the professors will be retired in 10-15 years. Of the R&D personnel with a higher degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in sociology (N= 706), 43 per cent are above the age of 50. This means that there will be a need to replace some 300 researchers over the next 15-20 years.

It is clear that a substantial shift in research personnel will take place in the years to come. As the personnel at the independent research institutes are younger than the personnel at the higher education institutions, these institutes may function as a recruitment base for filling vacant positions in the higher education sector. There is also a significant production of Master's graduates in sociology which provides another good recruitment base. It appears, however, that the current production of Ph.D. graduates may be insufficient to meet the large future demand.

In terms of gender distribution, 54 per cent of the research personnel with a higher degree in sociology (Master's degree or equivalent) in 2007 were women (Gunnes &

Slipersæter 2009).<sup>4</sup> The gender distribution is quite even at the higher education institutions, with a somewhat higher representation of women researchers at the research institutes. Women were the majority in all positions, except professorships, and at all types of institutions. Women comprised 42 per cent of all professors. This is a very high proportion in both a national and an international context. The proportion of women was highest among researchers and post-doctoral fellows at 74 per cent, followed by recruitment positions (including research fellows and research assistants) at 61 per cent.

### **Scholarly publication**

One objective of the evaluation is to assess the research output of the units and its quality and impact in an international perspective. Although not without limitations, quantitative assessment of research output provides valuable information in this respect. A detailed bibliometric analysis of the research output of the units has been conducted (and published as an appendix to the report). It should be stressed that in evaluating the quality of research of the individual units it is important to take into consideration the division of labour between them or the nature of their obligations as well as their financial situation. The panel would, for instance, expect that the larger university departments produce more international publications in “leading” publication channels (level 2) than the institutions conducting more applied research, measured in total and on a per capita basis. The panel also recognises the desire and need to publish in Norwegian. Norwegian-language publications serve not only to maintain and develop a professional sociological vocabulary in Norwegian, but also to disseminate sociological findings and sociological conceptualisations to a broader public. However, international publication is important to all institutions, for both internal and external reasons. Internally it serves to ensure that research is quality-assured via the competitive process of international peer review and journal publication. Externally, it is a signal to the research community as well as to society at large that the institution is competent and meets the highest international standards.

During the five-year period from 2004 to 2008, the total research output of the persons included in the evaluation amounted to close to 1 000 scholarly publications. This includes a variety of publications, such as articles in international and national journals, books and book chapters. In terms of total research output, UiO is the most productive unit, followed by NTNU. The total research output depends, of course, on the size of the unit. There are nevertheless large variations in the average number of publications per person included in the evaluation, varying from 0.56 to 1.91 article equivalents per researcher man-year. A selection of overall figures is provided in Table 3.2.

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<sup>4</sup> Please note that this refers to personnel within the field as a whole and not the persons included in the evaluation.

When interpreting these figures, due regard must be paid to the significant differences in the ability of the various units to conduct research. Some receive very little basic funding and mainly carry out contract research, while others have high teaching loads, etc.

**Table 3.2 Summary. Publication indicators for the individual units, 2004-2008**

<i>Department</i>	<i>Number of publications*</i>	<i>Proportion of overall publication output</i>	<i>Number of article equivalents** per researcher man-year***</i>	<i>Per cent level 2****</i>	<i>Per cent English</i>
NTNU	147	16 %	1.01	25 %	61 %
UiB	76	8 %	1.02	25 %	65 %
UiO	183	19 %	1.91	15 %	48 %
UiS	94	10 %	1.64	13 %	68 %
UiT	28	3 %	0.65	18 %	43 %
HiO	33	4 %	0.75	18 %	48 %
Fafo	48	5 %	0.80	15 %	23 %
ISF	56	6 %	1.30	14 %	38 %
SIFO	41	4 %	0.66	12 %	68 %
NOVA	126	13 %	1.23	21 %	48 %
SSB	28	3 %	0.75	4 %	39 %
WRI	35	4 %	1.15	0 %	31 %
HiBo-NF	44	5 %	0.56	5 %	27 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>1.08</b>	<b>17 %</b>	<b>50 %</b>

\*) Total number of publications in the period 2004-2008, limited to the publication categories included in the Norwegian performance-based budgeting of higher education institutions; monographs and contributions to anthologies (book chapter) published at publishing houses classified as scientific/scholarly by the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR).

\*\*) One article equivalent equals one scholarly article authored by one researcher: Articles count 1, whereas monographs are given higher weight and count 5. Moreover, the figures are weighted for co-authorship by dividing the publication scores by the number of contributing authors.

\*\*\*) All of the publications of the individuals assessed have been included, with the exception of works authored by the individuals before they became affiliated with the respective units. When calculating productivity indicators the denominator has been adjusted accordingly. The indicator as also been adjusted for leaves of absence.

\*\*\*\*) The UHR classifies all relevant journals/series and publishers at two levels: the normal level (level 1) and a higher level (level 2) which is given extra weight in the performance-based funding model and only includes the leading and most selective journals and publishers.

In addition to the publication analysis, the panel has obtained data on citation rates. The accumulated citation rates of the individuals included in the evaluation (and their most highly cited publications) have been identified using the software program Publish or Perish, which retrieves academic citations using Google Scholar data. No analysis has been performed on the data, which has merely been used to provide background information for the panel.

## Part II

### 4. Unit descriptions

#### **Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) – Department of Sociology and Political Science**

The Department of Sociology at NTNU was formally established in 1971. Until the mid-1980s, the department had only six academic positions. An expansion in the 1990s enabled the university to build up a department of greater breadth within the discipline of sociology and expand the department's activities to encompass political sociology and political science. A special unit for political science was established with a Master's degree programme. As a result, the name was changed to the Department of Sociology and Political Science (ISS) in 1991. Today the department includes four disciplines: sociology, political science, sports science, and media, communication and information technology.

The ISS offers Bachelor's and Master's degrees in sociology, political science and sports science, as well as a Master's in media, communication and information technology. The department has Ph.D. programmes in sociology and political science as well.

According to the ISS homepage, the sociology unit has a staff of 40 academic personnel, of which 23 persons have permanent positions. This staff includes 15 full professors and three adjunct professors. There are 13 research fellows in addition to the permanent staff. The department also includes 17 tenured staff members in the political science unit. The evaluation encompasses 22 sociologists in permanent positions – 16 full professors and six associate professors – and one post-doctoral fellow. The gender distribution at the full professor level is seven women and nine men, and there are two women and four men associate professors.

The group of sociologists at the ISS has been recruited from a wide array of institutions. Only six sociologists in tenured positions completed their Ph.D. degrees at NTNU. Several have Ph.D. degrees from institutions in the US, Denmark, Czech Republic and the Netherlands.

#### *Capacity and funding*

One-half of the funding for research activities at the sociology unit is provided over the basic university budget and one-half comes from external resources. The university budget primarily covers the salaries of the permanent staff as well as the NTNU-funded Ph.D. fellowship, while the external funding covers temporary academic staff and the majority of



the Ph.D. fellowships. Altogether, external funding accounts for about 40 per cent of the revenues. (It should be noted that these figures apply to the entire department.) The rate of external funding for the sociologists is actually higher; thus, these sources play a very important role in funding research activities at the sociology unit. The Research Council of Norway is the largest source of external funding, accounting for approximately two-thirds of external income in recent years.

According to the interviews, 47 per cent of the total working hours in the sociology unit are devoted to research. In addition to leaves of absence from teaching financed by external funding, staff members may apply for a sabbatical every five years. This appears to be a more generous arrangement than those found at most other Norwegian departments of sociology. Nearly all staff members take advantage of the opportunity to concentrate on research for a longer period of time. The ISS encourages staff members to spend their sabbaticals abroad, and cooperates with several foreign institutions on this type of exchange. The possibility of taking a leave of absence to conduct research for an extended period is important to the staff. However, as indicated in the internal evaluation, the financial resources for stays abroad are limited, if external grants have not been obtained.

### *Research profile*

The ISS is organised into seven research groups. The research groups are well-established and mutually supportive. Participation in the research groups is voluntary but strongly encouraged, as it has several advantages in terms of improving the quality of grant applications and constructive critique of research articles. The sociologists at the ISS are affiliated with the following five groups:

Organisation and work

Family and childhood

Welfare and social inequality

Sport, leisure and culture

Media and opinion

The first three research groups clearly dominate the research activities at the sociology unit, with regard to both the number of publications and the number of affiliated staff members. Research on flexibility in work organisations, organisation and gender and time constraints in the family have comprised a main research theme of the group on organisation and work for many years. This research has contributed significantly to the understanding of the gendered work organisation and the importance of flexibility in working time for the reconciliation of work and care in families. The group mainly conducts qualitative research. Other research carried out by the group is primarily funded by external sources through applied research projects administered by Studio Apertura. This includes, for example, research on work security, innovation in complex organisations, and application of different technologies for

cooperation. Most of this research is performed in cooperation with the Norwegian petroleum industry. The Norwegian national oil and gas company, Statoil, has financed several Ph.D. fellowships during the 2004-2008 period.

Research under the group on family and childhood is focused on childhood and adolescence, the impact of divorce on children, and demographic trends. The researchers in this group have also been active in research on family and childhood in developing countries. The Norwegian Centre for Child Research is located at NTNU and cooperates closely with the group. The group's research projects combine quantitative and qualitative methods in their analyses.

The third thematic research group focuses on welfare and social inequality. The core issues addressed by this group are social class, attitudes and public opinion. For the time being, the research conducted by the group is concentrated on inequality in health and the relationship between school, education and social inclusion. A new area of research is work migration from Central and Eastern Europe and its consequences for Norwegian labour conditions. The group primarily employs quantitative research methods, using large European databases such as the European Social Survey and the European Value Study.

The other research groups also include sociologists, but they are in the minority. Research under the group on sport, leisure and culture is focused on sport in relation to social capital and social networks and sport in relation to civil society and its importance for the development of nationalism. Under the research group on media and political opinion, a couple of sociologists are active in research projects on media organisation and public perception of politics.

Outside the framework of the research groups, research activities are being conducted on health and medical technology and on the economic and social situation in the Balkans. This research combines different methods and both quantitative and qualitative data are used. Considering that the sociology unit at NTNU is one of the largest in Norway it was surprising to find that none of the sociologists included in the evaluation was an expert in general sociological theory. Furthermore, the panel found very few reflections on sociology in general in the submitted scientific production. Most of the scientific publications submitted for evaluation address special topics and many reveal a clear affinity with political science.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

Generally the sociologists at the department have well-established and sustainable research contacts at institutions in Trondheim and other parts of Norway and in other countries. A large majority of the staff members have extensive, long-standing international networks and several years of experience working on international collaborative projects. Their research has been published widely both in national and international journals. The research group on family and childhood has been very active in international sociology circles, with regard to both scientific publications and organisational activities. Initiated by researchers from the ISS,

the International Sociological Association (ISA) established a special Research Committee on the Sociology of Childhood.

The sociologists in the research group on sport and leisure are active in the ISA Research Committee on Sociology of Sport. Recently this group has been involved in the ERASMUS Mundus (Master's/Ph.D.) programme Leisure, Entertainment and Governance, which may significantly strengthen research on the sociology of sport at the department.

There are currently 35 Ph.D. students affiliated with the sociology unit. A large majority of these are employed in research projects funded by external resources. The Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology Management finances only one open Ph.D. position at the sociology unit each year. Additional Ph.D. fellowships in sociology may be awarded under strategic programmes at NTNU.

Twenty-two sociologists completed their Ph.D. degrees at the ISS during the 2004-2008 period, of which four obtained a scientific position at the department. In addition to the group of self-financed Ph.D. students, the department also has taken responsibility for educating Ph.D. students affiliated with the university colleges and research institutions. This has led to the acceptance of students in fields in which the department has limited competence for supervision. The internal evaluation conducted by the unit notes this problem, and the procedures for acceptance and supervision of external Ph.D. students have been improved.

#### *Publication and quality of research*

The 23 sociologists at the ISS included in the evaluation have a productivity of scholarly publications per person on a par with the average for the units encompassed by the evaluation. The ISS sociologists publish via both national and international publication channels. The overall proportion of publications in English is 61 per cent, which is significantly above the average for the field of sociology in Norway. Of the English-language publications, one-fourth are published in journals listed at level 2 in the Norwegian ranking of scientific journals. This again is above the Norwegian average. The publications from the 2004-2008 period are divided equally into articles in refereed journals and chapters in books – only three monographs were published. The amount of co-authored publication is 69 per cent, which is among the highest in Norway.

Most of the publications the panel examined are of high quality, and between one-fourth to one-third of the publications have an excellent standard. The record of accumulated citations shows that four of the researchers in the sociology unit are ranked among Norwegian sociologists with the highest number of citations.

Sociologists at NTNU have a strong record of dissemination to the scientific community, special interest groups and the general public. Staff members frequently appear in the media as commentators on political behaviour and in connection with elections, and several researchers are frequently engaged to speak on cooperation, organisation and innovation at private and public institutions.

### *Suggestions*

Both the quality and the quantity of research conducted by the sociologists at NTNU are of a high standard, and NTNU is one of the best institutions in Norway. However, most of the research is highly specialised. The panel recommends that the sociology unit focus more on the core issues of sociology and give priority to general sociology in future planning activities.

The panel's following recommendations regarding future appointments at the department are made with this in mind. The internal evaluation mentions that several staff members will retire in the upcoming years. The panel suggests that some of these positions be reserved for highly qualified candidates with expertise in general sociological theory. The panel also recommends that the department start a discussion about the future thematic structure of sociological research at NTNU. It may be worth considering changing the thematic focus of some of the very successful research groups to bring the research more in line with the current transformation of welfare priorities and to respond to increasing globalisation.

NTNU has a steady, satisfactory production of Ph.D. degrees in sociology. However, most of the Ph.D. students work in very specialised areas and are affiliated with externally-funded, applied-oriented research projects carried out at Studio Apertura. According to the internal evaluation, only one Ph.D. fellowship per year is funded over the basic budget of the university. In the panel's opinion, financing more Ph.D. students through the university resources will make it possible for the university to boost research on general sociological issues and make it less reliant on available external funding.

## **University of Bergen (UiB) – Department of Sociology**

The Department of Sociology is part of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Bergen. Since its establishment more than 40 years ago, researchers from the department have played an active role at the faculty and the university as a whole. Several of the social science departments at the university originated in the Department of Sociology. Today the Department of Sociology collaborates closely with units in other disciplines at the university as well as with other institutions in Bergen involved in sociological research, such as the Uni Rokkan Centre, Bergen University College, the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (NHH) and the Institute for Research in Economics and Business Administration (SNF).

The department offers Bachelor's, Master's and Ph.D. programmes in sociology. There are approximately 40 researchers affiliated with the department, including two Professor Emeritus who are still active in the department and 20 Ph.D. students. The tenured staff of 15 comprises seven professors and nine associate professors. All are included in the evaluation, in addition to one post-doctoral fellow. Twelve of the 16 researchers hold Ph.D. degrees and the gender distribution is as follows: seven women and nine men.

### *Capacity and funding*

The majority of the research at the department is funded over the basic budget of the institution. External funding accounted for 27 per cent of the department's revenues in 2009. The Research Council of Norway is by far the most important source in this context, providing 94 per cent of the department's external funding.

The duties of the tenured personnel at the department are in principle split 45/45 between teaching and research. This applies to all professors and associate professors.

### *Research profile*

As a result of a previous external evaluation and internal strategy planning, efforts were launched in the 1990s to develop and consolidate the research activities at the department. As a result of this process, three thematic research groups were established:

Welfare, inequality and life course

Migration and ethnic relations, development, poverty and environment

Work, knowledge, education and economics

Several researchers are affiliated with more than one group. Looking at the entire body of information submitted to the panel, it appears that the researchers in a given group are only loosely connected. It is not always clear why a particular researcher is listed under a particular group. The sub-themes of the groups appear to overlap to a certain extent; for example, questions relating to social inequality comprise a key topic in all of the groups.

The thematic research groups have combined research and teaching duties. Attempts are therefore made to develop and coordinate research activities with teaching activities in the areas profiled by the respective groups. The thematic research groups do not have own financing but are given financial support for organising research seminars and inviting guest speakers. The department's research committee includes one representative from each group. In addition to seminars organised by members of the thematic research groups, there are departmental seminars at which staff and Ph.D. students present their own research and general seminars with invited speakers. There are also biannual seminars at which research strategies and educational and administrative issues are discussed.

The department has a broad research profile in terms of the themes covered, the theories addressed and the empirical orientations of the researchers/research groups. Researchers focus on a wide array of topics: globalisation, migration and ethnic relations, the welfare state, family, work and education. As mentioned above, questions relating to social inequality are of central importance in the research publications.

The group on welfare, inequality and life course is the largest of the thematic research groups, and the evaluation includes seven researchers listed under this group. The focus of the group is on welfare in a broad sense and the researchers cover topics such as public welfare institutions, meetings between recipients of welfare services and services in the care sector as well as poverty and social inequality (due to class, gender and ethnicity). The group also carries out intergenerational and comparative studies in a life course perspective.

Globalisation processes are the core focus of the seven researchers listed under the thematic research group on migration and ethnic relations, development, poverty and the environment. A wide variety of topics are addressed, including the relationship between rich and poor (nationally and globally), Norwegian policies relating to citizenship, work migration and ethnic relations, and developmental studies, poverty and environmental questions. There are five researchers listed under the thematic research group on work, knowledge, education and economics. The focus of this group is more on traditional areas of sociology, such as the relationship between work and education, social class and professional organisations, economy and society, and social mobility, class and elites.

In earlier years, other areas such as economic sociology research, research on networks and women/gender research were of key focus at the department. There is less emphasis on these research areas today. For example, after the Centre for Women and Gender Research was established, a certain amount of the research on social welfare and gender carried out at the sociology department was transferred there, while other areas of research have been integrated at the department.

While most researchers at the department carry out empirical studies, there are some whose main interest lies in contributing to sociological theory. The department is known for its quantitative traditions, particularly its focus on surveys. The department has a key position in terms of using registry databases. Activities today involve a variety of methods ranging

from quantitative methods such as surveys and creation of models to qualitative methods such as interviews, biographies, observations, case studies, text/discourse analyses and mixed methods approaches.

As far as theory is concerned, the publications cover a broad spectrum of topics and eras, from classical sociological theories (Durkheim, Weber, Marx), phenomenology (Schutz, Berger & Luckmann) and theories on modernity and late-modernity (Giddens), to theories on globalisation, the nation-state and race (Gilroy) and cultural capital (Bourdieu). In addition, the researchers make use of institutional/organisational analyses and study the interrelationships between power, knowledge and resistance and between mobility and education, often with focus on class relations. Some researchers are involved in further developing previous analyses of care and care work, while others study mobility and education, often with focus on class.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

The researchers at the department collaborate extensively with other institutions in Bergen, both within and outside of the university sector. There are close links with the Uni Rokkan Centre at the University of Bergen, where several of the Ph.D. students have their workplace. The collaborative activity is often cross-disciplinary in nature, involving participants from various disciplines.

Nearly all of the researchers at the department are active internationally with regard to publication and participation in research networks and research projects. All present papers at international conferences, most have contributed chapters to international anthologies and several have had monographs published by international publishing houses. The department also supports international researcher exchange and invites international guest speakers to its seminars. Several staff members have spent a term at sociology departments in US, France, Germany or a few other countries.. It is possible to apply for a sabbatical every seven years and most researchers have spent time at universities abroad, although the panel was informed that external funding for longer stays abroad for research staff is limited at present.

There are currently 20 Ph.D. students affiliated with the department. Sixteen received their Master degrees from the Department of Sociology in Bergen, while four received their degrees from the University of Oslo. A major component of the Ph.D. programme consists of participation in courses and seminars organised by the department. The Ph.D. students themselves are free to choose their courses and many take courses at other Norwegian universities or universities in other countries, including Denmark and the Netherlands, or through programmes such as the summer school in Essex. Nine sociologists completed their Ph.D. degrees at the department during the 2006-2008 period.

### *Publication and quality of research*

The researchers included in the evaluation have a productivity of scholarly publications per person that is higher than the average for the units encompassed by the evaluation. The researchers published 76 publications during the 2004-2008 period, broken down as follows: four monographs, 38 journal articles and 34 chapters in anthologies. The researchers publish via both national and international publication channels. They publish extensively internationally: 65 per cent of the publications are in English, which is significantly above the average and the second-highest of all of the units evaluated. Twenty-five per cent of the publications were published in level 2 journals, the same as the sociology unit at NTNU. Content-wise, the panel wishes to draw attention to a few contributions in particular. First of all, there is the research on care work initiated by Kari Wærness, which has been taken in new directions, in part through a focus on new areas but more importantly through collaboration with international researchers. This research was mentioned in the interviews, as was the importance of utilising Bourdieu's theories, correspondence theory and class theory. The panel also finds that the research on global poverty and developmental ethics and the research on citizenship, migration and minorities inspired by postcolonial theory maintain a high international standard.

There is a substantial amount of co-authorship in the publications. Two of the monographs are co-authored, while 18 per cent of the chapters in anthologies and 41 per cent of the journal articles have two or more authors. Often the co-authors belong to a single research group but there are also projects (such as the book *Kvinnens arbeid* ("Women's work") from 2009) in which researchers from different research groups participate.

According to their CVs, most researchers disseminate to audiences outside of the university environment, for example through popular science articles, opinion pieces and public lectures.

Research conducted at the department is of a high quality and most researchers have a good publication record. They generally publish in Norwegian and English, while a few publish in German or French. One-third of the researchers have excellent publication records, which means that they have published articles in international/national refereed journals and monographs published by highly respected publishing houses.

### *Suggestions*

During the interview, the department's representatives were unassuming in their presentation of the department's environment and contributions. The panel finds this presentation to stand in contrast to the high quality of most of the research at the department and would like to suggest that the department aims toward taking a more active leadership in Norwegian sociology. The panel views the department's strength in quantitative methods and particular areas of research to be such possible areas.



The department's collaboration with other departments and institutes in and around Bergen is satisfactory but internally, we would like to encourage the department to see over its construction of thematic research groups. There are several reasons for this recommendation. First, there is some overlap between the groups. Second, there are differences between the thematic research groups in particular in relation to quality of publications and in this activity some are highly successful internationally and others contribute more to knowledge used locally.

## **University of Oslo (UiO) – Department of Sociology and Human Geography**

The department was established under the Faculty of Humanities in 1950 and is the oldest department of sociology in Norway. The department was incorporated into the Faculty of Social Sciences when it was established in 1963, and merged with human geography in 1996.

The department offers Bachelor's, Master's and Ph.D. programmes in sociology, and currently has an academic staff of 66. The sociology section has 20 tenured personnel, of whom 19 are professors. All except one of the staff members have earned their degrees at the department. The 20 tenured personnel have been included in the evaluation, along with one researcher and three post-doctoral fellows. The department at UiO is the largest unit evaluated in terms of the number of persons included in the evaluation. Of the 24 researchers included, 11 are men.

### *Capacity and funding*

A large majority of the research activity at the department is funded over the basic budget of the institution. However, since the department has a joint budget for sociology and human geography, it is not possible to determine the exact relationship between internal and external funding of sociology research.

During the 2006-2008 period the department received basic funding totalling approximately NOK 35 million annually. The funding mainly covers the staff's salaries (two-thirds of the tenured personnel are affiliated with the sociology section). In 2008 the department obtained NOK 16.5 million in external funding, of which NOK 8 million was allocated to the sociology section. Funding from the Research Council of Norway accounted for approximately 75 per cent of external funding. The department also receives some funding from EU projects and various ministries.

The tenured personnel at the department devote, in principle, 47 per cent of their time to research. This applies to all professors and associate professors. It is possible to apply for a sabbatical every six years.

### *Research profile*

According to the internal evaluation, the sociology section is organised into four research groups/core areas:

Social inequality

Gender, daily life and intimate relations

Culture

Organisations

The core areas are strategic research areas in which there is already considerable activity of high quality or in which there are ambitions to intensify activity. Accordingly, the core areas do not cover all of the research carried out at the department. Most of the employees, but not all, are affiliated with one or more of these areas. After the panel's discussions with representatives of the department, it became clear that these four areas are more administrative categories than an actual reflection of the sociological research conducted at the department. Much of the best research deals with problems from several of these research areas and many researchers could be placed under at least two of the groups.

All in all, the research at the department represents a broad spectrum of sociological research both in terms of the topics studied and the theories and methods applied. However, two of the core areas mentioned above comprise the main areas of research at the department. At least three of the researchers devote themselves to research on social inequality in terms of social class, gender and ethnicity. Most of this research is based on quantitative data.

The largest number of researchers are placed with under the second core group: gender, daily life and intimate relations. According to the panel's examination of submitted publications and publication lists, eight of the researchers (i.e. one-third) work mainly or partly within this area, which encompasses studies on families, parenthood and the welfare state, the concept of love, divorce and sexuality, and living conditions for children and youth. Various methods and theoretical approaches are applied in the studies, which also address certain common core questions regarding the conditions for family life in late-modern society and working life.

There appears to be less recent publication activity and ongoing research within the third and fourth core areas. The research group on culture addresses the topic in a very broad sense. It involves research on cultural aspects of childhood, consumption, ethnicity, religion and politics as well as language and technology. However, the panel does not find that culture as such is a major area of research in the department. According to the internal evaluation, the department has a long history of research on organisations, but research in this area appears to have lain dormant for some time. However, a new professorship was established in 2008, and the department wishes to renew its efforts in this area. Only one or two researchers at the department work in the core area of organisational research, but the number increases considerably if we include researchers studying topics such as the professions and the welfare state or economic and political elites. The more traditional sociology of work appears to be absent from the research agenda.

The department's sociological research profile is quite broad, and there is some important research being conducted that is not included in these four core areas. There are at least five or six researchers at the department who have made interesting contributions to discussions on sociological theory and the history of sociology in Norway as well as important contributions to the sociology of science. There is some very interesting work being done on developing sociological methods for quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis

alike, for example in terms of memory work. This research, however, is not given a prominent role in the department's presentation of itself. The panel feels this is unfortunate because the department is the largest, most central academic department in sociology in Norway and it could take more of a leading role in the advancement of theoretical and methodological knowledge and skills, especially in the education of Ph.D. students.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

The staff at the department participates extensively in research collaboration, both nationally and internationally. External cooperation plays an important role, as the number of employees is too limited to establish specialised research groups on important topics. National collaborative partners include Bodø University College, the Department of Behavioural Sciences at UiO, NTNU Social Research, SIRUS, the Department of Sociology at UiB, and others. Many researchers also collaborate with researchers at institutions in other countries. The most extensive collaboration appears to be with researchers at independent research institutes in Oslo, notably ISF, NOVA and Fafo. Several staff members have worked at these institutes themselves and maintain close contacts with researchers there; they also serve as supervisors to Ph.D. students there. Collaboration between researchers at the department and researchers at other departments at UiO appears to be rather rare. Nor is there significant pressure to cooperate within the department itself, unlike most other research institutes.

There are, however, emerging problems in the collaboration between the sociology department and the research institutes because they operate under different financial conditions. There is also increasing competition for research funding between university departments and independent research institutes.

There are currently 12 Ph.D. students and three post-doctoral fellows employed by the sociology department. There is also a significant number of individuals who are employed by external institutions and are affiliated with the sociology department as Ph.D. students. According to the internal evaluation, the department has a total of 50 Ph.D. students. Thus a large majority of the Ph.D. students work and conduct research in other research environments than the sociology department.

#### *Publication and quality of research*

The persons included in the evaluation have a high productivity of scholarly publications per person (cf. Table 3.2). Their productivity is 76 per cent higher than the average and the highest of all of the units encompassed by the evaluation. The unit publishes via both national and international publication channels. The overall proportion of publications in English is 48 per cent, which is on a par with the average. The panel believes the reason that the proportion of English-language publications at UiO is not as high as at some other university departments is not that the researchers publish less in English but that they publish more in Norwegian books and journals than the other university departments. It is also interesting to

note that several of the department's sociologists write for daily media and some participate rather extensively in public debate on social issues.

In general, the publications by the researchers at the department that the panel had the opportunity to examine maintain a high quality standard. The panel estimates that at least one-third of the researchers publish research that is clearly at the international forefront within their respective fields of sociology research. There are only one or two researchers included in this evaluation who have produced publications that the panel does not think have the calibre one would expect from researchers at this department. Almost all of the sociological researchers at UiO rank among the Norwegian sociologists with the highest accumulated citation rates according to Google Scholar (cf. Chapter 3).

One explanation for the high quality of the sociological research at the department is that competition for positions is fierce. Most of the tenured researchers at the department have had a long career at other institutes and have proven themselves to be productive, creative researchers before they come to the department.

### *Suggestions*

The panel encourages the department to take on greater responsibility for research that is more directly related to the development of sociological theory and methodology. Given the department's central position in the sociological community in Norway and key role in educating future generations of sociologists, it also needs to more consciously address central sociological questions and the development of the discipline. One way to accomplish this would be to create thematic research groups that address theoretical and methodological questions. For the future, the panel recommends that the department try to recruit specialists in sociological theory and methodology.

The panel encourages the department, in cooperation with some of the research institutes, to investigate the need for strengthening teaching activities in quantitative methods.

The panel recognises that a large proportion of all Ph.D. students in sociology in Oslo spend most of their time working at the independent research institutes and on multi-disciplinary projects. The panel is convinced that such experience is useful for learning research skills, but believes that Ph.D. students in sociology should spend most of their time in an academic environment where they have the opportunity to gain insight into a broader range of sociological theory and research.

## **University of Stavanger (UiS) – Department of Media, Culture and Social Sciences**

The University of Stavanger obtained its university status quite recently (January 2005). Until then, the school was a state university college, whose main activity was teaching. Eight researchers from the Department of Media, Culture and Social Sciences at the Faculty of Social Sciences have been included in this evaluation. Sociologists are also found at the Department of Social Studies, but they have not been included in the evaluation.

The organisational structure of the department, both in terms of teaching and research, is largely interdisciplinary. The department has six areas of focus: social science, societal safety, change management, art and culture, journalism, and television and multimediaproduction. The department offers Bachelor's programmes in sociology and human resources management, journalism, art and culture studies, and television and multimediaproduction. The department also offers Master's programmes in change management, risk management and societal safety, and art and culture, and Ph.D. programmes in management, and risk management and societal safety. Sociologists have played an important role in developing the Master's and Ph.D. programmes, with key importance attached to the incorporation of sociological theories and methods. This information was substantiated in the interview. The interdisciplinary structure is also reflected in the research that sociologists at the University of Stavanger are involved in, and projects are often carried out in collaboration with researchers from other disciplines.

There are 45 researchers employed at the department, eight of whom participated in the evaluation and represent the social sciences (three), societal safety (two), TV and media (two), change management (one), art and culture (one). Of the eight, seven are men and one is a woman. One-half are professors and one-half are associate professors.

### *Capacity and funding*

The majority of the research activities at the department are funded over the basic budget of the institution. Figures are only available for the department as a whole, making it difficult to assess the amount spent on activities involving sociologists. External funding accounted for 22 per cent of the department's revenues in 2008. Doctoral fellows at the department are mainly funded via external sources. The Research Council of Norway is the main source of external funding. In addition, the department receives minor contributions from other external funding sources. Sociologists at the department also participate in applied research projects; these are, however, mainly channelled administratively through the International Research Institute of Stavanger (IRIS).

As a rough estimate, an average of 25 per cent of the working time of the tenured personnel is allocated to research; the rest goes mainly to teaching. There is little differentiation between the academic staff in terms of teaching load and time allocated to research, with the exception of a few staff members who are allowed to maintain primary or

sole focus on research activities. The transition from university college to university has improved the overall foundation for carrying out research. This is primarily due to the development of Ph.D. programmes and supervisory functions for Ph.D. students, but also to an increased focus on and demand for research and publishing. According to the information the panel received, the department wishes to raise the research component for its academic staff to nearly 50 per cent in coming years. It was mentioned that academic staff may apply for temporary grants in connection with well-defined research projects. Each year for the past several years, one or two employees have been awarded such grants. However, the panel was also told during the same interview that it is unlikely that the allocation of these new grants can be sustained due to the department's unstable financial situation.

### *Research profile*

The research carried out at the department is interdisciplinary, where each researcher contributes in his or her area of expertise. The latter is often done in collaboration with social scientists from other institutions (local, national and international). Seen as a whole, there is no specific research profile in sociology; the questions addressed vary and there is little that binds the researchers together. While the latter is also the case for some of the other institutions included in the evaluation, most have Master's and Ph.D. programmes in sociology which gives the staff an opportunity to meet and discuss sociological questions when preparing for and conducting teaching activities. Most courses at the department are interdisciplinary, however, and sociology as an independent subject is a component of only one degree at the undergraduate level, so this applies only to a lesser extent to the University of Stavanger. There appears to be no wider forum in which to discuss questions that are fundamental to the discipline of sociology as a whole.

Various theoretical approaches are represented in the publications and the researchers can be categorised according to different traditions in terms of assumptions about the relationship between actor and structure (constructivist and realist) and micro, meso, macro levels of analysis. Whereas some researchers prefer rational choice and game theory approaches, others make use of theories of cultural capital and maintenance of gender differences with particular focus on gendered divisions of labour. Stress, competence and innovation are also studied. Methodologically, a majority of the researchers make use of quantitative methods. These range from the creation of mathematical models to comparative studies and surveys. A few make use of qualitative methods and work more exploratively.

Problem orientation is a key feature of the research carried out, which often entails that problems and questions of importance to the region are being studied. Here, research is linked closely to and also carried out in collaboration with public and private organisations located in the proximity of the university.

In addition to the above, researchers are active as “public intellectuals” (to make use of Burawoy’s term), presenting scientific works in the media through interviews and debate contributions as well as holding lectures and participating in popular science projects.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

The organisational structure at the department mirrors the profile of the interdisciplinary programmes at the undergraduate and Master’s levels. The Ph.D. programmes are also interdisciplinary, and Ph.D. students participate in the thematic research groups. Sociologists are important contributors to the research groups on societal safety and change management and participate in more general discussions about the social sciences. In addition, there are less formally organised research groups outside of the Ph.D. programmes, for example in working life transitions and social science methods.

According to the internal evaluation, the university decided to prioritise specific thematic areas for research and the development of research groups by providing additional resources to researchers and research environments with promising research projects and high research competence. This initiative from 2004 was followed up by the establishment of various programme areas at the university in 2009, the idea being that these programme areas could help to raise the level of publication and external funding and, by extension, promote recruitment of Ph.D. students. Ten of these programme areas are found under the Faculty of Social Sciences.

There are close ties between the University of Stavanger and the research institute IRIS, which is a foundation partly owned by the university. In practice, the bulk of the commissioned research is channelled through IRIS and many of the sociologists at the university have close contact with the social science section there. Collaboration has also been established with large organisations and institutions located close by the university.

The sociologists at the department collaborate on research projects with several other Norwegian universities (UiB, UiO, NHH, NTNU); they also have contact through adjunct professorships at various Norwegian universities and university colleges. There is little coordinated participation in international cooperation, but several sociologists participate in international projects and networks on an individual basis.

There is no Ph.D. programme in sociology in the traditional sense at the department, but sociology is a component of the Ph.D. programmes in risk management and societal safety and management. Nevertheless, judging by their titles, approximately one-half of the doctoral dissertations in progress fall under a broadly defined sociological umbrella. During the 2004-2008 period, there were 23 Ph.D. students at the department; about one-half of these received their undergraduate degree at the University of Stavanger. So far, four of them have completed their Ph.D. degrees. The department offers Ph.D. seminars once or twice a month where Ph.D. students are expected to present their research. Other researchers participate as well.



### *Publication activity and quality of research*

Taken together, the sociologists included in the evaluation have a very high productivity of scholarly publications (cf. Table 3.2). In fact, only one institution has a higher productivity level. In total, the researchers at the department also have the highest proportion of publications in English (70 per cent) of all of the units included in the evaluation. Most of these publications are articles (78 per cent) and the rest consist of chapters in anthologies. Sixty-two per cent of the anthology chapters and 55 per cent of the articles are co-authored (often with researchers from other institutions in Norway but also from other countries).

However, these distributions are severely skewed. One of the professors is a very prolific writer and his – often co-authored – publications account for a major portion of the total publication output. These publications, which are mainly published in English and in major journals, hold a high standard.

The theme of gender and (in)equality is addressed in studies by two of the other professors at the department. One study focuses on management, and the other on gender and household relations. These research projects make important contributions to research on these topics, and the panel finds that the comparative research on gender and household relations in particular holds a high international standard.

One-half of the researchers have published only a few articles and anthology chapters in addition to textbooks. Some of these are in a language other than Norwegian. In addition, some of the staff's main contributions are popular science publications.

### *Suggestions*

This is an evaluation of sociology in Norway and as such the focus is on the status of and possibilities for sociology and sociological research. During the period evaluated, only three sociologists were hired by the university, and not all of them are employed by the Department of Media, Culture and Social Sciences. Sociologists are active in the department, the Faculty of Social Sciences and the university as a whole, but there appear to be few fora where discussions specific to sociology as a discipline can take place. The internal evaluation, together with the information on the department's webpages, indicates that interdisciplinarity is highly valued, perhaps at the expense of disciplinarity. The panel suggests that, in order to develop sociology as a discipline, alternative fora for discussions of sociological questions of a general nature need to be established within the department and between departments at the university, as well as with other institutions in Norway and internationally.

While some of the publications are of a high standard, this does not apply to the department as a whole. The panel recommends improving the publication profiles of most of the staff. This means placing less emphasis on textbooks and popular science books and increasing efforts to publish in national and international sociology journals. Work-in-progress seminars, where (sociological) staff meet and discuss articles and book chapters that are not yet finished could be of interest here.

Ph.D. students are expected to participate in and present their work at seminars, but, as far as the panel understands, there are no expectations for senior staff to present their research. The panel recommends organising seminars where senior faculty present their work and as well as more seminars and other get-togethers where guest researchers can participate. In addition, the panel wishes to stress the importance of international exchange for the research environment at the department (and for the social science faculty as a whole). The panel recommends that the department create opportunities for academic staff to visit/conduct a stay at other universities and invite guest researchers for longer stays. To this end, the panel suggests that the department, despite its unstable financial situation, offer temporary grants for visits abroad in addition to the temporary grants earlier awarded in connection with well-defined research projects.

## **University of Tromsø (UiT) – Department of Sociology, Political Science and Community Planning**

The University of Tromsø was recently merged with Tromsø University College. As part of this process, the organisational structure was changed and the former Department of Sociology was merged with two other departments to form the Department of Sociology, Political Science and Community Planning (ISS). The sociology unit of this department, which corresponds to the former Department of Sociology, has been included in the evaluation. A rather small unit at the beginning of the 1990s, was expanded and had a staff of 10 by the end of the decade. The unit currently has an academic staff of eight sociologists in permanent positions (five full professors and three associate professors), all of whom are included in the evaluation. The gender distribution among the full professors is four men and one woman, and the distribution among the associate professors is one man and two women. The majority of tenured staff members in sociology earned their Ph.D. degrees at the University of Tromsø and have not been affiliated with any other institution in the course of their academic careers. However, a couple of sociologists at the University of Tromsø have a well-established scientific network with Nordic sociologists and on a broader scale in Europe.

### *Capacity and funding*

The majority of the research activity at the sociology unit is funded over the basic budget of the department. In the internal evaluation, the department mentions that about 75 per cent of the funding for the sociology unit comes from the university and covers the salaries of two-thirds of the staff. The unit has obtained additional resources for Ph.D. students and post-doctoral fellows from the university in recent years. Three projects have been funded by external sources during the past several years: one by the Research Council of Norway and two by the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU). Three Ph.D. students have been financed via these sources. So far, there has been limited strategic focus on obtaining external funding. However, the sociology unit would like to increase the amount of external funding in the years to come, particularly from the Research Council. All of the tenured personnel at the department devote 45 per cent of their time to research. According to the interview, it is no longer possible to obtain paid leave from teaching funded by external sources, but it is possible to apply for a sabbatical every five years.

The number of students in the sociology unit at the University of Tromsø is very limited. There are five students enrolled in the Master's programme in sociology per year and about 80 students in the Bachelor's programme, including students from other disciplines. With regard to teaching research methods, the sociology unit cooperates closely with the political science unit. This unit is responsible for one part of the methods course (quantitative methods) while the sociology unit offers teaching in qualitative methods.

### *Research profile*

The employees are given extensive freedom to select research topics and follow their own research interests. However, at present the sociology unit is trying to develop a strategy for establishing targeted research areas within sociology. With a staff of eight full-time sociologists and, according to the department, no prospect for any increase, there are only a limited number of areas within sociology in which it may be possible to establish effective thematic research groups. According to the internal evaluation, previous criteria for recruitment have been pragmatic, and the primary criterion has been to maintain diversity in the sociology unit to cover the need for teaching in sociology: general sociology, methodology, gender studies, welfare sociology, medical sociology, etc.

There are no formally organised research groups within the sociology unit but individuals have occasionally collaborated on a project basis. There is also some research cooperation with colleagues in other units at the University of Tromsø. However, the sociology unit is not satisfied with the current situation and has ambitions to increase research collaboration between the three different units within the new department (ISS).

Based on the internal evaluation and the submitted publications, it was possible to obtain information about the thematic areas and sociological specialisations of the eight sociologists included in the evaluation. Four topics are mentioned in the internal evaluation:

The modern society

Sociology of welfare and health

Gender and family research

Sociology of working life and economy

Each of these topics represents the research of one or two members of the permanent staff at the sociology unit, which means that the topics do not represent real thematic research groups but are more of a list of the issues dealt with by the unit at the University of Tromsø.

The thematic research area relating to the modern society is the area in which the unit has its most prominent scholars. Two full professors are working in this area and have published a significant number of books and articles in refereed journals covering topics such as the sociological perception of modernity, rationality, solidarity and economic sociology. Most of their work is related to theoretical discussions of the modern society and concerns development of various sociological theories. Both have comprehensive, well-established national and international networks and are often on leave in connection with fellowships or sabbaticals abroad.

The other thematic areas in the sociology unit primarily represent the research interests of individual staff members. In the thematic area relating to welfare and health the research primarily analyses patient relations in the health sector. In the area of gender and family most research concerns women and violence, trans-national marriage migration and social conditions for women in developing countries. The sociology unit also includes two members

who are conducting research on poverty in Third World countries (Guatemala and Ethiopia), respectively. An overwhelming proportion of the research carried out by the permanent staff members within these three thematic areas is qualitative and published as descriptive reports and books by university publishers. These individuals have limited publication records, and most of their publications have been published in Norwegian anthologies or internal University of Tromsø publications. Only a few examples of articles published in international refereed journals are listed in the internal evaluation.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

Scholars at the sociology unit participate in several national and international networks on an individual basis and have established collaboration with various Norwegian and foreign institutions. As most network contacts and research cooperation are individual, these do not appear to have much impact on the sociology environment in Tromsø. One important collaboration is between the sociology unit and the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU) where the unit cooperates with Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala in Guatemala and Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia.

According to the internal evaluation, the Ph.D. programme in sociology comprises 18-25 persons when both internal and external Ph.D. students are included. Most of these students have received external grants for specific projects. Therefore, many of the dissertation topics are rather narrow and have an applied character. Since 2004 seven persons have been awarded university-financed Ph.D. fellowships at the sociology unit; so far two of them have completed their Ph.D. degrees. In addition to this, several persons working at other institutions have been Ph.D. students at the sociology unit, for example persons from various university colleges and research institutes in Northern Norway.

#### *Publication and quality of research*

In general, the sociology unit at the University of Tromsø is small and the scientific framework is characterised by limited cooperation between staff members. Only two researchers stand out clearly when it comes to scientific quality and research networks in sociology outside of the University of Tromsø, both with comprehensive scientific production in sociological theory. These weaknesses are noted in the internal evaluation, and the department/faculty is drawing up a strategy for more comprehensive, effective organisation of research activities and a strategy for recruiting new staff members in sociology.

The persons included in the evaluation have a productivity of scholarly publications per person that is significantly lower than the other universities encompassed by the evaluation. The eight sociologists included in the evaluation have reported 28 publications in the 2004-2008 period. The publications are equally divided between anthologies and journals. In fact, of all of the sociology units included in the evaluation, only one has a lower productivity level than the University of Tromsø. The proportion of publications in English is

43 per cent, which is slightly below the average. The proportion of co-authored publications among the Tromsø sociologists is about one-third, which again is lower than the average in Norway, but this is not surprising considering the diversity of the unit and its rather isolated academic environment.

### *Suggestions*

The research interests of the sociology unit at the Department of Sociology, Political Science and Community Planning are narrow and highly fragmented. Based on the internal evaluation, submitted literature and the interview, the panel recommends the reorganisation of the sociology unit to concentrate research activities in core areas and focus on general sociological questions through departmental seminars. Only by upgrading the qualifications of the sociology staff at the University of Tromsø will it be possible to attract more Bachelor's and Master's students, thereby enabling further recruitment of additional staff within the field of sociology.

Based on the information that the panel received, the Ph.D. programme in sociology seems vague and too loosely structured. It is unclear how the external Ph.D. students are accepted into the programme or how the responsibilities for supervision are divided between the University of Tromsø and other institutions. The number of internal Ph.D. students is small and most of them do not appear to study core sociological issues. The panel recommends that clear guidelines for supervision and strict criteria for acceptance based on the qualifications of both applicants and supervisors be drawn up for the Ph.D. programme.

Finally, the panel suggests changing and improving the publication profile of the sociology unit with regard to publication in general and publication in international journals in particular. Only a small proportion of the staff has a strong international publication record in books, anthologies and articles; the publication record of the rest of the sociology staff must be improved significantly.

## **Oslo University College (HiO) – Faculty of Social Sciences**

Oslo University College was established in 1994, when the Norwegian regional college system was restructured and 22 smaller colleges in the Oslo area were merged. It is the largest state university college in Norway, with approximately 12,000 students and 1,250 employees. Oslo University College consists of seven faculties including the Faculty of Social Sciences, which offers Master's degree programmes in social work, economics and business administration, and international social welfare and health policy. The faculty has around 2,200 students and 140 employees.

There are 15 sociologists at the Faculty of Social Sciences, of whom eight accepted to be included in the evaluation. Of the eight, five are affiliated with the Social Welfare Research Centre, which is a research unit under the Faculty of Social Sciences. The other three are affiliated with other sections of the faculty (childhood protection, family counselling and health policy). Of the eight sociologists included in the evaluation, three are full professors and five are associate professors. Two of the associate professors do not hold a Ph.D. in sociology. The gender distribution is six men and two women. The career track of the sociologists at Oslo University College is different from that at other academic institutions. A majority have been employed at the college for a long time and only one person has previously held an appointment at a university. The others have been employed at various research institutes in Norway.

### *Capacity and funding*

A majority of the research activity at the Faculty of Social Sciences is funded over the basic budget of Oslo University College – 71 per cent in 2007. The Social Welfare Research Centre is an independent research institute and relies on external funding. Approximately 30 per cent of the centre's budget is provided by basic funding and the remainder by external funding. The Research Council of Norway is the largest source of external funding for the Social Welfare Research Centre; various ministries, directorates and the Foundation for Health and Rehabilitation constitute the other major external funding sources.

### *Research profile*

In the internal evaluation, the descriptions of the thematic research areas are found under the research profile of the Social Welfare Research Centre. The centre includes several research groups representing various disciplines –political science, psychology, anthropology, social work and law. Oslo University College will be placing emphasis on the research area of health, care and welfare during the 2008-2011 period. The Faculty of Social Sciences has six thematic research areas:

Inclusive welfare research

Childhood and youth – vulnerable groups

Professionalisation and children

Public health – inequality in health

Unemployment and marginalisation

Migration and ethnicity

According to the internal evaluation, the sociologists included in the evaluation are mainly affiliated with two research areas: inclusive welfare research, and professionalisation and children.

A number of the sociologists included in the evaluation hold positions as researchers at the Social Welfare Research Centre as well as teaching positions, and there is extensive research collaboration between the various disciplines at the faculty.

In the internal evaluation, the research profile of the Social Welfare Research Centre is described as a bottom-up approach focusing on “practitioners and users of public welfare services in relation to work, security, social benefits and child support”. In the interview, the staff representatives characterise the research of the Social Welfare Research Centre as action-oriented and pointed out that it takes a different approach to welfare issues than the welfare research conducted by economists.

In the interview they emphasise that the research carried out at Oslo University College has emerged to meet demands stemming from teaching activities and not the other way around.

Three topics characterise the research of the sociologists included in the evaluation: 1) research on unemployment analysed in relation to marginalisation and/or empowerment, 2) migration and ethnicity, and 3) health and inequality. The research carried out by the sociologists is either quantitative – public health and unemployment – or qualitative – youth, professionalisation and migration – and some involves a mixed-method approach. There appears to be little internal cooperation between the sociologists on these topics, but they have extensive contacts and participate in research cooperation with colleagues outside of Oslo University College.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

The sociologists at Oslo University College have different work conditions and their duties at the faculty vary. The college’s guiding principle is that the time allocated for research is 45 per cent for professors, 30 per cent for associate professors and 25 per cent for the rest of the academic staff. However, some of the professors are full-time researchers, while other staff members have substantial teaching obligations and still others are occupied with administrative duties. Professors may take a leave of absence from teaching if it is paid for by external funding.



Most of the research at the Social Welfare Research Centre is organised into groups and researchers have regular meetings at which they present papers and progress reports on their research. These meetings are part of the quality assessment process for research conducted at the centre.

The Social Welfare Research Centre collaborates with other Norwegian research institutes such as the WRI, NOVA, Fafø and IRIS on grant applications and research projects. It also collaborates with institutions from other countries, and the sociologists at Oslo University College cooperate closely with faculty members at Aalborg University in Denmark and Växjö University in Sweden.

The Faculty for Social Sciences has recently established a Ph.D. programme in social work and social policy. The development of the programme may have a positive impact on the quality and quantity of the research activities at the Social Welfare Research Centre. Up to now the Ph.D. students at the faculty/research centre have been affiliated with Ph.D. programmes at various universities – primarily the University of Oslo.

Five persons at the Social Welfare Research Centre obtained their Ph.D. degree during the 2004-2008 period. They were all part-time Ph.D. students and consequently the time used for completing their dissertations was long – on average 10 years. The Ph.D. students are primarily recruited internally. At the moment there are about six Ph.D. students studying sociology but most of their Ph.D. projects are interdisciplinary and/or focus on social policy and social work. Supervisors for Ph.D. students in sociology generally come from the Ph.D. programme in sociology at the University of Oslo, but other universities have been involved as well.

#### *Publications and quality of research*

The persons included in the evaluation have a lower productivity of scholarly publications than the national average for the units included in this evaluation (cf. Table 3.2). Among the submitted publications, 36 per cent are contributions to anthologies and 58 per cent are journal articles. About one-half (48 per cent) of the publications are in English. Of the journal articles, 18 per cent were published in level 2 journals, which is in line with the average. The proportion of co-authored publications is 67 per cent, which is higher than the average of 50 per cent. The publications submitted by the evaluated sociologists include only three articles published in international journals – two of which were written by the same author. The other publications comprise chapters in textbooks and doctoral theses.

The quality of the scientific research at the Social Welfare Research Centre has a special profile. Two of the sociologists included in the evaluation have a good publication record while the others have mainly published in introductory textbooks. The quality and content of the research of all of the sociologists included in the evaluation indicate that Oslo University College is a vocational college and that the sociologists' research and publications concern practice-related topics of relevance to the professionals trained at the college.

### *Suggestions*

Most of the staff in sociology has been recruited internally. In terms of future recruitment, the panel recommends that the Faculty of Social Sciences at Oslo University College try to hire sociologists externally and through open competition. This would not only strengthen the position of sociology at the college, but could also introduce new approaches to research and teaching.

The panel recognises that the research conducted by the Social Welfare Research Centre has to be applied-oriented and related to practice in the welfare and social sectors. The panel recommends that the sociologists concentrate their research activities on fewer subject areas. Two main research topics are mentioned in the internal evaluation, but the publications submitted by the sociologists indicate that research activities encompass a wider range of topics. Only a couple of the sociologists included in the evaluation have a publication record of high quality. There is a need to increase the international publication activity of the sociologists at the college.

The establishment of a new Ph.D. programme in social work and social policy could improve the quality of research activities at the Social Welfare Research Centre. However, this will only improve the quality of sociological research if sociological themes are given a clear profile in the programme. It is important that the sociologists at Oslo University College are involved in defining the competence criteria for sociology in the planned Ph.D. programme.

## **Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research**

Fafo was founded by the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) in 1982 and was reorganised as an independent research foundation in 1993. Fafo consists of two institutes: the Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research and the Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies.

As of the beginning of 2010, the two institutes had 99 employees, of whom 83 hold research positions. Both institutes have a multidisciplinary research profile. Approximately one-third of the research staff at Fafo are sociologists, while the others represent various disciplines and include political scientists, social anthropologists, economists, historians and nutritionists. On average there have been 25-30 sociologists working at Fafo during the past five years. With its current number of research sociologists (27), Fafo is one of the largest sociology research units in Norway. Eleven sociologists (seven women and four men) in senior positions (Researcher I/II) have been included in this evaluation. These researchers are all but one affiliated with the Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research, which is the object of this evaluation.

### *Capacity and funding*

Fafo is an applied research institute funded through commissioned research grants. The institute receives a basic allocation from the Research Council of Norway, which amounted to 10.8 per cent of its total revenues in 2009. Fafo carries out projects for a wide range of organisations: the Research Council, various ministries and directorates, trade unions, local authorities, business and industry, and various international organisations such as the EU, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the UN and the World Bank. Most of the projects are carried out on the basis of grants.

### *Research profile*

Fafo's research focuses on work, welfare and competence. The Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research is organised into four thematic research areas: 1) industrial relations and labour market policy, 2) social policy and welfare state studies, 3) enterprise development studies, and 4) work, inclusion and competence. The research conducted at Fafo is of a multidisciplinary character and researchers with different educational backgrounds collaborate on ongoing research projects. The sociologists at the Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research primarily address topics related to working life and welfare policy, nationally and internationally. The research is empirical and problem-oriented.

In contrast to the universities, Fafo is mainly an applied research institute and the unit does not consider basic research to be its primary focus. In its internal evaluation, Fafo

suggests that the institute has two resources that have been underutilised for sociological research: a highly qualified research staff and large, current databases. In its internal evaluation, the unit points out that it has achieved an important position in national and international networks in which sociologists participate. According to the unit, these resources could be better utilised as well – a view which the panel shares. The unit suggests that a more active profile could be achieved by securing more long-term funding from the Research Council. According to Fafo, more stable financing would enable the research unit to participate more actively in undergraduate teaching and education of Ph.D. students at the University of Oslo in Fafo's areas of specialisation.

The research conducted by the 11 sociologists included in the evaluation represents four areas of sociology: economic sociology, organisational sociology, sociology of professions and gender studies. The sociologists included in the evaluation cover highly topical issues and central issues in sociological debate, for example, new public management trends in Norway, the influence of various EU policies and practices and their consequences on Norwegian working life, caretaking work in Norway, gendered careers in Norwegian working life and the new faces of prostitution in Norway. Research findings identify the special features of Norwegian society and further theorising around the findings would not only strengthen the sociological arguments but also attract the attention of international scholars in the field.

A variety of methods are used in the research publications submitted by the sociologists for review. About one-third of the reports use qualitative research data, while another one-third use quantitative data from large databases. A third group of publications uses secondary data to evaluate the Norwegian labour market or welfare policies in a comparative perspective, generally with focus on other EU countries. The focus of this third group of studies has been to construct a typology of various governance systems that characterise collective bargaining in the EU. This kind of approach illuminates similarities and differences and further theorising around the concepts would enhance the international visibility of this research.

In its internal evaluation, the unit describes various structural mechanisms it has set up to ensure the professional development of its staff. These include both project-specific events and more general staff meetings and workshops that deal with developments in theory, methods and research ethics. The panel views these already-established mechanisms as possible venues for strengthening the role of sociology at the unit through workshops on theoretical perspectives in the core areas of the unit's research: class, gender, social inequality and citizenship.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

A large number of the projects carried out by the Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research are conducted in cooperation with other national and international research partners,

national research institutes and university departments. The institute is well-known for its international collaboration in certain research fields, for example in the area of industrial relations as well as in the areas of migration research and functional disability research.

Fafo is Norway's national centre in the European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO) network under the European Foundation for Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofund) and supplies information to the European Restructuring Monitor (ERM). Fafo participates in the Harvard Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality & Social Policy and is one of 13 European participants in the programme. Fafo also participates in networks at the EU level, for example, Baltic Welfare and Lifelong Learning 2010, the Household in Conflict Network and European Employment Observatory (EEO).

Fafo researchers participate in teaching activities at universities and university colleges and the unit considers these resources to be underutilised due to the current funding structure that ties the researchers to projects with specific deadlines and work packages. Considering the fact that Fafo's main mission is to conduct research, the panel considers it important that most future permanent research staff holds a Ph.D. degree. Fafo reports that approximately one-third of its researchers held a Ph.D. degree in 2009. The institute's goal is to increase this proportion to 44 per cent during the next three years. In the area of sociology, Fafo reports that there were six Ph.D. students in sociology working at the institute in 2010. The Ph.D. students are, in general, permanently employed junior staff who have been working at the institute for some time before they embark on a Ph.D. project. During the 2006-2008 period, three sociologists at Fafo completed a Ph.D. degree in sociology. There has been a close relationship in terms of recruitment between the University of Oslo and Fafo in the past. The University of Oslo is the single most important degree-conferring institution for the researchers working at Fafo. For example, 96 per cent of the research staff who had a higher academic degree and worked at Fafo in 2007 had earned their degree at the University of Oslo, while the remainder (4 per cent) had earned their degree abroad.

In its meeting with the staff representatives, the panel was informed that university students in sociology are not as interested in working life issues as they were before. It is therefore harder to recruit sociologists to the research areas encompassed by the institute. However, the unit collaborates with the University of Oslo to attract Master's and Ph.D. students, thereby strengthening the internal position of sociology.

### *Publications and quality of research*

The sociologists included in the evaluation have a productivity of scholarly publications per person that is slightly lower than the average of other units included in the evaluation (cf. Table 3.2). The proportion of publications in level 2 publications is about the same as the other units. A majority of the publications are co-authored, a trend which follows and is slightly higher (63 per cent) than the average of the other evaluated units. However, only 23 per cent of the scholarly publications are in English, which is the lowest proportion of all of

the units (50 per cent is the average). The publications submitted for evaluation by the panel are of good quality, although only a few of the researchers publish actively internationally. The researchers included in the evaluation address important sociological issues, but the rate of publication could be higher. Fafo is placing increasing emphasis on publishing research results via academic channels and hopes that long-term projects funded by the Research Council will provide researchers with the time to develop their reports for publication in international journals.

### *Suggestions*

In its internal evaluation, Fafo presents itself as one of the largest professional arenas for sociologists and considers its contribution to Norwegian sociology to be substantial. Fafo suggests that it has a highly qualified research staff who could take on a more active role in the education of Ph.D. students at universities. Given the sociological expertise within the unit, the panel encourages more active recruitment of Ph.D. students in sociology and recommends in particular that Fafo take on a more active role in promoting recruitment to its key areas of research: work and working life.

The panel recommends that the institute encourage and provide support for its sociological research staff to complete their Ph.D. degrees, thereby strengthening the position of sociology in its research profile.

In its internal evaluation, Fafo reports that its researchers work with nationally and internationally central themes of sociological research – class, gender, ethnicity, inequality, social change, solidarity and modernisation – and the institute considers itself to occupy a key position in the development of research on these themes in Norway. The panel finds that there is potential for further development in these research areas by increasing the involvement of Fafo researchers in national and international sociological research networks and boosting international publication activity. The panel encourages the research staff to submit more of its publications to international journals. To accomplish this, Fafo needs to secure more long-term funding for its research projects.

## **Institute for Social Research (ISF)**

The Institute for Social Research (ISF) was established as an independent foundation in 1950. The ISF is organised as a non-commercial foundation and its mission is to conduct social research. The institute has had a multidisciplinary orientation from the outset, and today comprises research within all of the social sciences, as well as history. Sociology and sociologists have played an important role in the development of the research institute, and almost all of the first generation of sociological researchers in Norway have worked at the institute. During the past several years, however, the number of sociologists at the institute has decreased somewhat. One of the main objectives of the institute is to combine basic and applied social science research.

The institute has 60 employees: 45 in scientific positions and 15 in administrative positions. In 2009 the ISF carried out 38 researcher man-years. Among the staff, 13 persons hold Ph.D. degrees in sociology. In addition, four Ph.D. students in sociology are working at the ISF and five sociologists are affiliated with the institute on a part-time basis (20 per cent position or less). Thirteen sociologists in senior positions (Researcher I/II) were selected for this evaluation, seven of whom are women.

### *Capacity and funding*

The ISF is a contract research institute and almost all funding comes from external sources. The institute receives a basic allocation from the Research Council of Norway, which amounted to 18 per cent of its total income in 2009. This basic allocation is spent on various tasks such as strategic research development, research management, competence development, and network-building. In addition, the ISF has a large project/programme portfolio funded by the Research Council, so altogether 37 per cent of the institute's income comes from the Research Council.

Other important sources of funding include ministries and government institutions (31 per cent of the income in 2009), primarily in the form of competitive and commissioned research projects. The most important funding ministries are the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, and the Ministry of Culture. In addition, the ISF received funding from professional and industrial organisations as well as a small amount of funding from international sources (2.2 per cent) in 2009.

### *Research profile*

According to its statutes, research activities at the ISF are not to be confined to particular sectors of society. Furthermore, researchers at the institute are to be engaged in basic and theory-driven empirical research with high relevance for policy-making.

Since 2009 the ISF has had three main research groups (compared to five previously): work and welfare, equality, inclusion and migration, and politics, democracy and civil society. With the exception of one, all of the sociologists included in the evaluation are affiliated with the latter two groups. Research on work within the equality, inclusion and migration group is generally conducted in close cooperation with the work and welfare group – usually in collaborative projects.

Before 2009 there was one research group especially devoted to research on gender. Currently gender research is integrated into the research on equality and migration and the research on work and welfare. There appear to be fewer gender issues addressed in the research on civil society.

There are two main groups among the sociologists at the ISF who are included in the evaluation: one focuses on migration and the other on civil society and non-governmental associations. Most of the sociologists in the research group on equality, inclusion and migration have issues concerning migration as their main interest. Parts of this research also cover gender issues. In the group on politics, democracy and civil society almost all of the sociologists conduct research on civil society and non-governmental associations. Recently, a new area of research has emerged that examines new family forms, families and households in a transnational perspective. Relations between households, gender equality and the welfare state are research topics in this area. This is an interesting new initiative and the panel encourages the researchers working in this area to develop their theoretical understanding more fully in order to make a significant contribution to this important field.

It is hard to identify a dominant or guiding theoretical perspective that has influenced sociological research at the ISF. Influences from what may be regarded as mainstream theoretical concepts in sociology today – ranging from Giddens, Bourdieu and Habermas to Foucault and Beck – can be discerned in the publications submitted for review. Common concepts in the discussion of late-modernity, such as individualisation, social capital, trust, networks, globalisation and multiculturalism, appear frequently in the publications. There is hardly any mention or discussion of post-modernism or social constructionism. Most of the theory discussions fall under the category of middle-range theory.

In the published research submitted to the panel, the panel finds that researchers at the ISF use both quantitative and qualitative methods. The overall methodological competence is high and the accumulated knowledge of various kinds of methods is one of the institute's strengths. Broad methodological competence is also one of the professional advantages of sociologists in multidisciplinary research. In the panel's talks with representatives of the institute it emerged that there is some concern that the younger sociologists' lack of interest in and mastery of quantitative methods will result in the economists taking over the quantitative research at the ISF.



### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

The researchers at the ISF collaborate with many national and international institutions. There are particularly close links to the Department of Sociology and Human Geography at the University of Oslo in relation to education, Ph.D. training, seminars and research projects. There are several professors from this department employed by the institute in the position of adjunct professor. This connection to the university has given the ISF a strong academic character.

The ISF also collaborates with the Uni Rokkan Centre at the University of Bergen. The research group on non-governmental associations in particular is involved in extensive international collaboration, and there are other research projects involving international comparative research as well.

Many Ph.D. students have been affiliated with the ISF over the years. The institute has its own scholarship positions, making it possible for employees to earn a Ph.D. in the same manner as other doctoral candidates. Ph.D. students are generally recruited among research assistants at the institute. During the 2000-2010 period, 10 sociologists affiliated with the ISF earned a Ph.D. degree.

Research is the main activity of the researchers employed at the ISF. In light of the institute's dependence on externally-funded projects, most of the researchers' time is spent on carrying out these projects. During the meeting with representatives of the institute, the panel learnt that there is a preference for longer-term projects and short-term grants are avoided. There is also a tendency not to seek out or accept projects that merely involve consultancy. The institute only accepts contract research projects and does not engage in projects whose findings are not intended to be published publicly. All of the researchers at the institute work under pressure to obtain funding for their work and this pressure is intensified by the fact that almost all of the researchers have permanent positions. The opportunity to employ researchers on shorter contracts is limited. There also appears to be some risk of an emerging division between researchers who are working on short-term projects and are under pressure to write a large number of project reports, and researchers who are working on long-term projects.

This situation may explain the career mobility of senior researchers to the university sector. For example, in recent decades, many of the senior professors at the Department of Sociology at the University of Oslo have come from the ISF.

The research conducted at the ISF is mainly carried out in project groups. There is extensive collaboration within the institute and many of the projects are multidisciplinary, involving personnel with different educational backgrounds. This has resulted in somewhat of a decrease in the number of sociologists at the ISF. In connection with the interest in research on migration, for instance, the number of anthropologists has increased.

### *Publications and quality of research*

The sociologists included in the evaluation have a high productivity of scholarly publications (cf. Table 3.2). In fact, only two units have a higher productivity than the ISF and both of them are university departments. Thus, despite being a contract research institute, the ISF has managed to maintain a high level of scholarly publication. Approximately one-third of the publications are in English, which is below the average of the units included in the evaluation (50 per cent). Publications in English are quite unevenly distributed among the researchers. There are a few researchers who have written almost all of their publications in English, while others have written nearly all of their publications in Norwegian. Considering the institute's high academic ambitions, one would expect a higher proportion of international publication among all of its researchers.

The overall quality of the publications examined by the panel is good. All of the publications hold a scientifically acceptable standard and are valuable contributions to the discussions in their fields. Around one-fifth of the publications stand out as more original and innovative than the others, and are clearly at the international forefront of research in their field. This is particularly true for some of the publications in the field of non-governmental associations.

### *Suggestions*

The ISF has been one of the strongholds of sociological research in Norway for 60 years. Having concluded its evaluation of the current sociological research in Norway, the panel believes that the institute needs to strengthen its sociological profile. Although it is important and necessary for sociologists to take part in multidisciplinary research, the panel sees a risk that continuous involvement in such research will result in too strong a focus on applied research questions and relevance for social policy. The panel encourages the unit to develop more theory-driven research approaches in order to strengthen its sociological research profile.

The institute could also enhance its sociological profile through the recruitment of Ph.D. students. The panel recommends that the institute accept Ph.D. students who do not have a background as research assistants at the institute, in addition to those who do. The panel also thinks it would be fruitful if Ph.D. students were given the opportunity to cultivate closer contact with researchers at other departments and institutes, both nationally and internationally.

## **National Institute for Consumer Research (SIFO)**

The National Institute for Consumer Research (SIFO) is the only institute in Norway solely concerned with consumer research. The institute has an applied research profile, and views dissemination of knowledge to consumer groups as an important function. Recently, efforts have been made to become more academically oriented. In addition to research, the institute carries out product testing (technical testing and quality control).

The institute was established and placed under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture in 1959. After an evaluation in 1985, it was decided to expand the scope of the institute to encompass the social sciences as well as the natural sciences and technical fields. This decision resulted in the employment of sociologists (in particular) during the 1990s. Currently administered under the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, SIFO has a staff of 55, comprising researchers, administrative personnel and engineers. The research staff of 33 is mainly made up of researchers in the social and natural sciences. Ten senior researchers (Researcher I/II) have been included in this evaluation. The gender distribution is equal.

### *Capacity and funding*

SIFO receives approximately 60 per cent of its income as a basic allocation from the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion. A substantial portion of the basic allocation is targeted towards funding a fully-equipped test laboratory and supporting the standard budget model used in public and private planning. The remaining funding comes from various sources, of which the Research Council of Norway is the most important. Other contributors include the EU, various national agencies, science and research bodies, various industrial organisations, and Nordic consumer authorities.

The information provided to the panel suggests that the researchers at the institute are free to select their topics of research as long as these are “useful for consumers” and there is funding available.

### *Research profile*

The profile of the research conducted at SIFO differs somewhat between the institute’s presentation on its website and its internal evaluation. According to the information on the website there are three research units: consumption and economy (unit 1), consumption culture (unit 2), and technology and environment (unit 3). The research carried out by the units is project-based and there are close ties between persons with various educational backgrounds, including sociology, political science and social anthropology. Researchers often collaborate and most researchers are engaged in more than one project at the same time.

Much of the research is interdisciplinary, meaning that researchers from various disciplines work together on the same project. One-half of the researchers included in the evaluation come from unit 1, which is not surprising as sociologists comprise the majority of the employees in this unit. Two researchers come from unit 2 and unit 3, respectively, and one researcher included in the evaluation does not belong to any unit because he is presently head of the institute.

While consumption and consumer questions are the main focus of the institute, the researchers included in the evaluation have many different areas of specialisation. There is, in other words, no specific approach or theme that dominates the research projects. In addition to the breadth of research questions and topics, there are differences in the levels of analysis and theories selected for use in research at the institute.

While a number of publications lack an overriding theoretical perspective, there are other works that focus solely on sociological theory. This is most apparent in the three doctoral dissertations but also applies to a few of the other publications. In the monographs, articles and book chapters, the analyses are rooted in phenomenology (Schutz, Berger & Luckmann, and even Wittgenstein), poststructuralism (Foucault) and microsociology (Goffman).

There is no distinct pattern as far as methods are concerned. In the publications submitted for evaluation, five researchers combine qualitative and quantitative methods, three only use quantitative methods and two use qualitative methods. More traditional methods are often used, such as surveys, interviews (individual and group) and observations, but one researcher makes use of the dimensions of space and place to analyse consumption in specific social contexts.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

SIFO collaborates extensively with institutions outside of Norway. Its researchers participate in several Nordic projects, first and foremost under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The institute's researchers have also participated in numerous EU projects, and collaborate in particular with researchers from England and Finland. Although the institute takes part in several national networks, overall cooperation with other Norwegian institutes and university departments is limited. There is some collaboration with the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (NHH) and the Norwegian School of Management (BI), but little or no collaboration with the sociology departments in Norway. The main explanation provided for this lack of contact is that consumer research in Norway is almost non-existent outside of SIFO. According to the internal evaluation, the institute has ambitions to develop closer links to the universities, particularly the University of Oslo.

There are currently five sociologists working on Ph.D. projects at SIFO. This includes persons who have been hired to fill advertised Ph.D. positions and persons already working at the institute who have been given the opportunity to pursue a Ph.D. The Ph.D. students receive their discipline-oriented training at a university, but are also educated by senior staff

and/or participate in research projects and research units at SIFO. Five candidates earned their Ph.D. degrees in sociology during the 2004-2008 period, and all became permanently employed by the institute after completing their degrees.

### *Publication and quality of research*

The most common form of publication at SIFO has been reports. All of the researchers have authored reports, and some have authored a large number of them. All of the reports are written in Norwegian. All of the researchers have contributed articles and chapters to anthologies. A number of researchers have also participated in the writing of reference books. According to the interviews with representatives of SIFO, there is some tension in the interface between the various goals of the institute as well as a lack of clarity regarding which users the institute should target. Earlier, in part due to the fact that funding agencies were often only interested in reports and particularly Norwegian-language reports, these comprised the most important form of publications. During the last four years, however, the proportion of reports as a form of publication has declined considerably.

The researchers publish extensively internationally and, along with the researchers at the University of Stavanger, have the highest proportion of publications in English (68 per cent) of all of the units included in the evaluation (cf. Table 3.2). The institute is in a better financial position than other institutes due to the high proportion of basic funding, so this level of productivity is not unexpected. But viewed in the context that one of SIFO's key tasks is to disseminate research findings and test results to consumers and consumer organisations (among other organisations), and that all of the researchers are involved in writing reports, this level must be considered high. These international publications taken together with participation in international conferences and research projects suggest that the institute's sociological researchers contribute significantly on the international research front. It also indicates that the institute's attempts to professionalise and move in a more academic direction by providing support – in the form of funding and networks – to develop the skills needed for writing articles has paid off.

There are, however, major differences in relation to publication among the researchers. Firstly, if we place the researchers along a continuum, with those who have produced a large number of English-language articles and articles in refereed journals at the one end and those who have produced only one or two articles in a foreign language at the other, we see that most of the researchers are located somewhere in the middle. Secondly, only 12 per cent of the publications are published in level 2 journals – the lowest proportion of all of the institutions included in this evaluation. The panel advises the institute to continue its attempts to develop its researchers' writing skills.

However, in general, the research holds a high standard and the researchers make important contributions to their particular fields of study. The panel finds some of the research particularly exciting and original, including the research on space, place and consumption and

the attempts to change traditional thinking around standard budgets. Still, while the contributions to the field of consumption are more than satisfactory, the contributions to the discipline of sociology are more limited.

### *Suggestions*

The panel recommends that SIFO strengthen its sociological profile. There are several ways to achieve this. First, researchers at the institute could participate in seminars at the Department of Sociology and Human Geography at the University of Oslo as well as create ties to researchers at other sociological institutions in Norway. Second, researchers at the institute could participate in informal networks and at national and international conferences with specific focus on sociology, and sociologists could be invited to participate in seminars organised by the institute. Third, sociology as a discipline could be made more visible at the institute itself.

The institute's attempts to professionalise and raise its academic profile by providing support – in the form of funding and networks – to develop the skills needed to publish internationally have paid off. The panel suggests that the institute continue its efforts to move away from internal reports as the main form of publication and move towards publication in professional journals and international monographs.

## **Norwegian Social Research (NOVA)**

The Norwegian Social Research Institute (NOVA) was established in 1996 under the auspices of the Norwegian Ministry of Education (through a merger of four independent research institutes), and is one of the largest social research institutes in Norway. The aim of the institute is to develop knowledge about social living conditions and an understanding of the processes and consequences of social change. This is achieved by conducting research on the level of living conditions and quality of life and on programmes and services provided by the welfare system in Norway. Researchers at NOVA represent a variety of disciplines, but a majority of the personnel have their educational background in sociology or psychology. The institute has 106 employees, including 15 persons in administrative positions. The current head of research at NOVA is a sociologist. Twenty-two sociologists (one-half are women, one-half are men) who hold senior positions (Researcher I/II) have been included in this evaluation. In terms of the number of sociologists to be evaluated, NOVA is one of the three largest units encompassed by the evaluation.

### *Capacity and funding*

NOVA is an independent research institute and its funding comes to a large extent from commissioned research projects. The institute receives a basic allocation from the Ministry of Education and Research, and the Ministry provides additional funding for strategic research programmes (9 per cent of the total income in 2008). The institute's turnover was NOK 79 million in 2008 and NOK 89 million in 2009.

NOVA carries out projects for a wide range of public organisations and private sector agencies. Project funding under programmes at the Research Council is the single most important source of funding (NOK 10 million in 2008 and NOK 17.5 million in 2009). In 2008 various ministries and directorates accounted for 23 per cent of total funding, local authorities for 27 per cent, the private sector for 12 per cent and international organisations for 18 per cent.

### *Research profile*

In its internal evaluation, the research conducted at NOVA is characterised as empirical, problem-oriented and action-oriented. The individual researchers work in research groups that are organised around a specific theme. There are currently six thematic research groups at NOVA: 1) child and youth welfare, 2) youth, 3) ageing and the life course, 4) welfare governance and health behaviour, 5) migration and transnationality, and 6) comparative welfare policy.

The sociologists included in the evaluation address research topics that fall under a wide range of categories: child day-care and child welfare services, immigrant youth, youth unemployment, gender and sexuality, elderly care, comparative welfare policy, inequalities in health, and disability. Most of the thematic groups have defined their research approach in multidisciplinary terms and the panel was informed by the staff representatives that sociologists, who generally emphasise structural and institutional factors, might not fit into a research group that, for example, was dominated by researchers who utilise an individualising approach. Sociologists at NOVA primarily work with topics related to the institutional aspects of welfare state services, for example home care services for the elderly and services for children and youth.

Sociologists at NOVA use both quantitative and qualitative methods and, according to the staff representatives, the researchers relate pragmatically to the use of both methods. The representatives point out that researchers who are highly skilled in either quantitative or qualitative methods are hard to find and recruit to the institute.

The main methodological approach used in the submitted publications is quantitative (one-half of the researchers), and the publications demonstrate high-level methodological skills. A number of the researchers included in the evaluation have used a qualitative approach in their studies but these researchers have not published as extensively in international fora as those who have used quantitative methods.

Most projects at NOVA have short-term funding and, according to the staff representatives, there is generally little time to develop the analysis in a publication that could contribute to general social theory. A range of general theories are used in the publications submitted by the NOVA sociologists. Most of the publications are, however, anchored in middle-range theory – an area in which the staff representatives believe that research institutes like NOVA can make a substantial contribution. In the panel's opinion, the quality of the research conducted at the unit and the competence of its senior researchers is sufficiently high to allow the unit to take a more active role in generating general theory around key issues addressed by the unit: welfare systems, inequalities in health, family and youth sociology. There is international interest in the Nordic model of the welfare state, Nordic family policy and the Nordic health care system, and sociologists in Norway could take a leading role in theory development around these issues.

According to the staff representatives, the skills of NOVA sociologists are not used optimally in multidisciplinary projects at NOVA. The use of the sociologists' specialist knowledge is linked to the institute's funding structure. In the meeting with the panel, the staff representatives stated that funding agencies are not specifically looking for a sociological approach, but rather a broader social science perspective on the social issues to be examined and funded.

In the internal evaluation and in discussions with the panel, globalisation and environmental issues were flagged as new directions for NOVA research. Sociology may



provide a central analytical perspective in these new priority areas, giving the sociologists the opportunity to further strengthen the role of sociology in NOVA research.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

Thirteen of the 22 NOVA researchers included in the evaluation reported in the internal evaluation that they participate in larger-scale national and/or international projects. The sociologists at NOVA participate in interdisciplinary and subject-specific fora (from research groups at NOVA to international networks and associations). They cooperate extensively with colleagues from other disciplines and specialist areas. For example, they collaborate closely with researchers examining poverty and material deprivation in the UK and researchers focusing on work and social inequalities in health, gender and well-being, and disability in Europe, as well as with Nordic and other European researchers studying the Nordic welfare model and civil society and citizenship in Europe.

While much of NOVA sociologists' international cooperation has focused on the Nordic countries and Europe, collaboration targeting areas of the world outside of Europe is growing, and involves partners such as Canada, the US, China and Russia.

There are currently 14 Ph.D. students at the institute who represent different social science disciplines. They are employed for a four-year period and are expected to devote 25 per cent of their time to duties other than research at the institute. Nine researchers at NOVA, most of whom are sociologists, have completed their Ph.D. degrees during the 2006-2008 period. There is a division of labour between NOVA and the University of Oslo: the Ph.D. students in sociology at NOVA take their graduate courses at the Department of Sociology and Human Geography at UiO, and they have a supervisor from the department as well as a mentor from their NOVA project. This division of labour in training sociologists has both strengths and weaknesses. The Ph.D. students are supposed to learn their research skills while working with senior researchers at NOVA, but a number of the Ph.D. students have in fact worked at NOVA for a while and their ties to the academic environment have become gradually weaker. In a multidisciplinary environment such as NOVA, students working on a dissertation in sociology may find that the central sociology skills of the sociologists have become dulled because of the "social science approach" emphasised at NOVA.

NOVA has been and continues to serve as an important training ground for Ph.D. students in sociology and the institute is one of the foremost recruitment channels for a new generation of sociologists. In 2007, 93 per cent of the research staff employed at NOVA had received their higher academic degree from the University of Oslo.

#### *Publication and quality of research*

The sociologists included in the evaluation have a high productivity of scholarly publications (cf. Table 3.2). Despite being a contract research institute, NOVA sociologists have managed to maintain a high level of scholarly publication and only three units included in this

evaluation have a higher productivity than NOVA. Approximately one-half of the publications are in English, which is on a par with the average of the units included in the evaluation. The proportion of publication in level 2 publications (21 per cent of all publications from 2004 to 2008) is slightly higher than that of the sociologists in other units encompassed by the evaluation. A majority of the publications are co-authored, a trend in line with the average of the evaluated units.

It is somewhat surprising that four of the 22 researchers included in the evaluation have submitted their doctoral dissertations as one of their main publications. The panel also notes that five (23 per cent) of the researchers included in the evaluation do not have a Ph.D. degree. The panel recommends that researchers who hold senior positions (Researcher I/II) have a Ph.D. degree. The different educational backgrounds of the researchers are also reflected in the publication output. About one-half of the researchers included in the evaluation have an international publication profile. There is a skewed performance level among the researchers included in the evaluation: three of the researchers have a high international publication profile, while about one-third of the researchers have not published very much during the past five years. For example, the sociologists at NOVA who conduct research on social determinants of health and research on the welfare state and citizenship are at the international forefront of their fields. Another example of Nova's strong position in welfare research is its inclusion in larger-scale research collaborations. In the 2007-2012 period, NOVA is leading a Nordic Centre of Excellence in Welfare Research financed by NordForsk entitled 'Reassessing the Nordic Welfare Mode'.

### *Suggestions*

Thematically, the sociological research conducted at NOVA deals with the key issues and major structural changes underway in Norwegian society: changes in welfare state policies, changes in the meaning of citizenship, and new forms of inequality that influence a variety of social groups and pose the challenge of redefining old social categories in order to account for and understand new forms of inequality. At NOVA a small group of the evaluated sociologists has a high international profile in research networks and publications addressing these issues. The panel encourages other NOVA sociologists to follow their example.

While many units included in the evaluation conduct research on the Nordic welfare state, family policies, gender and youth, few other units besides NOVA (e.g. HiO, UiT, NTNU) conduct sociological research on health. A further strengthening of sociological research on health and a broadening of this theme to include qualitative and intersectional approaches could both fulfil society's need for information on health inequalities and contribute to the culture of health in Norwegian society. Further collaboration with other units within Norway on topics related to the sociology of health and illness would strengthen this area of sociological research in Norway.

The panel encourages NOVA to continue to serve as a training ground for Ph.D. students in sociology. Its unique databases, highly skilled staff of sociologists and close relationship with the University of Oslo could be used more optimally for the recruitment of a new generation of sociologists to academic careers in sociology by providing Ph.D. students with the opportunity to learn more about other types of sociological research.

## **Statistics Norway (SSB) – Research Department, Division for Social and Demographic Research**

Unlike most other statistical agencies, Statistics Norway has its own specialised research department. The department mainly carries out research on economics and has a staff of approximately 90. One division of the department focuses on social and demographic research, and the sociologists in this division have been included in the evaluation. The division consists of a permanent staff of 19 persons, of whom the majority are sociologists, but there are also demographers, economists and persons with other educational backgrounds. In addition to the permanent staff, several persons are affiliated with the division on a 20 per cent basis. Seven researchers have been included in this evaluation: four women and three men. Most of them have been employed at the unit for more than 10 years.

The division does not have a formal group structure. It is organised into three research areas: fertility and changes in family structure, living conditions and social participation, and population trends, migration and mortality. Many of the projects have participants from two or three of these research fields. The sociologists included in the evaluation are associated with research fields 1 and 2.

### *Capacity and funding*

During the past 10 years, 50-60 per cent of the division's staff have been employed on the basis of external funding. Although the division has a high rate of internal funding compared to the independent research institutes, the "freedom" to spend this funding is limited, as it has been provided for public services and monitoring of demographic trends.

The main sources of external funding are the Research Council of Norway and various ministries. On average, funding from the Research Council accounts for approximately one-half or slightly more of the external funding.

Staff members in the division have some compulsory duties related to demographic monitoring that would not be considered research. However, on average, they spend around 90 per cent of their time on research-related activities. Thus, compared to most other units, the conditions for carrying out research appear to be very good.

### *Research profile*

The research is defined as taking place in the interface between demographics and studies of living conditions. The research method comprises quantitative studies based on data from Statistics Norway, often using registry data and sometimes employing comparative methodology. Thus, the ambition of the unit is not to advance sociological theory as such but rather to use existing data to contribute to quantitative sociological-demographic thinking; perhaps many of the researchers view themselves more as demographers than sociologists.

In general, the research at the unit encompasses quantitative, often registry-based analyses – or combined registry and survey data – of large data sets on living conditions in the broadest sense of the word. Norway's relatively unique situation in relation to high-quality registry data and the ability to combine registry data and surveys are important for the research at the unit, and hold the potential to attract greater international attention. The unit is already engaged in activities in this area, which may be further developed in the future.

There does not appear to be a more specific overall theme governing the topics pursued by the individual researchers. Research topics include, for example, suicide, families, fertility and family policy, immigrant settlement patterns and refugee transition to ordinary employment.

The focus on large data sets and quantitative methodology means that the unit has a relatively unique position within Norwegian sociology. The unit's research areas appear to be quite general and the research at the unit addresses relatively diverse topics. The unit's research seems to be primarily united by the methodology used, which is generally quite advanced and employs not only more commonly-used statistical techniques but several less-well-known techniques as well. The unique data situation has made it possible to uncover important tendencies in Norwegian society and has also resulted in publications in international journals.

According to the staff, the unit fills a gap in Norwegian sociology in the sense that quantitative sociology has a weaker position at other institutions and universities. In the view of the staff members, quantitative sociology is given somewhat low priority at the University of Oslo and they fear that it may be difficult for the unit to recruit qualified researchers and students. They also feel that some sociologist colleagues consider members of the unit to be merely data providers rather than researchers on equal terms.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

After a number of organisational changes, the unit's present organisational position was established in 2008. The profile of the unit is related to living conditions and demographic research. It is a multidisciplinary unit manned by economists and sociologists. Of the approximately 20 staff members, four have earned a Ph.D. degree during the 2006-2008 period, and three others will defend their doctoral dissertations in 2010. Several of the Ph.D. projects have received strong support from internal sources.

The division is located in an environment dominated by economists and collaborates with many other units within SSB. Outside of SSB, NOVA has been an important collaborative partner, as have other research institutes (e.g. Agder Research, Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR), Fafo and Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)). The division collaborates internationally, particularly within the field of demographic research. Partners abroad include institutions such as United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute

(NIDI) and Institut national d'études démographique (INED). The division also takes part in formal collaboration projects through organisations such as the Council of Europe and Eurostat.

The unit has a collective research culture and an elaborate meeting structure (administrative as well as scientific meetings). The initiative to establish new research projects has mainly been taken by members of the unit, but the unit is also under some pressure from the general organisation at SSB to participate in the development of quality assessment and other tasks in relation to the production of statistics.

Most of the researchers included in the evaluation have relatively high seniority, and the unit is aware of the need for long-term planning and recruitment.

### *Publication and quality of research*

The sociological-demographic research profile and the use of advanced statistics on large data sets make much of the unit's research quite unique in the Norwegian sociological landscape. In particular, studies of families in the modern welfare state (including the position of fathers) appear to be an interesting line of research. This is probably the area in which the unit is most strongly associated with international research networks.

There has not been a strong tradition of academic publication at the unit and the main focus has been on producing reports. However, the situation has changed recently. The publication analysis shows that the staff has published in a variety of national and international journals. The persons included in the evaluation have a productivity of scholarly publications per person on a par with the majority of the independent research institutes (cf. Table 3.2). Thirty-nine per cent of the publications are in English, which is somewhat lower than the average for the units included the evaluation (50 per cent). There are very few publications published in and by highly-ranked (level 2) journals and publishers (4 per cent). In addition to the scholarly publications, a relatively large number of articles are published in journals published by Statistics Norway. This is part of the unit's obligation to disseminate research results to relevant stakeholders and Norwegian society at large.

### *Suggestions*

The unit does not have a clear sociological profile, and based on the internal evaluation the panel gets the impression that developing sociological research per se is not one of the unit's research goals. The panel believes that the unit has the potential to contribute more than it does today to the development of sociological theory and concepts, as it has easy access to high-quality data. This would probably mean concentrating research activities in specific fields. The panel also has the impression that the division views its mission as encouraging Norwegian sociologists to use registry data (combined with survey data). The unit's staff has comprehensive knowledge about the relatively unique opportunities for research based on Norwegian registry and survey data. The panel recommends that the unit address the problem

of how to become more integrated into the Norwegian sociological community, for instance by offering courses for Ph.D. students in sociology or perhaps offering general courses for social scientists interested in quantitative studies. The unit should also capitalise on the high quality of the registry data to attract international researchers to conduct research stays.

The panel finds the division's organisation into three research fields relatively arbitrary, and it is unclear how this structure helps to strengthen the research carried out. The unit should discuss whether the organisation into these particular areas is optimal.

The panel recommends that the unit discuss whether the present research profile is adequate, particularly in light of the fact that the division will soon have to recruit new staff.

The panel supports the unit's initiatives to strengthen international publication activity and has noted progress in this area.

## **The Work Research Institute (WRI)**

The Work Research Institute (WRI) is a social science institute that conducts multidisciplinary research, often with an action-oriented approach. Since its establishment in 1964, the institute has placed strong emphasis on action research and has been a pioneer in developing this research tradition. It became a government limited company in 2004, and has been administered by the Ministry of Education and Research since 2005.

The institute currently has 49 employees, of whom 39 hold research positions. The majority of the personnel are educated as sociologists (25 persons). There are also employees with various educational backgrounds in the social sciences and the humanities. Nine sociologists in senior positions (Researcher I/II) were selected for this evaluation, five of whom are women.

### *Capacity and funding*

WRI is a contract research institute and its funding comes for the most part from commissioned research projects. The institute receives a basic allocation from the Research Council of Norway, which amounted to 13.6 per cent of its total income in 2009. This funding is spent on competence development, scientific publication and development of cooperation with the higher education sector as well as internationalisation activities. The most important external funding sources for WRI are the government administration (ministries etc.) and the Research Council, whose contributions amounted to 41 per cent and 25 per cent of the funding for new contracts in 2009, respectively. Most of the projects are awarded on the basis of tenders. In addition, the institute receives funding from the private sector (the process industry, the food industry, media corporations and industry unions), as well as from international enterprises and organisations such as the EU and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

### *Research profile*

Research at the institute focuses on several thematic areas within working life and is organised into two research groups:

Organisational development and innovation

Participation, inclusion and organisation

Although a majority of the researchers at the institute are sociologists, the institute itself is multidisciplinary and its main focus is organisational research. All of the researchers are involved in multidisciplinary projects. Sociological competence as such is not as important to the researchers as an interest in questions concerning the organisation of working life.



While WRI is theoretically and methodologically positioned within the traditional social sciences, action research is still a living tradition at the institute, and most of the publications the panel received for evaluation refer to some form of action research. Today, action research is closely connected to the study and evaluation of change processes, and comprises a natural part of such studies. According to the interviews with researchers at the institute, their research is generally conducted in close contact with various actors in their research field. The results are reported to these actors, often through direct dialogue. However, in most cases the written report and research publications from these projects addresses a broader segment of the field.

Much of the research at WRI concerns the public sector, and there is particular interest in studying new forms of work organisation. The institute does not, however, have a well-defined research strategy or a pronounced interest in conducting research on specific sectors of working life. The institute is very dependent on the actual demand for research in its fields.

The institute largely conducts applied research. The ambition of the researchers included in the evaluation is not primarily to develop theories or new concepts as such but to develop a new and better understanding of the field being researched. The focus of the institute lies in exploring how theories and knowledge may be used to improve working conditions and organisational structures.

However, in terms of action research, one of the leading researchers at the institute has made interesting contributions to the international theoretical discussion on the current status and concept of action research. There seems to be an active desire at the institute to develop and use action research strategies in various contexts.

Most of the publications the panel has seen apply some kind of qualitative methodology, but there are also examples of quantitative analysis. The institute does not have a specific strategy in terms of methodology, but action research has traditionally been grounded in qualitative research techniques. According to the internal evaluation, there is increasing interest in research that combines quantitative and qualitative methods.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

WRI collaborates extensively with national and international organisations. During the past five years, part of the institute's strategy has been to increase such cooperation. In particular, WRI collaborates with other Norwegian actors within the field of sociology of work, both other research institutes and university departments. Yet, in the panel's talks with representatives of the institute they complained that there appeared to be less interest in this field among academic institutions. Recently, the institute has introduced the strategy of collaborating with other research institutes on all grant applications submitted to the Research Council. There are problems when it comes to cooperation with university departments on teaching activities because the universities and WRI operate under very different financial conditions.

Internationally, the institute is engaged in various projects and networks. Two areas have been of particular importance: poverty, social welfare and social policy, and industrial relations. Representatives of the institute have also had a central position in an international network of action researchers.

During the 2004-2008 period, five employees (sociologists) were Ph.D. students; three of them have defended their doctoral dissertations so far. There are currently two employees at the institute working on Ph.D. projects in sociology. The WRI's recruitment strategy is to employ researchers with Ph.D. degrees and the skills to manage and perform contract research. There is a collective organisation of work at the institute, and all of the researchers are members of several project teams concurrently.

### *Publication and quality of research*

The researchers included in the evaluation have a productivity of scholarly publications per person that is slightly above the average for the units encompassed by the evaluation. The unit publishes via both national and international publication channels, but on the whole national publications dominate and the proportion of publications in English is 31 per cent, which is significantly lower than the average. None of the publications assessed within the framework of this evaluation have been published in the more prestigious level 2 publications. Several of the researchers included in the evaluation list more internal reports than other publications in their publication lists.

The scientific quality of the publications the panel has examined is uneven. A couple of the publications have a high international standard and are of more general interest. However, the quality of the published research varies considerably, and many of the publications submitted for the evaluation are internal reports and reports intended for those who have funded the research project, which is a result of the type of projects in which most researchers at WRI are involved.

### *Suggestions*

The focus of the research carried out at the Work Research Institute is, as the name indicates, the world of work. The institute's research profile has been highly influenced by its commitment to action research. This approach, which once had a central position in sociology in Norway, has lost its stronghold in sociological research, as has the status of the sociology of work in general. Much of the research at the institute is conducted in close contact with specific organisations and employers and the results are primarily reported to the parties involved. The panel recommends that the researchers at the WRI adopt a more general approach to the study of working life in Norway.

The study of work remained central to the discipline of sociology through the 1960s. Today, some sociologists are asking: "Where is the sociology of work in the discipline of sociology?" The panel also poses this question and sees the opportunity to more actively

profile the sociology of work, not only in the research conducted at WRI but also in Norwegian research in general. WRI, together with other research institutes such as Fafo and SIFO, could take on an active, leading role in addressing how current working conditions are related to globalisation, marginalisation, new forms of segregation at work, risk, identity and consumption. The panel recommends more intensive publication in international fora to encourage sociologists at WRI to address some of the key theoretical issues related to these themes.

## **Bodø University College – Nordland Research Institute**

The sociologists at Bodø University College (HiBo) and Nordland Research Institute (NF) have been evaluated together. The institutions prepared a joint internal evaluation and there are close links and forms of collaboration between them. Nevertheless, there are also important differences in relation to the type of research conducted, working conditions for employees, teaching obligations etc.

Taken together there are approximately 100 social scientists (including Ph.D. students) affiliated with the Faculty of Social Sciences at HiBo and NF. Nineteen sociologists in senior positions were selected from the two organisations for this evaluation. Fourteen have their main workplace at HiBo, while five work at NF (both research units).

Most of the researchers from HiBo included in the evaluation are employed in the section for sociology (10 researchers, of whom five are women and five are men). There are also research sociologists in other units: one man in the section for history, one woman in the section for social work, and one man in the section for political science and governance. Five researchers (four women and one man) are employed by Nordland Research Institute.

Sociology has been a key discipline at Bodø University College since the college was founded in 1971. Today, the institution offers Bachelor's, Master's and Ph.D. programmes in sociology. Moreover, sociology is one of four Ph.D. programmes at the university college – and the only one in the social sciences.

The social science environment at the university college gave impetus to the establishment of Nordland Research Institute in 1979. The close ties between the two institutions may be due to extensive cooperation on research projects and that the two institutions are located in the same campus building. In addition there has been a tendency to recruit researchers from Nordland Research Institute to positions as professors and associate professors at the university college. The institute has about 30 employees and is organised into two units: welfare, work and childhood, and entrepreneurship, innovation and regional development.

The role of Bodø University College and Nordland Research Institute must be viewed in light of regional development in Nordland County. In the interviews, scholars from Bodø explained that the research and teaching at the university college and NF have helped to improve living conditions, raise the academic standard and promote a more cosmopolitan outlook in Nordland County and Northern Norway as a whole. Both institutions have contributed to this development, which is linked to the development efforts of the Nordland County Council. The Council was the main driver behind the establishment of Nordland Research Institute, and one of its main objectives has been to support activities that capitalise on the synergies of teaching at the college and commissioned research at the institute for the benefit of Nordland County as a whole. The university college is currently applying for

university status. Sociology plays an important role in the application as it is defined as one of the university college's four priority pillars.

### *Capacity and funding*

The two organisations are quite different in terms of funding. HiBo receives most of its income over the national budget. Less than 10 per cent of its income comes from external funding. There is a goal to allow the academic personnel at the university college to devote slightly less than 50 per cent of their time to research. In practice, however, this goal has been difficult to achieve.

In contrast, NF is a contract research institute and a large majority of its funding is based on commissioned research projects. The Research Council of Norway is the most important source of funding (45 per cent of the institute's total income, including 5 per cent basic funding, in 2008). In addition, NF carries out research projects for various ministries, government institutions and regional institutions and authorities. The institute also receives some funding from local businesses, industry and international organisations.

### *Research profile*

The research at Bodø is typically empirical, often with emphasis on local and regional conditions and problems. The general sociological profile of HiBo and NF is not easy to identify. According to the interviews, much of the research development and recruitment has been motivated by HiBo's wish to become a university. This has resulted in a somewhat fragmented research portfolio. Traditionally, research has focused on the welfare state and welfare state professions, a fact which may be explained by the close relationship between this research area and the existing educational programmes at the various schools for welfare (semi-)professions. Rehabilitation, disability and medical sociology are related topics of importance. Researchers have made contributions on the questions of social inequality theories of gender and the distribution of welfare (with focus on disability). Other research foci have been added, such as environmental sociology, institutional theory and resource governance.

Methodologically, a majority of the researchers carry out qualitative studies. According to the interviews, this has not been a strategic choice, but has rather grown out of the research topics and research interests of the employees. The variety of research topics covered has emerged organically as a consequence of scholarly entrepreneurship, research project funding and researcher recruitment. For instance, the two institutions aim to play a leading role nationally – empirically as well as theoretically – in relation to one of their more successful initiatives concerning disabled persons. This field of research grew out of an application for funding, and has developed into one of the core research areas at the institutions.

Thus, despite the important role they play in their geographic area, the institutions do not wish to limit themselves to research topics that are related to the region alone. However, at the same time, it is vital that the institutions maintain close relationships with regional institutions and organisations, particularly by carrying out applied research studies. The incremental research strategy has proven successful in the sense that the sociologists have obtained research funding.

The two organisations differ in that the research conducted at Bodø University College is, in general, of a more basic nature and the institution addresses theoretical issues to a larger extent than Nordland Research Institute. Due to the funding structure at the institute, almost all of its researchers carry out contract research related to specific problems.

According to the internal evaluation, HiBo and NF intend to build cross-institutional research groups. This may be one way of strengthening sociological research at both of the institutions, but such an exercise should be accompanied by a discussion about the position of sociology as a discipline in Bodø and its relationship to other disciplines and other institutions. This is also stated as an objective in the institutes' internal evaluation.

#### *Cooperation, networks and Ph.D. programmes*

As mentioned above, there are strong collaborative links between the two units. Many researchers employed at HiBo and NF participate in joint research projects and the organisations are located in close proximity to each other.

Many of the sociologists cooperate closely with the regional business community. In addition, they collaborate with other Norwegian and international institutions through joint research projects. Several adjunct professors from abroad have been affiliated with HiBo, and this has broadened the university college's international research networks.

HiBo has offered a Ph.D. programme in sociology since 2005, and so far two persons have completed their Ph.D. degrees. There are 10 permanent positions for Ph.D. students, in addition to positions funded through external grants. Some Ph.D. students are affiliated with and receive their funding from other institutions. There are currently about 25 students enrolled in the Ph.D. programme. Their research projects are quite diverse and their inclusion of sociological theory varies somewhat. Some of the Ph.D. students even hold tenured positions. Most of the Ph.D. students received their prior degrees at other universities. Priority is given to Ph.D. students who fit the faculty's areas of specialisation: democracy, organisation and governance, the environment and the use of resources, gender, body and society, and welfare, socialisation and living conditions.

Upon entering the Ph.D. programme, students are assigned a main supervisor from the university college. Supervisors from other institutions are often involved as well. To help to structure the Ph.D. studies, the faculty arranges seminars at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the programme. Programmes vary depending on what type of funding a Ph.D. student is receiving and whether he or she is participating in a larger research project.

Students are free to select their Ph.D. courses and are encouraged to take courses at other institutions, particularly in other countries. Many students, however, take all of their courses at HiBo as there is a lack of funding for study abroad. Reading groups and research seminars are organised as needed.

### *Publications and quality of research*

According to the interviews, HiBo gives its employees ample opportunity to conduct research. As mentioned above, the expansion of the scope of the research and the choice of research topics at HiBo and NF has often been the result of entrepreneurship and has, to a certain degree, been governed by funding opportunities. In some ways this has been productive. However, such organic development has also resulted in a certain fragmentation of the research, and a professional, discipline-oriented strategy for the two units is lacking. Due to the funding situation, both institutions, and NF in particular, are involved in many applied research activities. A large portion of this research is related to the welfare semi-professions – for which HiBo has educational programmes. In some cases this has led to specific, problem-oriented research, while in other cases research projects have gained national and international recognition.

The preferred dissemination channel at NF has been research reports. HiBo, on the other hand, has had a tradition of writing textbooks (and some research reports), which may reflect the fact that HiBo has primarily been a higher educational institution with a main focus on teaching (not research). The sociologists at HiBo and NF have the lowest productivity of scholarly publications of all of the units included in the evaluation (cf. Table 3.2). Several researchers have not published in scholarly publications channels during the five-year period between 2004 and 2008. Twenty-seven per cent of the publications are written in English, which is the second-lowest proportion among the sociology units evaluated. The two institutions are well aware of this situation and according to their research strategy will be implementing initiatives to increase the level and volume of publications.

### *Suggestions*

In its joint internal evaluation, Bodø University College and Nordland Research Institute write: “The sociology environment at Bodø is not perhaps at the forefront of research in relation to developing general sociological theory but it has contributed to increased knowledge in a number of areas and specific fields [...] and has had important national and international significance.” The panel agrees with this assessment and recommends more strategic deliberation concerning the role of sociological theory in relation to the various social science disciplines at HiBo and NF and the large portfolio of (multidisciplinary) research projects. Do the institutions wish to strengthen sociology as a discipline or do they wish to take a multidisciplinary approach?

The development of sociological research activities and the focus on the Ph.D. programme in sociology have resulted in a fragmented sociological research environment. The two institutions should consider whether they wish to develop a more formal sociological research profile and in this respect reconsider the relationship and division of labour between them. The panel acknowledges the need for steady, reliable external funding, but it recommends that the institutions consider whether they can develop a long-term strategy. This would make them less dependent on short-term funding opportunities. Further development of the Ph.D. programme could also be a way of establishing a clearer sociological research profile.

The panel has noted the efforts to improve the publication profiles of the staff through publication in international journals. Thus far, it appears that the initiatives to increase (international) publication have mainly been limited to funding translation and copy-editing. The panel strongly urges the two institutions to improve their publication profiles. The internal evaluation also shows that although the level of external funding received by HiBo has recently decreased, the number of publications has increased. This may be an important piece of information for use in planning future research strategies.



## **A comparative summary**

In this section the panel summarises its descriptions of the 13 research units and compares the units in terms of research quality and publication output. The panel also briefly discusses the topics of research addressed. The panel starts by looking at the universities/institutions of higher education.

First of all, the panel finds that during the 2004–2008 period a very large proportion of the researchers at the three well-established university departments in Bergen, Oslo and Trondheim have published works (articles, books or book chapters) that hold a scientific standard comparable to the best international research in their fields. Most of the researchers have also published in both Norwegian and English (or in a few cases in other languages). At the same time, however, a few of the researchers in these departments have a publication record that is below average in terms of the number of publications and quality. The sociologists at the University of Oslo have by far the highest score in terms of the number of publications, but the sociologists in Trondheim and Bergen have a higher proportion of publications in English. Despite these slight differences, the panel finds the publication rate in English satisfactory for all of these departments.

When it comes to the quality of the research, it is not easy to differentiate between the three departments. According to the panel's document analysis, between one-fourth and one-third of the publications are of top international quality in their respective fields. Most of the other publications are also of high quality. Thus, the panel concludes that, according to the evaluation of their output, these departments are excellent research environments with the capacity to produce research of a high international standard.

The quality of the research published by the recently-established, smaller university departments and the university colleges is more uneven. There are some researchers at the universities of Tromsø and Stavanger whose publications are on a par with the international standard in their fields and who also publish regularly in English. However, the majority of the researchers at the smaller university departments have a relatively low publication output, often in the form of public reports. The situation is similar at Oslo University College and Bodø University College. The publication score of the smaller university departments and university colleges is low, with the exception of the University of Stavanger, although the proportion of publications in English is quite satisfactory at both the University of Tromsø and Oslo University College. The panel concludes that there is quite a large gap between the three well-established university departments and the departments at the other universities and university colleges as far as publication and research quality are concerned.

Comparing the research institutes, the panel finds more high-quality research at ISF and NOVA than at the other institutes. The publication output is also high at these two institutes (higher than that of the university departments in Trondheim and Bergen), although

the proportion of publications in English is lower than at the university departments. Nevertheless, about one-half of NOVA publications are in English, and the institute also has a high percentage of publications in highly ranked journals. The panel also finds that several of the publications authored by researchers at the ISF and NOVA have a very high international standard.

At the other four research institutes (Fafo, SIFO, SSB and WRI) the publication output is lower than at the above-mentioned institutes, as is the proportion of publications in English. SIFO is an exception here in a number of ways. First of all, the unit has an exceptionally high percentage of publications in English (68 per cent); secondly, some of the publications have a high international standard; and thirdly, researchers at the unit, particularly some of the younger researchers, have conducted some innovative research studies. This indicates that SIFO occupies a middle position on a scale with the ISF and NOVA on the one end and Fafo, SSB and WRI on the other. At the three latter institutes, the panel finds relatively few top-quality publications, including articles that have a high international standard. However, most of the research conducted at these institutes is applied research and results are often published in reports that are intended for the commissioners of the research rather than for the academic community in the field of sociology.

A look at the general pattern of accumulated citation rates of the publications by the researchers at the various units reveals significant variations. Among the university departments, the University of Oslo has the largest proportion of researchers with a large number of citations. When it comes to the research institutes, two institutes stand out in this regard: NOVA and SSB. It is the panel's general impression that the pattern of citations fits well with the panel's own judgments regarding the quality of the research.

Thus far, the panel has compared the 13 units in terms of general research quality and output. The panel is also interested in the type of sociology that sociologists in Norway are conducting. For this reason the panel has analysed the information regarding the activities of the research groups presented by the departments and institutes in their internal evaluations.

According to this analysis, three fields of research predominate, and while there is a fair amount of research activity in three other fields:

1. Organisation and work
2. Welfare state and citizenship
3. Family, gender and sexuality
4. Sociology of health and illness
5. Social stratification
6. Migration

The first three areas listed above comprise the leading research areas in terms of the number of researchers and publications both at the higher education institutions and the research institutes. These areas, however, do not constitute clear-cut fields, and there is considerable overlap between them. In research on the sociology of work, for instance, greater

focus is currently being placed on unpaid work, reproductive work and the relationship between the workplace and the household. The panel discusses this further in Chapter 7. Research on family, gender and sexuality is somewhat more common at the institutes, whereas research on the welfare state and citizenship is more common at the universities and university colleges.

The three most frequently studied areas of research – organisation and work, the welfare state and citizenship, and family, gender and sexuality – are without a doubt the key areas of sociological research in Norway. Not only do they predominate in both the institute sector and the higher education sector, they are also addressed at practically all of the units studied. Thus, in general, the themes of sociological research in Norway do not vary much between the various departments and research institutes.

In its evaluation of the 13 research units, the panel has found some striking differences between the units in terms of research quality and publication output. At the same time, the panel has found very general patterns of sociological research topics and a similar sociological profile. Problem-oriented empiricism still prevails and the problem-orientation is generally related to the welfare state. This type of sociology most commonly utilises a middle-range theoretical approach. Such an approach contributes to the fragmentation and specialisation of sociology. There is a risk that the core issues of sociology and further theorising around these issues will not be given sufficient attention.

In the next part of the evaluation report, the panel discusses general patterns regarding the organisation of and conditions for sociological research in Norway and their consequences for the discipline.

## Part III

### 5. The new generation of sociologists, recruitment and mobility

Sociology as a field of study and a field for a career in teaching and research appears to be on solid ground in Norway. The strong academic legacy and profile of the discipline, anchored in a shared memory of a Golden Age with its pioneering generation of sociologists, explain both the high status of the field and a sense of coherence felt by those who are about to embark on a career in sociology. This, however, is the public discourse. When examined more closely, the field of sociology in Norway appears to have developed structural shortcomings in three areas: the recruitment pattern, the requirements for a Ph.D. degree in sociology and the pattern of career mobility.

#### Recruitment pattern

The completion of a Master's degree is the prerequisite for recruitment to an academic career in sociology. Some graduates are recruited by independent research institutes and at some point enrol in a Ph.D. programme at a university and start working on their thesis. Others are appointed to a funded position under a university Ph.D. programme.

It is possible to earn a Ph.D. degree in sociology at the universities of Bergen, Oslo and Tromsø, NTNU in Trondheim, and Bodø University College. A total of about 125 students are currently enrolled in Ph.D. programmes in sociology.<sup>5</sup>

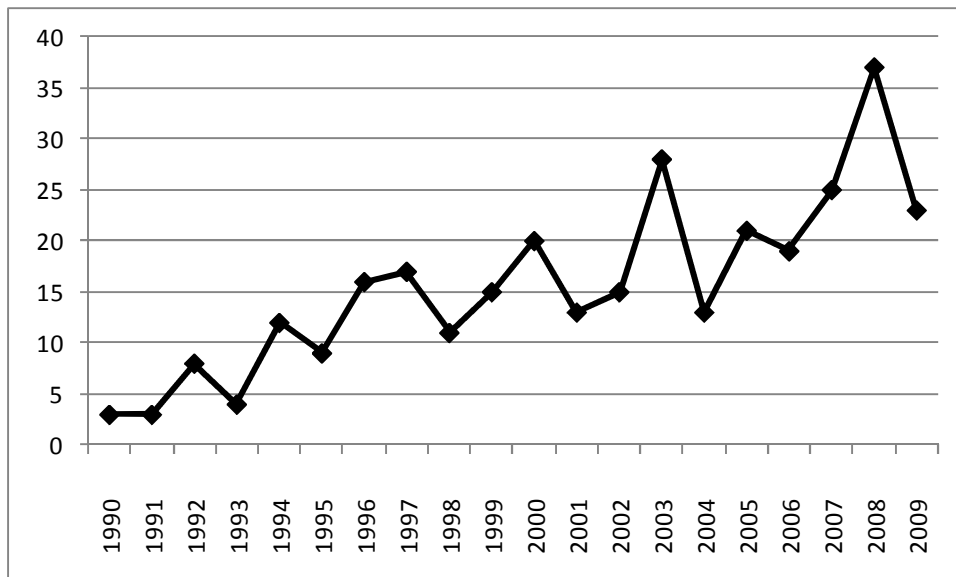
The annual output of Ph.D. graduates varies somewhat, but the trend shows an increase in the number of Ph.D. graduates in sociology (Figure 5.1). The annual production of Ph.D. graduates should be seen in relation to the total number of sociology researchers in Norway. Of the some 30 Ph.D. students who complete their degree each year, about 20-25 may be expected to obtain a research position at a university, research institute or other research institution. There are currently about 700 sociologists in research positions (Gunnes & Slipærseter 2009). The output of Ph.D. graduates today is far too small to replenish the current population of sociologists conducting research in Norway. The skewed age distribution among the tenured researchers and the fact that one can expect more frequent

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<sup>5</sup> From 1995 to 2005, approximately 1 350 candidates obtained a higher degree (Master's or equivalent) in sociology from a Norwegian higher education institution, according to NIFU STEP's Doctoral Degree Register (Gunnes & Slipærseter 2009). Of these, 20 per cent were employed as research personnel in the higher education sector and the institute sector in 2007.

employment of Ph.D. graduates in positions other than research positions make the recruitment of a new generation of sociologists a pressing issue.

**Figure 5.1** Number of Ph.D. degrees in sociology at Norwegian higher education institutions, 1990-2009



Source: Doctoral Degree Register, NIFU STEP. Please note that the classification of sociology degrees is somewhat discretionary, based on judgments regarding the topic of the Ph.D. theses.

The Ph.D. programmes and the entire educational situation vary among Ph.D. students. Some students are “internal” Ph.D. students, i.e. they are employed by the university department, whereas others are “external” Ph.D. students who are employed at a research institute. The percentage of internal vs. external Ph.D. students varies among the universities, primarily due to the location of the research institutes. The sociology department at the University of Oslo is unique in this respect. Almost one-half of all Ph.D. students in sociology in Norway are enrolled in this department. About 80 per cent of the Ph.D. students at the department are external and are employed at some 20 institutes. Similar relationships between research institutes and university departments exist in Bergen, Trondheim and Tromsø, but the number of Ph.D. students is much smaller.

The everyday research experience of internal and external Ph.D. students is quite different. Internal students conduct their everyday activities at the university department. They are often enrolled to study a self-selected topic and quite often conduct their research on their own. At the research institutes, Ph.D. students are often recruited on the basis of a pre-defined, externally-funded research project. These Ph.D. students generally become members of a larger research group comprising junior and senior members from different disciplines.

The Ph.D. students at research institutes have a number of advantages, as well as certain disadvantages. One advantage is that they become part of a larger research group

where they learn the craft of social science research, including practical methodological skills, data analysis and how to write scientific reports through co-authorship with senior researchers. One disadvantage is that external Ph.D. students do not appear to be integrated into the sociological environment of the university department. Their socialisation into the discipline of sociology tends to be much weaker than that of the internal Ph.D. students, not only because their ties to the university are weaker but also because they generally conduct their research as part of a multidisciplinary project. The Ph.D. students at the research institutes should be better integrated into the university environment and learn central sociology skills during this crucial stage of their career. Although the multidisciplinary environments at the research institutes provide a rich research experience, the Ph.D. students are isolated from discipline-specific professional socialisation. For example, in their meetings with the panel, few Ph.D. students viewed themselves as sociologists, most considered themselves social scientists.

A related problem is that some of the academic environments at the research institutes are small and fragmented and the Ph.D. student employed is sometimes the only student in sociology. While internal Ph.D. students have a sociology supervisor at their university, it may be difficult for external Ph.D. students to find a supervisor at their research institute who can guide them in their Ph.D. studies in sociology.

The creation of graduate schools would benefit these Ph.D. students. In addition, such schools could provide the larger departments of sociology with the incentive to take on a leading role in Ph.D.-level training in sociology in Norway.

At the larger departments and at some of the smaller academic environments such as UiS and HiBo and some of the research institutes such as SIFO, the faculty or senior research staff have been actively involved in establishing successful research collaborations with other research groups, nationally and internationally. This has been a way of creating a larger network of professional colleagues for individual researchers. However, at the smaller institutions, several of the Ph.D. students have not become part of these extra-local professional communities and are therefore not as well integrated into the larger academic community.

Ph.D. students in sociology in Norway tend to attend summer schools and special graduate courses offered at universities abroad, mostly in Europe. More of these types of links could be established with other major academic institutions in both the US and Europe to ensure that knowledge transfer encompasses a variety of theoretical perspectives and methodological traditions in sociology.

#### *Requirements for a Ph.D. degree in sociology*

The lack of national standards both for the courses required for a Ph.D. degree in sociology and the Ph.D. thesis itself is a major source of uncertainty for Ph.D. students. During the interviews, the panel was told that the same Ph.D. course in sociology could be worth six

credits at one university and nine credits at another. Furthermore, the panel was told that the national requirements for Ph.D. theses were quite vague and even Ph.D. supervisors could seldom give students clear guidelines about local practice. This uncertainty was particularly prominent for students who were writing a Ph.D. thesis based on several published articles. There appears to be no national consensus concerning the number of published articles to be included in such a dissertation or about the character and size of the introductory summary. This vagueness and lack of both local and national standards for a Ph.D. thesis in sociology is a threat not only to the quality of the Ph.D. degree system in sociology in Norway but also to the educational rights of Ph.D. students in sociology.

The panel recommends that the National Academic Council for Sociology or another body take hold of this problem and act as a mediator to help the universities to draw up common formal requirements for Ph.D. programmes in sociology.

### **Pattern of career mobility**

Of the 106 persons who received their Ph.D. in sociology during the 2003-2007 period, about one-fourth were employed at a university, one-fourth at a research institute and one-fourth at a university college. The remainder were employed abroad or outside the public research sector (Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1 Work place and academic position in 2008 for persons who obtained a Ph.D. degree in sociology during the 2003-2007 period.**

Position	Work place 2008				Total
	University	University college	Institute sector	Not identified	
Professor	2	4			6
Associate professor	10	19			29
Post-doc.	6	1	2		9
Researcher	6	3	29		38
Other	3				3
Not identified				21	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>106</b>

There is generally relatively little geographical mobility among sociologists in Norway. Most of the Ph.D. students who are currently employed at a university graduated from the same university. There appears to be little variation in this pattern. (It must be noted that the actual number of personnel at some of the units is small; see Table 5.2.) Furthermore, there is little mobility between the universities and the university colleges. The exceptions are the institutions that have recently obtained university status, such as the University of Stavanger, where recruited staff have earned their degrees at another university.

**Table 5.2 Mobility in Norwegian sociology: Educational background of the academic staff<sup>1</sup> (2007) at the 14 evaluated units, in per cent.**

Affiliation/ place of employment in 2007	Institution awarding higher degree (Master's etc.) <sup>2</sup>								Total per cent	N
	UiB	UiO	NTNU	UiT	UMB	Other Norw. Institution	Abroad	Not specified <sup>3</sup>		
NTNU	12	16	<b>68</b>	0	0	0	0	4	100	(25)
UiB	<b>80</b>	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	(20)
UiO	3	<b>97</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	(31)
UiS	<b>43</b>	29	0	14	0	0	0	14	100	(7)
UiT	14	29	14	<b>43</b>	0	0	0	0	100	(7)
HiBo	13	13	27	<b>47</b>	0	0	0	0	100	(15)
HiO	8	<b>77</b>	0	0	0	0	0	15	100	(13)
FAFO	0	<b>96</b>	0	0	0	0	4	0	100	(26)
ISF	0	<b>100</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	(11)
SIFO	0	<b>93</b>	0	0	0	0	7	0	100	(14)
NOVA	4	<b>93</b>	0	0	0	0	4	0	100	(28)
SSB	0	<b>80</b>	10	0	0	0	10	0	100	(10)
WRI	0	<b>100</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	(16)
NF	25	<b>50</b>	0	25	0	0	0	0	100	(4)
<b>N</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(227)</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes personnel with a higher degree in the discipline registered in the NIFU STEP databases, including all Norwegian higher degrees, but not all international higher degrees. Note: This analysis covers a larger number of personnel than those encompassed by the evaluation.

<sup>2</sup>Higher degree=Cand.polit./Mag.art/Master's

<sup>3</sup>In most cases "not specified" refers to an education abroad or an unspecified discipline. Source: NIFU STEP Research Personnel Register.

Students who work on their Ph.D. thesis while employed at one of the research institutes in Oslo tend to continue working at the research institute after they have earned their degree. These research institutes, notably the ISF and NOVA, constitute a recruitment pool of researchers who are later appointed as professors of sociology at the University of Oslo after a career in research and scholarly publication. Yet, there is little mobility from the academic departments to the research institutes.

Career mobility is generally fairly low for a number of reasons. Lack of funding is probably the most important push factor in mobility. The pull factor may be the opportunity of working in a more interesting or prestigious environment. The existence of a tacit hierarchical structure between research institutes and between universities serves to reduce the voluntary movement of sociologists during their careers even further. The lack of mobility may also be related to labour market regulations. The regulations that govern temporary employment are different for research institutes and universities. For example, it is mandatory for research institutes to give their employees tenure. However, in general, many of the reasons for a lack of mobility are probably related to the researchers' private lives. For example, variations in housing prices from region to region and the preponderance of dual-career families tend to diminish geographical mobility.



Improved conditions for mobility – both between research institutes and university departments and between different university departments – would provide sociologists with the opportunity to tackle new, challenging professional tasks during various stages of their career and prevent insularity in existing research and academic environments. It is not easy to develop mobility incentives, but a temporary change in position could also provide the opportunity to experience new research environments. For tenured staff, a number of measures may be taken to improve temporary relationships with other institutions. The adjunct professor system is an important tool for boosting the recruitment of new temporary staff, especially for universities in more remote areas. Research institutions may also develop incentives for their employees to conduct a stay abroad or visit other institutions for longer or shorter periods. The panel recommends that the Research Council award mobility grants to encourage this type of professional exchange.

## **6. Competition and cooperation between the units**

The 13 research units evaluated by the panel comprise several types of institutions. There are rather significant differences between them that are of importance for interpreting the panel's evaluations of the individual units. The institutions operate under very different conditions and have different missions. Moreover, there are many forms of interdependence and collaboration – as well as competition – between some of the units. In this chapter the panel analyses the structure of the overall organisation of sociological research in Norway in order to put its evaluation of the individual units into context as well as to provide a general picture of the organisational and institutional foundations for sociological research in Norway as a whole.

### **Differences and competition**

First of all, three types of units were evaluated: universities, university colleges and research institutes that are not formally connected to an academic institution. Of the 13 units encompassed by in the evaluation, five are university departments, two are sections at university colleges and five are research institutes. In one case the unit is a combination of a university college and a research institute. A total of 177 sociologists were included in the evaluation. Slightly less than one-half of the researchers (79 persons) are affiliated with a university department that has a Ph.D. programme. More than one-third of the researchers (72) are employed at research institutes with various specialisations. There are, however, also significant differences between the research institutes, both in terms of how they are financed and in terms of their specialisation or field of research. Three of the research institutes are organised as independent foundations (Fafo, the ISF and NOVA) and one as a government limited company (WRI).

Only a small portion of the budget of the four above-mentioned research institutes comes from a basic allocation from the Government. These institutes have to compete against other institutes as well as university departments on the research market for most of their funding. The Research Council of Norway is an important source of funding for all of these institutes, but they also conduct research funded by, for example, government ministries, organisations in the public sector and the private sector. It became clear in the panel's interviews with representatives of these institutes that there is increasing competition for funding between research institutes and university departments. Some of the research institutes also encounter increased competition from private enterprise such as consultancy companies. It is the panel's impression that the researchers at these institutes are under significant pressure to continually apply for new grants, which also affects the type of personnel recruited. Norwegian employment legislation also has an impact on the institutes'

opportunities to conduct research. These institutes are required to employ research staff on a permanent basis and are not allowed to hire short-term employees. In this regard, the university departments operate under more favourable financial conditions and are allowed greater flexibility with regard to short-term employment, which may give them an advantage in the competition for external funding.

Two of the research units (SIFO and SSB) receive a larger basic allocation from the Government. They are also placed under the auspices of government ministries: SIFO under the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, and SSB under the Ministry of Finance.

A very large proportion of the funding from the Research Council is allocated to problem-oriented research, not basic research. Only 18 per cent of funding allocated by the Research Council for sociological research is not targeted towards a specific field of research (cf. Chapter 3). This may create pressure to conduct multidisciplinary research, or at the very least does not support the development of basic research in the discipline of sociology. New funding structures and planning structures have changed the character of the research conducted both at the research institutes and the academic departments. Academic units and research institutes compete today for external funding from the same sources. If universities finance their research more and more via grants, this may imply that the development of general sociological knowledge is becoming more difficult and less rewarding for them.

### **Multidisciplinarity**

This report is an evaluation of sociological research in Norway. However, not all of the units evaluated view the research they conduct as primarily sociological but rather as multidisciplinary or field-specific. Two of the institutes (WRI and Fafo) specialise in research on the labour market and problems related to work organisations and unemployment, although Fafo carries out research on welfare state-related questions as well. NOVA specialises in research on the welfare state in a broad sense. The ISF, on the other hand, has a more general research agenda and mostly conducts problem-oriented research. SIFO and SSB have an even more specialised research profile than the other four other institutes, specialising in research on consumers and consumption and demography, respectively. These two institutes do not compete with the other institutes for funding to the same extent. When the research institutes recruit new researchers they rarely look for competence in sociology per se, but rather for researchers with knowledge or experience in a specific field or topic.

Moreover, sociology as such is not particularly strong at the smaller academic departments. Many of the researchers at the university colleges, as well as at the universities in Stavanger and Tromsø, belong to multidisciplinary research environments. At the University of Tromsø, for instance, the Department of Sociology has now become a sociology unit under the Department of Sociology, Political Science and Community Planning. During

the interviews, the researchers at UiT stressed the need for more multidisciplinary research. Interestingly, although the focus is on multidisciplinary research, the employees still maintain their unidisciplinary teaching in sociology.

In their interviews with the panel, representatives of the research institutes said that they favour a division of labour between the academic departments and the institutes in terms of the type of research performed. They argued that the institutes' short-term research funding makes it impossible for them to undertake elaborate theoretical sociology work even if they would like to. They consider the task of developing the discipline of sociology as the responsibility of the university departments. Drawing boundaries between various social science disciplines is of little interest to many Norwegian sociologists. In their everyday research practice they team up with, for example, anthropologists and economists to attempt to solve specific, often welfare state-related problems. The organisational structure of the majority of the research institutes does not support a division between sociology and other disciplines, nor does the management encourage a specific sociological approach. Almost all research activities are problem-driven, not discipline-driven. This is currently a dilemma for sociology. The general perception appears to be that it is the field of study that is decisive for the research, not the disciplines represented by the research team. The researchers and the management alike highly value interdisciplinarity and problem-oriented research.

In many cases the researchers at the institutes argued that they did not think of themselves as sociologists when they were conducting their research. The boundaries of the discipline did not seem relevant to them. However, one interviewee said: "When I teach [at the university] I consider myself a sociologist." As some researchers at the institutes teach at universities, they experience the potential split between uni- and multidisciplinary in their everyday practice; nevertheless, this is not considered a dilemma, but rather, perhaps, an advantage.

The fact that sociological research is performed in multidisciplinary environments and projects to such a large – and possibly increasing – extent is an important consideration in this evaluation. In some respects it makes the panel's task both difficult and uncertain. The contours of sociology are erased in the work of the specialised research institutes as well as in interdisciplinary projects, and the panel does not have good instruments or a system of measure to determine what is or what is not sociological research. This is not a stance against multi- and interdisciplinarity as such; the panel believes it is a valuable component of most social science research. However, the panel does see some problems for sociology if interdisciplinarity becomes the norm.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the emphasis on interdisciplinarity in sociological research has a long tradition in Norway. The first generation of sociologists in Norway referred to social science rather than sociology in their discussions. There is much that speaks in favour of interdisciplinarity, but the dominance of such an approach has consequences for the discipline of sociology and the development of sociological knowledge. In the long run,

sociology as a strong, independent discipline is essential for interdisciplinary research. In order for sociologists to work productively with researchers from other disciplines, they need to contribute unique knowledge and specialised expertise that only sociologists possess and which is genuinely sociological. The paradox noted in Chapter 2 regarding the history of sociological research in Norway still appears to apply. Sociology as a discipline has a strong position and status but it is facing increasing challenges posed by disciplines that have a stronger profile and more defined object of study, such as economics, anthropology, demography, political science and psychology.

### **Cooperation**

It is not, however, only the different financial and organisational conditions under which the research units operate and the multidisciplinary research environments that make the evaluation of the individual units an uncertain task. The interaction and cooperation between the units is also complex. For example, two of the professors at the University of Oslo are employed on part-time basis at the ISF and play an important role in leading some of the research activities there. Several of the publications authored by researchers at the ISF were written in collaboration with researchers at the sociology department at UiO. The panel believes that this is a strength for sociological research in general, but it may be a source of error, or at least of confusion, when evaluating and comparing the individual research units.

There is, of course, a regional aspect to the cooperation between the research units. As all of the six research institutes included in the evaluation are located in Oslo, one can expect a fair amount of interaction between these institutes and the Department of Sociology and Human Geography at UiO as well as with Oslo University College. The panel has not had the ambition or the opportunity to gain a complete picture of this interaction, which appears to be most prevalent between NOVA, the ISF and UiO. There appears to be a certain amount of cooperation between the research institutes as well (i.e. between NOVA and the ISF and between NOVA and SSB). The Ph.D. students who work at the institutes and study at the university comprise an important component of this cooperation. There is less cooperation between WRI and Fafo and UiO. There is also less cooperation between SIFO and SSB and UiO. These two latter institutes have more extensive cooperation with university departments abroad.

## 7. Conclusions and recommendations

In Chapter 2 the panel ended its discussion on sociology in general and its object of study and sociology in Norway with five sets of questions. In this chapter the panel returns to these questions and provides some answers. The panel concludes the chapter with overall recommendations that it believes would be valuable for improving the conditions for sociological research in Norway.

### **Topics of research: theories and methods**

The panel's first set of questions concerned the themes and problems researched by sociologists in Norway and how they are researched (which theories and methods are used), and the development of sociological research in Norway in comparison with sociological research elsewhere. In its summary in Part II of this evaluation, the panel identified six areas of sociological research (organisation and work, the welfare state and citizenship, family, gender and sexuality, sociology of health and illness, social stratification, and migration) that appear to dominate the research agenda at most of the units examined. The academic departments and the research institutes listed most of these areas as their central areas of research. These areas (or research groups) do not constitute clear-cut fields of research. On the contrary, there is significant overlap between them and some of the most interesting research topics are located in the interface between the three most frequently researched areas (organisation and work, the welfare state and citizenship, and family, gender and sexuality).

Some of the most important sociological research is conducted in this interface. This research deals with women's work in relation to the organisation of paid labour and the welfare state, including topics such as flexible work schedules and the new role of fathers, the welfare state and working mothers, and motherhood and the work contract in Scandinavia. This is a key field of research at all of the large university departments as well as at some of the research institutes, and it may very well be the largest field of research in sociology in Norway. Many of the most widely quoted researchers are active in this field, and there is international interest in current conditions in Norway and the rest of Scandinavia and their consequences. This research constitutes a major contribution of Norwegian sociologists to the international sociological research community.

There are, however, other types of research and publications that address other questions and problems and move in other directions. A shift in focus has taken place in the research area of organisation and work, from traditional organisational theory to issues relating to the professions and professionalisation.

Similarly, the focus of work research, which was formerly on industrial work is now on the relationship between paid and unpaid work. During the interviews, representatives of

the research institutes studying the organisation of work complained that interest in these questions has decreased considerably. It is the panel's understanding that this change in focus mirrors a more general trend in sociology (cf. Halford and Strangleman 2009).

Social stratification is a central sociological theme and permeates sociological research internationally. Although this is not a very large area of research in Norway, Norwegian researchers have made excellent contributions to international sociological research in this field. This judgment applies in particular for the contributions of some researchers, particularly at the three large university departments, to research on social stratification in terms of mobility, the relationship between education, class and gender.

There is also some interesting research being conducted on the sociology of health and illness in terms of quantitative studies on health conditions in Norway as well as case studies of care organisations and hospitals. Research on various aspects of migration is a field that has emerged in recent decades, and Norwegian sociologists have made important contributions to understanding patterns and conditions of migration in a comparative perspective and with a focus on Europe.

In conclusion, empirical research relating to the welfare state in a broad sense appears to constitute the core of applied sociological research in Norway. The panel finds that most of the research conducted in fields such as social stratification and health also shares links with questions related to the organisation and growth of the welfare state and the social problems it addresses, including the role of education for mobility and problems related to migration and Norway's new citizens.

### *Methods*

Most researchers generally specialise in either qualitative or quantitative methods. However, an increasing number of researchers demonstrate competence in using both types of methods. Yet, it is the panel's impression that younger researchers tend to use qualitative methods more often than quantitative methods, including traditional sociological methods such as interviews as well as memory work and discourse and narrative analysis.

On the surface, there do not seem to be any major conflicts or disagreements regarding methods in sociology in Norway. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the first generation of sociologists used qualitative methods from the outset, and it appears that the use of quantitative and qualitative methods, respectively, has not been a controversial issue. The panel believes that this absence of disagreement has been a strength for sociological research in Norway. At several of the research units, the panel encountered an interest in developing methodological strategies, both quantitative and qualitative.

Looking at the sociological research community in Norway as a whole, it is evident that there is also excellent competence in using advanced quantitative methods, including the use of registry data. This competence, however, is not as widespread, and the majority of the

researchers included in this evaluation have more extensive competence in using qualitative methods than quantitative methods.

There are courses dedicated to quantitative and qualitative methods at all departments where sociology is taught in Norway. In the interviews with representatives of the departments, all of the interviewees emphasised the importance of teaching both quantitative and qualitative methods. In the interviews with representatives of the research institutes, however, the panel heard several complaints about a lack of interest in quantitative methods among students and that the university departments did not take adequate responsibility for teaching quantitative methods. Some of the institutes reported problems in recruiting researchers with sufficient competence in using quantitative methods.

### *Theory*

In its reading of the publications selected by the 177 researchers included in the evaluation, the panel has not discerned a specific dominating theoretical perspective or traces of lively theoretical debate or confrontation between competing perspectives or explanations. This leads the panel to conclude that there is quiet consensus among sociologists in Norway about the sociological paradigm. Norwegian sociological researchers use an array of theories and perspectives – or rather fragments of theories or sensitising concepts – from theorists as diverse as Bourdieu, Butler, Foucault, Giddens, Goffman and Habermas, among others. Theoretical fragments are often used in an elegant and fruitful way in much of the best applied research, but it is rare that a specific theoretical perspective is used consistently and to guide the research as such.

The panel has encountered examples of interesting theoretical research, especially at the university departments in Oslo, Bergen and Tromsø. Much of this research deals with the sociology of science or sociology of knowledge, especially in relation to sociology in Norway. As a whole, however, theoretical research is not very salient and is not mentioned as a special research area by any of the units. The panel recommends that the major departments and institutes take on a more active role in the development of theoretical issues in sociology.

In conclusion, if sociology is to be a sought-after discipline in multidisciplinary research, care has to be taken to develop its core theoretical insights and knowledge about how to study and understand social structures, social relations and social change.

### **Sociology, social sciences and multidisciplinary**

The second set of questions concerned boundary maintenance in Norwegian sociology. These questions address two main issues: First, do sociologists feel a need to open up and/or set boundaries in relation to other social sciences? Second, what characterises the sociologists' relationship to multidisciplinary?



The question of sociology's relationship to other social science disciplines has been discussed since the inception of sociology. Sociologists have always worked together with other social scientists, and it has not always been clear where the boundaries between sociology and other social sciences lie. At present, in Norway, there are two developments of particular interest. First, disciplines such as anthropology, economics and political science appear to have taken over some of the areas studied earlier by sociologists. Second, the focus today is less on the relationship between sociology and other social sciences and more on the relationship between sociology and multidisciplinary practice and goal. In relation to Norwegian sociology, the panel has noted that with the exception of about one-third of the researchers included in this evaluation who work at the large university departments, all of the researchers work in multidisciplinary environments. This is – as mentioned in Chapter 6 – most apparent at the research institutes, but it is apparent at the university colleges as well. At the university colleges, research is often multidisciplinary while sociology is taught as an individual discipline. At the research institutes, research projects are nearly always multidisciplinary and specialised in relation to specific problems and fields of study. It appears that researchers are hired more often for their area of expertise than for their particular sociological knowledge.

The fact that sociological research is carried out in multidisciplinary environments and projects to such a large extent has important consequences for sociology. In a situation characterised by the sharing of multidisciplinary environments and interdisciplinary research practices, disciplinary boundaries and the drawing of them are considered to be of little relevance. Research activities in Norway are often problem-oriented and are not driven by concerns for the discipline as such. Nevertheless, the panel wishes to argue that the quality of multidisciplinary research is enhanced by the meeting of strong disciplines.

The panel suggests that sociology as a discipline be given a more visible position. With this the panel means that the contours of sociology – central questions, theories and methods – need to be discussed and brought to the fore, not only at the university departments of sociology but also in multidisciplinary environments. This would promote the development of sociology as such and enable sociologists to develop and present knowledge that is unique to sociology. The sociologists at the university departments can play an important role here. Some of the research institutes favour a division of labour between the universities and the institutes and argue that theoretical sociological work and general sociological questions should be addressed by the university departments. This implies that the task of developing the discipline should be the responsibility of these units. While the panel supports such a division to a certain degree, it also sees a place for sociologists at the research institutes, particularly with regard to the development of theory and methodology in specific fields.

### **Sociology in society: Dissemination**

The third question posed by the panel was: How is the sociological knowledge base disseminated to society? As described in Chapter 2, sociology has a 60-year history as a discipline and profession in Norway. Each year a large number of students graduate with degrees in sociology, and they constitute, perhaps, the single most important source of updated sociological knowledge to be disseminated to public institutions, companies and the general public.

In Norway, the discipline of sociology is grounded in a heritage that continues to be a component of the knowledge base and provide legitimacy for the discipline. A committee established by *Sosiolognytt* is currently drawing up a canon of Norwegian sociology works. This is an interesting initiative, and the fact that it is possible to produce a long list of excellent publications in sociology over many decades illustrates the strength of the sociological community in Norway. The canon committee's five criteria for selecting the publications may also inspire future research. However, the question may be raised as to whether the perceived need to establish a canon may be a sign of weakness in the sense that Norwegian sociologists can no longer take the strong position of sociology for granted and therefore need the canon to legitimate its position.

The existence of Norwegian-language sociological journals guarantees that sociological vocabulary in Norwegian remains alive and that new concepts to be used in contemporary sociology are developed. These concepts are of importance for the discipline as such, as well as for describing and naming new social problems and social processes in the public debate outside academia. The panel strongly supports Norwegian sociologists' continued dissemination of knowledge for and involvement in public debates.

The panel recommends that the units encourage their staff to participate in international sociological meetings. Such participation is a way of disseminating Norwegian sociological research and knowledge internationally, as well as of enabling Norwegian sociologists to form new international networks and research collaborations.

### **Funding and new funding strategies**

The fourth set of questions posed by the panel was: What are the consequences of the new funding and planning structures? How do these affect cooperation and interaction between the academic institutions and independent research institutes? Has the character of the research carried out by the research institutes and academic departments been altered?

First of all, the panel has pointed out the bifurcated structure of sociological research in Norway: sociological research is carried out at traditional academic departments at universities as well as at independent research institutes. Of the 13 units included in this evaluation, six are research institutes. The panel has noted that, with regard to financing of Ph.D. students and basic research projects, large private foundations do not appear to be among the external funding sources, at least within the field of sociology. Private foundations

often play an important role in supporting research that lies outside the scope of the more applied-oriented research. Such private foundations have played, and continue to play, an important role in funding of sociological research in Sweden, Finland and Denmark. The panel was not provided with information on funding from the EU or other international organisations.

Second, the panel has noted the changing conditions for external research funding faced by the units included in this evaluation. Today academic departments have to seek out external funding, thereby competing with the research institutes for the same resources from the Research Council. This situation weakens the position of the research institutes, and the academic departments must adapt to the applied character of the research programmes at the Research Council. This need to adapt poses a challenge to the strong basic science orientation of the academic departments. There is a danger that if all units converge towards a problem-oriented and applied approach, this could lead to the weakening of the academic departments' responsibility to remain at the forefront of social theory and efforts to develop new methods for sociological research. The panel recommends that the Research Council open up opportunities for the development of basic research in sociological theory and methodology. To this end, the panel proposes the establishment of a "Distinguished Vilhelm Aubert Professorship" to finance a Norwegian or international professor for a period of two to three years with the aim of developing sociological theory or methodology.

The panel has noted that in the internal evaluations the research institutes have lamented the lack of skilled quantitative researchers and have complained that registry data and combined registry and survey data are not used optimally. Partial or shared funding of stays by international researchers who wish to collaborate with research staff at the research institutes on projects using these types of data could be a way of expanding the potential for sociological research and international collaboration in Norway.

#### **Ph.D. programmes in sociology and recruitment to research**

The fifth and final set of questions posed by the panel was: Which steps are being taken and which plans are being made to recruit a new generation of sociological researchers? What characterises the career mobility of sociologists today? The panel would like to draw attention to two main concerns in this regard: Ph.D. programmes in sociology and career mobility.

##### *Ph.D. programmes in sociology*

The comments and recommendations related to Ph.D. programmes in sociology in Norway are based on three major sources of information: a) data and information from the units themselves, b) the panel's interviews with Ph.D. candidates representing most of the units included in the evaluation, and c) Norwegian educational statistics. Based on this information the panel would first like to address three issues in need of further assessment and then make

some recommendations regarding strategic planning of future Ph.D.-level training in sociology at the national level.

First, there is a need to clarify the acceptance procedure for Ph.D. programmes in sociology. Although rules and standard procedures may exist, the information provided to the panel gave a picture of a diverse and fragmented system. The most evident weaknesses are that there is no open competition for Ph.D. research positions and a lack of criteria for acceptance of students to Ph.D. positions at the universities.

Second, there is built-in inequality in terms of access to Ph.D. programmes in sociology because the major research institutes and universities offering funding for Ph.D. positions in sociology are concentrated in the Oslo region. This concentration has positive and negative aspects. The positive aspect is that it builds a potentially diverse and critical mass of Ph.D. students and makes it possible to invest in organising high-quality research seminars featuring both local experts and international guest lecturers. The negative aspect is that Ph.D. students in other regions, particularly students associated with the smaller academic departments, do not get equal exposure to the variety of theoretical traditions and debates and methodological approaches in sociology that the larger community of scholars in the Oslo (or Bergen or Trondheim) region does. The establishment of national graduate schools would provide not only a broader socialising experience for the graduate students involved but would also be an investment in improving the overall quality of Ph.D.-level training in sociology. Such national graduate schools could also solve the current problem that the same course is worth a different number of credits at different university departments.

As mentioned earlier in this evaluation, the panel is concerned that so many Ph.D. students spend a large part of their training working in a multidisciplinary research environment and that many of them do not have a supervisor in sociology at their research unit. This concern is related to the panel's recommendation that more funding be allocated to Ph.D. positions at the academic departments. The panel has also highlighted the need for Ph.D. students at research institutes to spend more time, at least during the final year of their Ph.D. studies, in an academic environment of sociology.

Third, there is a need to establish clear, standardised criteria for what a Ph.D. thesis in sociology should contain. This need is related to the increasing practice of putting together a Ph.D. thesis based on already published works with an introductory summary instead of writing a single research monograph. The panel recommends that a national working group be appointed to establish the following criteria: 1) What types of publications are acceptable for inclusion in such a collection of articles? (Only journal articles or chapters in books as well? Only international publications or national publications as well? Only publications in refereed journals or in non-refereed journals as well? Only published articles or articles submitted but not yet accepted for publication as well?) 2) How many publications of those defined as acceptable for inclusion should be included? 3) How many of the articles included should be single-authored or could all be co-authored?

### *Career mobility*

The panel noted in the evaluation of the 13 units that there is little geographical mobility once a person has received his or her Ph.D. degree. This lack of mobility could promote insularity in certain theoretical schools of sociology due to geographical location. While a concentration of research themes fosters the setting of priorities and focuses research efforts, the dynamics of change found in more diverse systems may be lacking. The panel recommends the creation of funding opportunities for post-doctoral fellowships abroad and opportunities for professors and senior lecturers to conduct longer research stays at universities abroad in order to encourage increased mobility and the infusion of new perspectives and methodological approaches into the Norwegian sociology community. One concern raised by the panel in this report is that there is little mobility from the universities to the research institutes. The current flow appears to be in the other direction. One way of increasing the mobility from the universities to the research institutes is to make it possible for the research institutes to establish research professorships.

### **Summary of overall recommendations**

In its review of current sociological research in Norway, the panel has found a substantial amount of high-quality research that has attracted international attention, as well as some research that does not achieve the same standard. Although the overall quality of the research varies, the panel's conclusion is that Norwegian sociological research maintains a high standard and generates important knowledge about social problems and social conditions in Norway. Nevertheless, the panel has found conditions affecting the opportunity to conduct research that could be improved.

Theoretical and methodological research is indispensable for developing the discipline of sociology and its ability to contribute to the collective body of social science research. It is the panel's opinion that theoretical and methodological research needs to be strengthened in Norway. Problem-oriented empiricism predominates, and has done so successfully for many decades. However, there is a risk that this approach could become an obstacle for sociologists in developing the discipline. It is the panel's opinion that sociological research in Norway needs to be directed towards theory-driven research. Although such research may be empirical, its primary aim should be to develop sociological theories, create new concepts and test hypotheses for understanding social mechanisms, processes and structures, while at the same time addressing the challenges to social science research posed by globalisation. Only by pursuing such research can sociologists make important contributions to multidisciplinary collaboration.

The panel has formulated a number of suggestions and recommendations which can be summarised in six points which address: 1) the conditions for research at the large university

departments, 2) research funding, 3) the research environment at the newly-designated universities and the university colleges, 4) the independent research institutes, 5) Ph.D. programmes, and 6) researchers' career mobility.

First, the three large sociology departments at the universities of Bergen, Oslo and Trondheim should be given the opportunity to assume greater responsibility for developing theoretical and methodological research. This requires, first of all, that the departments themselves take the initiative to achieve this goal, for example by organising seminars and research groups. However, these departments must be given the means to establish academic positions expressly for this purpose. The panel recommends that these departments intensify their efforts to offer courses in social theory, training in sociological methods, and development of broad methodological competence in using quantitative as well as qualitative analysis as well as in combining the two.

Second, the panel believes that it will be difficult to carry out applied sociological research in the long run if sociology is not given the opportunity to develop through the formulation and investigation of theoretical issues. Theoretically motivated research is often empirical, and the panel sees no conflict between carrying out theoretical research and empirical research. However, if empirical research is conducted in a perspective that is only relevant to social policy, such an approach will limit the development of the discipline of sociology. The panel recommends that the Research Council set aside a certain amount of funding for basic research in sociology rather than allocating the bulk of its funding to policy-oriented research. In order to advance the quality of applied research, there must be investment in basic research to develop sociological research for its own sake. In addition to these two recommendations, the panel proposes that the Research Council establish a Distinguished Vilhelm Aubert Professorship to finance a Norwegian or international professor for a period of two to three years with the aim of developing sociological theory or methodology.

Third, the panel recommends that sociological research at the departments in the newly-designated universities and the university colleges be strengthened and directed towards selected areas of sociology. These departments have few resources at their disposal and a concentration of research in specific areas is therefore important to maintaining the desired standard of research. It is vital that the researchers in these departments find areas of common academic interest so that they can work together in research groups and develop a common seminar culture. The panel also believes that it is important to provide the sociologists at these departments with the opportunity to participate in national and international research communities/exchanges/networks.

Fourth, a large part of the sociological research evaluated by the panel is conducted at independent research institutes. This is a unique feature of the organisation of sociological research in Norway and has many advantages. There are, however, certain drawbacks. Much of the research is carried out in a multidisciplinary environment in which there has been some

difficulty in maintaining sociology's strong position vis-à-vis other disciplines. Furthermore, the panel has identified a trend whereby the independent research institutes must increasingly compete with several types of players for funding for this type of research. The panel believes that these institutes possess substantial competence and knowledge that is currently not given sufficient visibility. Increased publication in major sociological journals would improve this situation. The panel also recommends providing the institutes with the means to establish research professorships in sociology in order to maintain and enhance general competence in the discipline of sociology.

Fifth, in the long run the discipline of sociology will be strengthened by a greater emphasis on sociological core competence in Ph.D. programmes. The panel believes that a far larger proportion of all Ph.D. students should be given the opportunity to work on projects they have chosen and developed themselves. From what the panel has seen, a large number of the Ph.D. projects are associated with ongoing projects that are dependent on external funding. Furthermore, only a few Ph.D. students spend a lengthy, unbroken period of time at the academic institution where they have been accepted. The relationship between the sociological departments that educate Ph.D. students and the students themselves must be strengthened. The production of about 30 new Ph.D. graduates annually is insufficient to fill the vacancies anticipated in the next five to 10 years. The panel recommends that the number of Ph.D. students be increased.

Sixth, the panel recommends that the conditions for mobility between educational institutions and research institutes be improved. The panel has noted that the career path for sociological researchers generally involves qualifying for a position at one of the research institutes that engage in applied research. It is difficult to qualify for a professorship at a university department by solely, or mainly, conducting theoretical research. The panel proposes establishing more career-oriented positions at the university departments of sociology, such as post-doctoral positions or tenure stream positions corresponding to assistant or associate professors in the American system. Such positions would both increase mobility between university departments and improve the opportunity to qualify for a better position. The panel's proposal to establish research professorships at research institutes could serve to encourage mobility from universities to research institutes.

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## **Appendix I – Evaluation panel and evaluation documents**



## **Members of the evaluation panel**

### **Göran Ahrne, chair**

Göran Ahrne is Professor of Sociology at the Department of Sociology, Stockholm University, Sweden, where he previously held positions as Associate Professor and lecturer. Since 1995 he has also been a researcher at the Stockholm Centre for Organizational Research (SCORE). Ahrne has also held a professorship at Uppsala University, where he earned his Ph.D. He has published extensively and is one of the leading Nordic experts in his field. Ahrne is currently member of Riksbankens Jubileumsfond's Review Panel 2. Throughout his research career Ahrne has addressed issues within the broader field of organisational sociology. His current research interests focus on explaining social processes and human agency by investigating different organisational principles, as well as differences between organised social relations and relations that are not organised, such as friendship. Ahrne is currently working on two empirical projects: one focusing on meta-organisations, the other on the conditions and limitations of friendship.

### **Thomas P. Boje**

Thomas P. Boje is Professor of Sociology at the Department of Society and Globalisation, Roskilde University, Denmark. He holds a Master's degree in sociology from the University of Copenhagen and a Ph.D. in Business Administration from Copenhagen Business School. Boje was previously Professor of Sociology and Labour Market Studies at Umeå University, Sweden. He has published extensively in recent years. Boje has served as co-editor of a number of European journals of sociology and was one of the founders of the European Sociological Association (ESA). He is currently a member of the ESA Executive Committee, a position he has held several times before. Among other appointments, Boje has been Head of Department at Roskilde University, member of two former Swedish research councils and board chair of the Danish graduate-level Research School – Welfare State and Diversity, as well as participated in the evaluation of Swedish sociology education. He acts as expert referee for various European research councils and institutions, and has held guest professorships at several universities abroad. Boje's research fields are the welfare state, labour markets, family-work relations, citizenship and civic society, including research on participation and integration. In recent years he has worked on and headed a number of comparative European projects, including a Network of Excellence under the EU Sixth Framework Programme.

### **Johanna Esseveld**

Johanna Esseveld is Professor of Sociology at the Department of Sociology, Lund University, Sweden, where she earned her Ph.D. in sociology. She was educated in the Netherlands and the US before she settled in Sweden. Esseveld has been guest professor and researcher at a large number of institutions, both in Europe and in the US. She has published extensively and is regarded as one of the pioneers in the field of women and gender research in the Nordic region. Esseveld has held a number of academic appointments, undertakes a range of

supervisory, assessment and teaching activities at Lund University as well as other institutions in Sweden. She has been editor for the Swedish journal for gender studies, *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift*, and has acted and still acts as referee for various journals in the field of sociology, social policy and gender studies. She is a member of Riksbankens Jubileumsfond's Review Panel on the Social Sciences. Key fields of Esseveld's research include studies of processes that create inequality and lead to inclusion and exclusion in institutional communities and social contexts such as higher education, high-level politics, the labour market and trade unions. Another area of research has been the study of discourses and narratives on middle-age, the body and identity. An intersectional perspective, with a focus on how gender (primarily), class and ethnicity interact, has been and remains central to her research. Esseveld's research interests also include methodology, in particular different qualitative methods and narrative analysis.

### **Peter Gundelach**

Peter Gundelach is Professor of Sociology at the Department of Sociology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark since 1994. He was previously Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science at Aarhus University, a position he held for several years. Gundelach has published extensively. He has held a wide range of academic appointments, including Head of the Department of Sociology, Chair of the Danish Social Science Research Council, and member of the European Science Foundation (ESF) Standing Committee for the Social Sciences and ESF's referee panel for the European Social Survey. He has been member of several assessment committees. He also acts as referee for a number of journals and research councils and as a member of referee panels that assess grant proposals submitted to the Research Council of Norway. Gundelach's research interests are social change, political sociology, social movements and non-governmental organisations, values, utopias, collective actors, national identity, religion and comparative methodology.

### **Elianne Riska**

Elianne Riska is Professor of Sociology at the Swedish School of Social Science, University of Helsinki, Finland. She earned her Ph.D. at Stony Brook University in New York in 1974. Riska was Assistant and Associate Professor of Sociology at Michigan State University, USA, during 1974-1981. During 1985-2004 she was Professor of Sociology at Åbo Akademi University, Finland, and during 1997-2002 she was Academy Professor of the Academy of Finland. Riska has published extensively. She has held a wide range of administrative positions, including Director of the Women's Research Institute at Åbo Akademi University, and Chair of the Research Committee on Health Sociology of the International Sociological Association. She is currently Vice Rector and Head of Research at the Swedish School of Social Science, University of Helsinki. Her main areas of interest are health/medical sociology, professional sociology, the sociology of work and gender studies. The main themes of her research are women in professions, gender and health, gender and substance abuse, and the sociology of medical education.

## **Mandat for evaluering av sosiologisk forskning i Norge**

### **I Innledning**

Norges forskningsråd har besluttet å evaluere sosiologisk forskning i Norge. Styret for Divisjon for vitenskap oppnevner et særskilt panel for å gjennomføre evalueringen. Resultatene fra evalueringen vil være offentlig tilgjengelig. Evalueringen skal gi grunnlag for å videreutvikle den sosiologiske forskningen i Norge.

### **II Formål**

Evalueringen skal

- gi et bilde av kvaliteten på den sosiologiske forskningen vurdert ut fra en internasjonal standard
- bidra til læring og egenutvikling i forskningsmiljøene og gi innsikt i styrker, svakheter og utfordringer for forskningen
- være med på å identifisere tiltak som kan bidra til å fremme kvalitet
- styrke forskningsmiljøenes, Forskningsrådets og departementenes kunnskapsgrunnlag for videreutvikling av den sosiologiske forskningen.

For å oppnå størst mulig læring fra evalueringen, er det viktig at resultatene gjøres kjent. Brukerne av rapporten vil være det enkelte fagmiljø og institusjonsledelsen, Forskningsrådet, forskningspolitiske myndigheter, andre fagmiljøer og oppdragsgivere.

Forskingsrådet vil bruke evalueringen som grunnlag for sitt arbeid med fagutvikling og kvalitet i forskning. Den viktigste oppfølgingen vil miljøene selv måtte ta ansvar for gjennom sitt arbeid med fagutvikling, rekruttering og forskeropplæring, forskningsledelse og forskningsorganisering.

### **III Organisering**

Et faglig uavhengig evalueringspanel med internasjonal representasjon oppnevnes av styret for Divisjon for vitenskap. Panelets oppgaver framgår av mandatet som er gitt av divisjonsstyret. Det vil bli engasjert et faglig sekretariat som skal bistå panelet i arbeidet, og panelet vil få administrativ støtte fra Forskningsrådet. Det forventes at panelet legger fram sin rapport innen angitt tidsfrist.

Evalueringen skal inkludere fagmiljøer av en viss størrelse, og alle forskere med førstestillingskompetanse knyttet til disse miljøene. Både forskning ved universitetsinstitutter og sentra, høyskoleinstitutter og frittstående forskningsinstitutter kan omfattes av evalueringen. Utvalget av miljøer og forskere er basert på kriterier vedtatt av styret for Divisjon for vitenskap.

Evalueringsrapporten skal forelegges miljøene for kvalitetssikring av faktabeskrivelser før ferdigstilling. Deretter legger panelet fram rapporten for divisjonsstyret.

Arbeidet settes i gang tidlig i 2010 og skal avsluttes innen utgangen av 2010. Panelet skal utarbeide en framdriftsplan for arbeidet tidlig i prosessen, og det vil ha anledning til å foreslå justeringer i mandatet.

## **IV Oppgaver for evalueringspanelet**

Panelet skal gi en samlet vurdering av kvaliteten på den sosiologiske forskningen i de utvalgte fagmiljøene.

Kvalitetsvurderingen skal gjøres ut fra en internasjonal standard. Fagmiljøene skal også vurderes ut fra formål og tilgang på ressurser, herunder finansiering og finansieringskilder.

For øvrig kan panelet ta opp andre problemstillinger enn de som nevnes i mandatet, dersom slike behov avdekkes underveis i evalueringsprosessen.

Panelet skal gi anbefalinger om oppfølgingstiltak for fagmiljøene. Det skal også gi anbefalinger til Forskningsrådet og departementene.

Evalueringen av sosiologisk forskning skal omfatte følgende fem dimensjoner:

### **1. Kvalitet og relevans**

- Fagmiljøenes og forskergruppenes kvalitet
- Forskningens internasjonale posisjon
- Sterke og svake forskningsområder
- Forskningens innflytelse og relevans
  - for det internasjonale forskersamfunnet
  - for norsk samfunns-, nærings- og arbeidsliv

### **2. Organisering, samarbeid og PhD-opplæring**

- Forskergrupper og institutter
  - Forskningsledelse og forskningsstrategi
  - Balansen mellom junior- og seniorforskere, mellom kvinner og menn
- Nasjonalt og internasjonalt forskningssamarbeid
  - Samarbeid og arbeidsdeling på nasjonalt nivå
  - Kontakt og samarbeid på internasjonalt nivå
- Rekruttering og fornying
  - Forskermobilitet nasjonalt og internasjonalt
  - PhD-opplæringens kapasitet og kvalitet
  - Rekruttering til PhD, postdoktorstipend og faste stillinger

### **3. Publisering og formidling**

- Nasjonale og internasjonale publiseringskanaler
- Formidling til studenter, brukere og allmennheten



#### 4. Kapasitet og finansiering

- Samlet volum av sosiologisk forskning i Norge
- Fordeling og bruk av forskningsressurser
- Finansieringsstruktur

#### 5. Anbefalinger og oppfølging

- Anbefalinger rettet mot de evaluerte miljøene og institusjonenes ledelse.
- Anbefalinger på nasjonalt nivå, rettet mot Forskningsrådet og departementene.

## V Vurderingsgrunnlaget

Panelet bes om å gi en vurdering av den sosiologiske forskningen i Norge og hvert av de utvalgte fagmiljøene på grunnlag av følgende materiale:

1. *Faglig produksjon*
  - a) CV-er og publiseringslister for alle forskere som er omfattet av evalueringen.
  - b) Bibliometriske analyser av publiseringsdata.
  - c) Utvalgte faglige arbeider av alle forskere som er omfattet av evalueringen.
2. *De evaluerte fagmiljøene*
  - d) Årsrapporter og annen dokumentasjon av de evaluerte institusjonenes virksomhet.
  - e) Egenvurderinger fra fagmiljøene som skal evalueres.
  - f) Møter mellom evalueringspanelet og fagmiljøene.
3. *Referansemateriale*
  - g) Presentasjoner og beskrivelser av det norske FoU-systemet generelt, og av den sosiologiske forskningen spesielt, institusjonelle og økonomiske rammebetingelser og rekrutteringssituasjonen.

Materialet vil bli innhentet og tilrettelagt av Forskningsrådets administrasjon. Panelet kan be om at det innhentes supplerende informasjon dersom slike behov avdekkes underveis i prosessen.

### 1. Vurdering av faglig produksjon

For at panelet skal kunne danne seg et bilde av hele den faglige virksomheten, må utvalget vurdere miljøenes samlede faglige produksjon. Fullstendige CV-er og publiseringslister for de siste ti årene for alle forskerne som er omfattet av evalueringen, vil utgjøre grunnlaget for analyse av publiseringsmønsteret og forskningsproduksjonen i faget. I tillegg vil det bli laget bibliometriske analyser av publiseringsdata for de siste fem årene.

Panelet skal foreta en gjennomgang med særlig henblikk på å vurdere faglig bredde og fornyelse. Gjennomgangen bør kunne avdekke på hvilke områder norsk sosiologisk forskning står sterkt internasjonalt sett, for eksempel innenfor hvilke subdisipliner, teorier, metoder eller temaer. Tilsvarende bør det vurderes om det er vesentlige deler av faget som er svakt dekket. Panelet bes også om å vurdere kvaliteten på de publiseringskanalene norske sosiologer benytter seg av.

Forskere som inngår i evalueringen skal legge fram *to faglige arbeider* av særlig høy kvalitet (etter eget skjønn). Med faglig arbeid menes artikler og andre bidrag i vitenskapelige tidsskrifter, antologier, avhandlinger og monografier. De utvalgte faglige arbeidene skal,

sammen med fullstendige publikasjonslister, danne grunnlag for vurdering av faglig kvalitet og produksjon, og vurdering opp mot internasjonal standard.

## **2. Vurdering av fagmiljøene**

De utvalgte fagmiljøene skal lage en *egenvurdering* med utgangspunkt i en mal utarbeidet av Forskningsrådets administrasjon. Formålet med egenvurderingen er å få fram både sterke og svake sider ved forskningsaktiviteten i fagmiljøet. Egenvurderingen må derfor gi en kritisk gjennomgang av virksomheten. Panelet vil også få seg forelagt tilgjengelige *årsrapporter* og annen dokumentasjon som beskriver de evaluerte miljøenes strategier, planer og aktiviteter, herunder student- og PhD-statistikk og beskrivelse av PhD-programmer.

I tillegg vil det bli arrangert *møter mellom panelet og fagmiljøene*. Hensikten med møtene er å utdype forhold knyttet til fagmiljøets målsettinger, rammebetingelser og oppgaver. Møtene kan benyttes til å belyse forskningsaktivitet og publisering, forskningsledelse og forskningsstrategier, arbeidsforhold og rekrutteringssituasjonen. Forholdet mellom forskning og undervisning bør vies spesiell oppmerksomhet, dvs. undervisnings- og veiledningsaktivitetens betydning for forskningsmessig utvikling. Møtene vil gi anledning til utdypning av forhold tatt opp i egenvurderingen. Panelet lager selv en plan for gjennomføring av møtene, møtenes form og innhold.

## **3. Referansemateriale**

Referansematerialet vil gi en overordnet beskrivelse av FoU-systemet i Norge generelt, og av den sosiologiske forskningen spesielt, herunder institusjonelle og økonomiske rammebetingelser, rekrutteringssituasjonen, andre relevante prosesser, etc. Det vil også bli laget et notat som viser finansieringen av sosiologisk forskning gjennom Forskningsrådet. Dette vil gi panelet et bakteppe for evalueringen av den sosiologiske forskningen i Norge og av hvert enkelt fagmiljø.

Fagmiljøene som skal omfattes av fagevalueringen  
av sosiologisk forskning

Vår saksbehandler/tlf.  
Janike Harsheim, +4722037437  
[jh@forskningsradet.no](mailto:jh@forskningsradet.no)

Vår ref.  
2008/05327  
Deres ref.

Oslo,  
3.7..2009

## Evaluering av sosiologi: Bestillingsbrev I

Vi viser til tidligere kontakt og takker for at dere vil delta i evalueringen. Det har tatt noe tid å få sammensatt et evalueringspanel. Vi er midlertid nå i slutfasen og vil orientere dere så snart panelet er oppnevnt. Endelig liste over fagmiljøer som deltar og mandatet for evalueringen vedlegges.

### Bestillingsbrev I: Navn, CV-er og publikasjonslister

Første trinn i arbeidet er å få samlet inn underlagsmaterialet for vurderingen av forskernes faglige produksjon. Det er utarbeidet anvisninger for hva slags materiale vi ønsker innsendt fra institusjonene. Anvisningene fremgår av vedlegg 1. Det er avgjørende for evalueringsresultatet at miljøene og forskerne følger de anvisninger som er gitt for sammenstilling av informasjon om faglig produksjon.

Vi ber om at materialet sendes Forskningsrådet senest 15. oktober 2009.

Forskningsrådet har i tillegg bestilt kvantitative analyser av forskernes vitenskapelige publisering fra NIFU STEP. Disse analysene vil omfatte perioden fom. 1.1.2004 tom. 31.12.2008, og er basert på de vitenskapelige publikasjonene som er innrapportert til Database for høgere utdanning (DBH) gjennom FRIDA og Forskdok, og som er publisert i kanaler som er klassifisert som vitenskapelige. Fagmiljøene i instituttsektoren vil bli kontaktet senere for supplering av publikasjonsdata for de aktuelle forskerne.

### Orientering om de to neste fasene i evalueringsprosessen

- *Bestillingsbrev II: Fagmiljøenes egenvurdering og dokumentasjon av fagmiljøenes virksomhet*  
Som miljøene er kjent med, er et annet viktig element i evalueringen fagmiljøenes egenvurdering. Vi har vedlagt et utkast til skjema for egenvurderingen, slik at miljøene kan gjøre seg kjent med hovedinnholdet i denne bestillingen (vedlegg 4). Egenvurderingen skal være på maksimalt 10 sider pluss vedlegg. Vi gjør oppmerksom på at evalueringspanelet i sitt første møte i januar 2010 vil diskutere egenvurderingen og skjemaet kan bli endret noe i forhold til utkastet som er vedlagt. Bestillingen vil sendes fagmiljøene like etter at evalueringspanelet har hatt sitt første møte.

- *Møter med evalueringspanelet*

Evalueringspanelet vil ha sitt første møte i januar 2010, og der vil det legges opp en plan for møter mellom forskningsmiljøene og evalueringspanelet. Møtene vil trolig finne sted i juni 2010. Etter at evalueringspanelet har hatt sitt første møte vil fagmiljøene motta nærmere informasjon med bl.a. en tidsplan for gjennomføringen av møtene.

Hvis det er spørsmål knyttet til bestillingen, vennligst ta kontakt med konsulent Hanne Husaas, tlf 22 03 73 90, e-post [hhu@forskningsradet.no](mailto:hhu@forskningsradet.no).

## Norges forskningsråd

Hege Torp  
avdelingsdirektør  
Divisjon for vitenskap

Siri Tønseth  
seniorrådgiver

### Vedlegg:

1. Bestillingsbrev I: Navn, CV-er og publikasjonslister
2. Mandat for evalueringen av sosiologi
3. Fagmiljøer som skal inkluderes i evalueringen
4. Utkast bestillingsbrev II: Egenvurderingen og dokumentasjon om fagmiljøenes virksomhet

### Kopi til:

- SV-fakultetene
- Nasjonalt fagråd for sosiologi
- Universitet- og høyskolerådet

## VEDLEGG 1

### Bestillingsbrev I: Underlagsmateriale for vurderingen av forskernes faglige produksjon

Forskere som skal inngå i evalueringen skal være fast ansatt ved institusjonen pr. 30.6.2009 og ha førstestillingskompetanse. Forskere med førstestillingskompetanse vil ha tittel som professor, førsteamanuensis, forsker I eller II eller postdoktorstipendiat.

**Materialet sendes inn samlet fra hver institusjon til Forskningsrådet**, ved: Hanne Husaas, e-post: [hhu@forskningsradet.no](mailto:hhu@forskningsradet.no).

**Frist for innlevering: 15. oktober 2009**

1. CV for ansettelsesforhold de siste 10 år
2. Publikasjonslister for årene fra og med 1999 til og med 30.6.2009
3. To faglige arbeider fra årene 1999 til og med 30.6.2009

#### **1. Navn og kort CV som viser utdanning og ansettelsesforhold fra 1.1.1999 – 30.6.2009**

Liste over personer som inngår i evalueringen. Listen må inneholde

- navn
- stillingstittel
- vedkommendes ansettelsestid ved institusjonen
- kort CV som viser utdanning og ansettelsesforhold fra 1.1.1999-31.12.2008

#### **2. Publikasjonsliste fra 1.1.1999 – 30.6.2009**

For at evalueringspanelet skal få oversikt over fagmiljøenes profil, ber vi om å få tilsendt publikasjonslistene til alle forskerne som omfattes av evalueringen. De publikasjonslistene vi ber om her skal inngå i det kvalitative materialet som evalueringspanelet trenger, og skal ikke brukes i statistikk.

Publikasjonslistene bør omfatte følgende kategorier:

- a. Doktoravhandlinger
- b. Bøker, monografier, utgitt på forlag (egne kapitler i redigerte bøker føres under c)
- c. Artikler i antologier på forlag (bokkapitler)
- d. Artikler i vitenskapelige tidsskrift (ikke redaksjonelt stoff, debattinnlegg og lignende)
- e. Review-artikler i vitenskapelige tidsskrifter eller bøker (dvs. lengre sammenfatninger av forskningsstatus på et felt)
- f. Bokanmeldelser, debattinnlegg og redaksjonelt stoff i vitenskapelige tidsskrifter
- g. Skrifter/rapporter/arbeidspapirer utgitt av egen eller andre institusjoner
- h. Redigerte bøker

I den grad publisering som faller utenfor disse kategoriene tas med i listene (for eksempel konferansepaper, populærvitenskapelige artikler, kronikker og bokanmeldelser i

dagspresse, TV- og radioinnslag), ber vi om at det *ikke* sendes fulle lister. Korte redegjørelser for hvilke andre publiseringskanaler som benyttes, målgruppene for publiseringen og omfanget av den, samt noen illustrerende eksempler, er derimot velkomne.

**3. Faglige arbeider de siste fem år, fra 1.1.2004-30.6.2009**

- a. To arbeider som er sentrale i forskerens vitenskapelige produksjon
- b. En begrunnelse for hvorfor disse arbeidene er sentrale (til sammen maksimum 1/2 side)

Vi gjør oppmerksom på at det innsendte materialet er viktig for panelet i arbeidet med å vurdere miljøene og helheten i faget. Dette betyr imidlertid ikke at panelet vil foreta en ny fagfelleevaluering av det enkelte vitenskapelige arbeid.

**Format:**

- Av bearbeidingshensyn ber vi om at materialet ordnes per forsker i alfabetisk rekkefølge etter forskerens etternavn. D.v.s. at først følger CV, publikasjonsliste, utvalgte arbeider og begrunnelse for forsker Abrahamsen, deretter det samme for forsker Bjørnsen osv.
- Vennligst legg ved en oversiktsliste over inkluderte forskere og deres innsendte arbeider, i riktig rekkefølge.
- Så langt det er mulig ber vi om at materialet sendes elektronisk, og i Word-format. De faglige arbeidene kan evt. sendes pr. post.

Til  
institusjoner og fagmiljøer som omfattes av  
evalueringen av sosiologi

Vår saksbehandler/tlf./e-post  
Siri Tønseth/22 03 73 45  
siri.tonseth@forskningsradet.no

Vår ref.  
2008/05327  
Deres ref.

Oslo,  
26.1..2010

## **Evaluering av sosiologi:**

### **Bestillingsbrev II - Fagmiljøenes egenvurdering og dokumentasjon av virksomheten – svarfrist 31.3.2010**

Vi viser til vårt brev av 3.7.2009 vedr. bestillingsbrev I til fagmiljøene og senere epost-korrespondanse vedr. bestillinger av materiale fra miljøene til evalueringspanelet. Sammen med utsendelsen av bestillingsbrev I var det vedlagt et utkast til bestillingsbrev II - fagmiljøenes egenvurdering og dokumentasjon av virksomheten. Evalueringspanelet har foretatt enkelte endringer i nevnte utkast, og det endelige bestillingsbrev II følger vedlagt her.

I bestillingsbrev II ber vi om fagmiljøets egenvurdering (se del A) og dokumentasjon av fagmiljøets virksomhet (se del B). Egenvurderingen (del A) skal være på *maksimalt 10 sider*. Dokumentasjonen (del B) kommer i tillegg.

Vi ber om at egenvurderingen representerer en kritisk reflekterende og problematiserende gjennomgang av virksomheten, og at den peker på de utfordringer fagmiljøene står overfor framover. Forskningsrådet understreker at egenvurderingen må være resultat av en kollektiv prosess i fagmiljøet, og speile bredden av virksomheten som evalueres. Fagmiljøene bes om å sikre at det blir gjort tilstrekkelig rede for forhold som har betydning for forskningsaktiviteten. Vi gjør for øvrig oppmerksom på at alle spørsmålene i egenvurderingen ikke er like relevante for alle fagmiljøer som omfattes av evalueringen.

**Egenvurderingen og dokumentasjonen bes sendt per e-post til Forskningsrådet v/Hanne Husaas, [hhu@forskningsradet.no](mailto:hhu@forskningsradet.no), senest 31.mars 2010.**

Av hensyn til progresjonen i evalueringspanelets arbeid, er det viktig at fristen overholdes.

Evalueringspanelet hadde sitt første møte 19.1.10 og har ut over en første diskusjon av prosess og arbeidsformer, tidsplan og lignende, nå startet lesningen av de vitenskapelige arbeidene og annen faktainformasjon.

Panelet har også startet planleggingen av møtene med fagmiljøene, og dere vil om kort tid motta nærmere informasjon om dette.

Vi vil i denne omgang benytte anledningen til å takke dere alle for stor velvilje i evalueringsarbeidet, og for de gode leveransene vi har mottatt som svar på bestillingsbrev I. I tillegg takker vi for dialog og samarbeid om avgrensning av hvilke forskere som skal/ikke skal være del av evalueringen o.a.

Hvis det er spørsmål knyttet til bestillingen, vennligst ta kontakt med konsulent Hanne Husaas, tlf. 22 03 73 90, e-post [hhu@forskningsradet.no](mailto:hhu@forskningsradet.no), eller Siri Tønseth, tlf. 22 03 73 45, e-post [st@forskningsradet.no](mailto:st@forskningsradet.no).

På forhånd takk for et fortsatt godt samarbeid.

Med vennlig hilsen  
**Norges forskningsråd**

Hege Torp  
avdelingsdirektør  
Divisjon for vitenskap

Siri Tønseth  
seniorrådgiver

Vedlegg:  
Bestillingsbrev II: Fagmiljøenes egenvurdering og dokumentasjon av virksomheten



# Bestillingsbrev II:

## Fagmiljøenes egenvurdering og dokumentasjon av virksomheten

Egenvurderingen skal være på **maksimalt 10 sider (del A) pluss vedlegg (del B)**.

Frist for innsending er **onsdag 31.3.2010**.

Egenvurderingen og dokumentasjonen sendes per e-post til Hanne Husaas, [hhu@forskningsradet.no](mailto:hhu@forskningsradet.no).

### A. Mal for fagmiljøets egenvurdering

Følgende områder bør omtales:

#### 1. **Forskningskvalitet og -aktivitet**

- Finnes det forskningsgrupper og evt. hvilke er spesielt aktive?
- Hvor ligger fagmiljøets forskningsmessige styrke og svakhet?
- Hvordan vurderer fagmiljøet sin egen rolle i norsk sosiologi?
- Hvilke faglige satsinger og prioriteringer vil fagmiljøet gjøre framover?
- Hvordan bidrar fagmiljøet til allmennformidling? Gi gjerne eksempler.

#### 2. **Nasjonalt og internasjonalt forskningssamarbeid**

- Vurder omfanget og betydningen av samarbeid med fag og emner på egen institusjon og andre norske institusjoner.
- Vurder omfanget og betydningen av samarbeid med internasjonale fagmiljøer.
- Vurder fagmiljøets kontakt med og betydning for norsk samfunns-, nærings- og arbeidsliv.

#### 3. **Fagmiljøets (enhetens) strategi for forskning**

- Er det primært en individuell eller kollektiv forskningskultur i fagmiljøet? Utdyp gjerne nærmere.
- Hva er styrkeforholdet mellom individuell versus gruppe-/prosjektbasert forskningsorganisering?
- Hvordan ivaretas forskningsledelse og kvalitetssikring?
- Hvilke felles fora, seminarer og lignende for stimulering av forskning, kvalitet, diskusjon og samarbeid internt finnes i miljøet? Hvordan arbeides det konkret i slike felles fora?
- Hva er forholdet mellom fagmiljøets/enhetens og fakultetets/forskningsinstituttets strategi for forskning?

#### 4. **Rekrutteringssituasjonen i faget i perioden fra 1.1.2004 -31.12.2008**

- Hvor stor andel av doktorgradsstipendiatene ansatt ved enheten i løpet av perioden har tatt høyeregradsutdanning ved enheten?

- Hvor mange av doktorgradsstipendiatene ansatt ved enheten i perioden har disputert for doktorgraden, og hvor lang tid brukte den enkelte doktorgradsstipendiat på arbeidet fram til disputas?
  - Hvor mange av doktorgradsstipendiatene ansatt ved enheten har fått tilsetning i vitenskapelig stilling ved enheten (fast eller midlertidig) etter disputas?
  - Hvordan er forholdet mellom den faglige profilen hos doktorgradsstipendiatene som er ansatt ved enheten og innretningen på forskningen i fagmiljøet?
  - Hvor mange er rekruttert til vitenskapelig stilling (fast eller midlertidig, ikke doktorgradsstipendstilling) fra andre institusjoner, nasjonalt og internasjonalt?
  - Hvordan er fagmiljøets strategi for rekruttering tilpasset videre fagutvikling og -dimensjonering?
5. **Hvordan vil dere karakterisere**
- Forholdet mellom undervisning/veiledning/administrasjon og den tiden som er satt av til forskning? Gjør evt. rede for prinsipper i forhold til å fordele tid til forskning og om det differensieres mellom de vitenskapelig ansatte.
  - Graden av forskningsfrihet?
  - Initiativ til og graden av forskningssamarbeid mellom seniorer og forsker-rekrutter, og mellom eldre og yngre forskere? Nevn eksempler på evt. samarbeidsprosjekter.
6. **Betydningen av ressurser fra Forskningsrådet og andre eksterne finansieringskilder**
- Hvor stor andel av den samlede forskningsaktiviteten er finansiert over grunnbudsjettet og hvor stor andel er eksternt finansiert?
  - Hvilke eksterne kilder har størst betydning?
  - Hvorfra og på hvilke områder er finansieringen tilfredsstillende og hvor er den mindre eller lite tilfredsstillende?
  - På hvilken måte preger eksternt finansiering forskningsprofilen?
  - Gjør rede for eventuelle strategier for å skaffe forskere, forskergrupper og enheten eksternt finansiering.
  - Hva slags kvalitetssikringsprosess gjennomgår søknadene om eksternt finansiering?
7. **Er det andre forhold som fremmer eller hemmer forskningen i fagmiljøet?**

## **B. Vedlegg: Dokumentasjon av fagmiljøets virksomhet**

Egenvurderingen skal suppleres med følgende skriftlige dokumentasjon av fagmiljøets virksomhet fra og med 2006 til og med 2008 – med ett unntak, se pkt 3 e.

1. Årsrapporter for treårsperioden.
2. Eventuelle strategiske planer/handlingsplaner for treårsperioden.
3. Andre opplysninger, hvis dette ikke dekkes på en oversiktlig måte gjennom årsplanene og rapportene.
  - a. Oversikt over enhetens eksterne og interne inntekter per år i perioden.

- b. Oversikt over alle ansatte i vitenskapelige stillinger (faste og midlertidige) ved enheten i perioden, fordelt etter stillingskategori, alder, kjønn, fagfelt og ansettelsesperiode.
- c. Oversikt over antall studenter ved enheten per år, fordelt etter studietrinn og kjønn (gjelder kun universiteter og høyskoler).
- d. Oversikt over doktorgradsstipendiater ansatt ved enheten som har disputert i perioden. Listen skal inneholde navnet på hver enkelt stipendiat og tittel på avhandlingen.
- e. Oversikt over doktorgradsstipendiater ansatt ved enheten **per i dag** som arbeider med sin avhandling. Tidspunktet for når stipendiaten ble tatt opp på doktorgrads-utdanningen skal angis, samt antatt tidspunkt for innlevering av avhandling og disputas.
- f. Vitenskapelig ansattes (faste og midlertidige) forskningsopphold i utlandet i perioden.
- g. Vitenskapelig ansattes (faste og midlertidige) deltakelse i større prosjekter i perioden, både nasjonalt og internasjonalt.
- h. Vitenskapelig ansattes (faste og midlertidige) deltakelse på nasjonale og internasjonale konferanser i perioden.

Til  
institusjoner og fagmiljøer som omfattes av  
evalueringen av sosiologi

Vår saksbehandler/tlf./e-post  
Siri Tønseth/22 03 73 45  
siri.tonseth@forskningsradet.no

Vår ref.  
2008/05327  
Deres ref.

Oslo,  
29.01.2010

## **Evaluering av sosiologi:**

### **Timeplan og informasjon om fagmiljøenes møter med evalueringspanelet**

Et viktig ledd i evalueringspanelets arbeid er møtet med representanter for den enkelte enhet som skal evalueres. Bakgrunns materialet for dette møtet er både egenvurderingen og annen informasjon som panelet har fått/får gjennom bestillingsbrev I og II.

Av tids- og kapasitetshensyn lar det seg dessverre ikke gjøre at panelet besøker hver institusjon. Alle møtene mellom panelet og hvert enkelt fagmiljø vil derfor bli avholdt i Forskningsrådets lokaler i Stensberggt. 26, Oslo. Det vil også bli arrangert et møte mellom panelet og doktorgradsstipendiater ved noen av enhetene som evalueres.

#### **Møtene med fagmiljøene**

Møtene finner sted 4.5., 5.5., 31.5., 1.6. og 2.6. 2010. De største enhetene er satt opp med to timers møtetid, de øvrige med 1 time og 15 minutter. Vedlagt følger timeplanen som viser tidspunktet for den enkelte enhets møte med panelet. Det er dessverre ikke mulig å arrangere møter på andre datoer enn de nevnte. Hvis en eller flere enheter ønsker å endre tidspunkt for sitt møte med panelet, så må det evt. byttes tidspunkt med en annen enhet, og Forskningsrådet må umiddelbart få melding hvis et slikt bytte finner sted.

Evalueringspanelet vil sette seg godt inn i materialet som er sendt inn fra fagmiljøene. Det vil derfor ikke være behov for noen innledning eller øvrig presentasjon av den enkelte enhet. På bakgrunn av lesningen av det skriftlige materialet, vil panelet formulere spørsmål som de ønsker å få belyst og diskutert. Informasjon og inntrykk fra møtene vil utgjøre tilleggsinformasjon til det skriftlige materialet som er sendt inn, og som utgjør hovedmaterialet for evalueringen.

I tillegg til evalueringspanelet, vil panelets faglige sekretær, forsker Dag W. Aksnes, NIFU STEP, delta på møtene. Seniorrådgiver Siri Tønseth, Forskningsrådet, vil delta som observatør.

#### Deltakelse

Evalueringspanelet ønsker at følgende kategorier fra det vitenskapelige personalet ved hver enhet skal være representert på møtene:

- lederen av instituttet/enheten/forskningsgruppen, evt. annen representant fra ledelsen
- en ansatt med lang fartstid (førstestillingsnivå)
- en juniorforsker som er relativt nyansatt

Det er ønskelig at både kvinner og menn er representert.

### **Møte med doktorgradsstipendiater**

I tillegg til møtene med hver enkelt enhet, inviteres det til et møte **tirsdag 1. juni kl 16-18** mellom panelet og doktorgradsstipendiater ved utvalgte enheter. De som inviteres er institusjoner som har rett til å tildele doktorgrad og tre av de største forskningsinstituttene – se nedenfor og vedlagte timeplan. Møtet vil bli lagt opp på en uformell måte, med spørsmål fra evalueringspanelet og diskusjon. Hensikten med møtene er å få synspunkter fra stipendiatene på temaer som gjelder deres situasjon spesielt, og vi henviser i den forbindelse til relevante punkter i mandatet for evalueringen og i malen for egenvurdering i bestillingsbrev II. Dette møtet vil ikke ha betydning for evalueringen av den enkelte institusjon, men skal gi evalueringspanelet et mer generelt bilde av doktorgradsstipendiateres situasjon. Det er ønskelig at doktorgradsstipendiatene som deltar på møtet har en viss fartstid som stipendiater, og at de tar med seg synspunkter også fra øvrige stipendiater ved enheten.

### Deltakelse

På møtet med doktorgradsstipendiatene bes hver enhet om å være representert med én stipendiat. Følgende ni enheter kan være representert (for enkelhets skyld er kun navn på hovedinstitusjon ført opp): Fafo, Høgskolen i Bodø, ISF, NOVA, NTNU, Univ. i Bergen, Univ. i Oslo, Univ. i Stavanger, Univ. i Tromsø.

### **Praktiske forhold**

Alle møtene finner sted i Forskningsrådets lokaler i Stensberggt. 26, 0131 Oslo.

Forskningsrådet dekker reiseutgifter (ikke kost og overnatting) for inntil tre representanter fra hver enhet og i tillegg for én doktorgradsstipendiat fra de enhetene dette er aktuelt for. Etter endt reise sendes reiseregning til Norges forskningsråd v/Hanne Husaas, postboks 2700 St. Hanshaugen, 0131 Oslo.

Spørsmål i tilknytning til innholdet i møtene kan rettes til faglig sekretær, forsker Dag W. Aksnes, NIFU STEP), e-post [dag.w.aksnes@nifustep.no](mailto:dag.w.aksnes@nifustep.no), tlf. 994 743 38. Øvrige spørsmål kan rettes til Siri Tønseth og Hanne Husaas i Forskningsrådet.

### **Tilbakemelding om deltagelse**

Vi ber om at det sendes inn en oversikt over hvem fra enheten som skal delta på møtet med panelet (navn og tittel). Vi ber også om navn på doktorgradsstipendiaten som skal representere enheten på møtet mellom panelet og stipendiatene. Informasjonen sendes pr e-post til Hanne Husaas, [hhu@forskningsradet.no](mailto:hhu@forskningsradet.no), **senest to uker før møtet finner sted.**

Panelet ser fram til møtene med fagmiljøene og stipendiatene – *og ønsker vel møtt!*

Med vennlig hilsen  
**Norges forskningsråd**

Hege Torp  
Avd.direktør  
Divisjon for vitenskap

Siri Tønseth  
seniorrådgiver

Vedlegg: Timeplan for evalueringspanelets møter med fagmiljøene

## **Evaluering av sosiologi: Timeplan for evalueringspanelets møter med fagmiljøene**

**Alle møtene finner sted i Norges forskningsråd, Stensberggt. 26,  
0131 Oslo**

<b>Dato</b>	<b>Møtetid</b>	<b>Fagmiljø</b>
<b>Tirsdag 4. mai 2010</b>	09.00-10.15	<b>FAFO</b>
	10.30-11.45	<b>SIFO</b>
	12.45-14.45	<b>Høgskolen i Bodø/Nordlandsforskning</b>
	15.15-16.30	<b>SSB</b>

<b>Dato</b>	<b>Møtetid</b>	<b>Fagmiljø</b>
<b>Onsdag 5. mai 2010</b>	9.00-11.00	<b>ISF</b>
	11.15-12.30	<b>Univ. i Tromsø</b>

<b>Dato</b>	<b>Møtetid</b>	<b>Fagmiljø</b>
<b>Mandag 31. mai 2010</b>	11.15-12.30	<b>Høgskolen i Oslo</b>
	13.30-15.30	<b>Univ. i Bergen</b>
	15.45-17.00	<b>AFI</b>

<b>Dato</b>	<b>Møtetid</b>	<b>Fagmiljø</b>
<b>Tirsdag 1. juni 2010</b>	9.00-11.00	<b>Univ. i Oslo</b>
	11.15- 12.30	<b>Univ. i Stavanger</b>
	13.30-15.30	<b>NTNU</b>
	16.00-18.00	Møte med <b>doktorgradsstipendiater</b> fra følgende ni enheter:  <b>Fafo</b> <b>Høgskolen i Bodø</b> <b>ISF</b> <b>NOVA</b> <b>NTNU</b> <b>Univ. i Bergen</b> <b>Univ. i Oslo</b> <b>Univ. i Stavanger</b> <b>Univ. i Tromsø</b>

<b>Dato</b>	<b>Møtetid</b>	<b>Fagmiljø</b>
<b>Onsdag 2. juni</b>	9.00-11.00	<b>NOVA</b>

**Vel møtt!**





## **Appendix II - Publication analysis**



NIFU STEP, April 2010

Dag W. Aksnes

# Norwegian sociology: Scholarly publications 2004-2008

*Paper to the panel evaluating Norwegian sociology*



# The background and purpose of the paper

The Research Council of Norway regularly conducts evaluations of research disciplines. This working paper was commissioned by the Research Council of Norway and has been prepared as a background document for the evaluation of sociology in Norway in 2010. The paper is intended to form part of the basis for the panel's assessments, and may be included as a chapter or appendix of the evaluation report.

## Acronyms: Norwegian and English names

### *Institutions*

NTNU: Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet/Norwegian University of Science and Technology  
UiB: Universitetet i Bergen/University of Bergen  
UiO: Universitetet i Oslo/University of Oslo  
UiT: Universitetet i Tromsø/University of Tromsø  
UiS: Universitetet i Stavanger/University of Stavanger  
HiBo: Høgskolen i Bodø/Bodø University College  
HiO: Høgskolen i Oslo/Oslo University College  
NOVA: Norsk institutt for forskning om oppvekst, velferd og aldring/ Norwegian Social Research  
ISF: Institutt for samfunnsforskning /Institute for Social Research  
FAFO: Institutt for arbeidslivs- og velferdsforskning/ Institute for Labour and Social Research  
SIFO: Statens institutt for forbruksforskning/National Institute for Consumer Research  
AFI: Arbeidsforskningsinstituttet/The Work Research Institute  
SSB: Statistisk sentralbyrå/Statistics Norway

### *Departments/research units included in the evaluation*

NTNU: Institutt for sosiologi og statsvitenskap/Department of Sociology and Political Science  
UiB: Sosiologisk institutt/Department of Sociology  
UiO: Institutt for sosiologi og samfunnsgeografi/Department of Sociology and Human Geography  
UiT: Institutt for sosiologi, statsvitenskap og samfunnsplanlegging /Department of Sociology, Political Science and Community Planning  
UiS: Institutt for medie-, kultur og samfunnsfag/ Department of Media, Culture and Social Sciences  
HiBo: Seksjon for sosiologi, fakultetet for samfunnsvitenskap/ Section for Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences  
HiO: Avdeling for samfunnsfag/Faculty of Social Sciences  
SSB: Forskningsavdelingen, Seksjon for demografi og levekårsforskning/Research Department, Division for Social and Demographic Research

For the other institutes persons from various units are included.

### *Databases*

Frida/ForskDok:	Forskningsresultater, informasjon og dokumentasjon av vitenskapelige aktiviteter/ Research results, information and documentation of scientific activities
DBH:	Database for statistikk om høgre utdanning/Information on Research and Higher Education
RPR:	Forskerpersonalregisteret/Research Personnel Register, NIFU STEP

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- 3 Number of publications per researcher .....17
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- Appendix 2 Performance based budgeting of Norwegian higher education institutions.....22

## Executive summary

The present study analyses the scholarly publications of the 177 researchers to be included in the evaluation of Norwegian sociology in 2010. In total, the study encompasses 939 items published by the sociologists during the period 2004-2008.

### *Publication profile: Majority of journal articles*

The publications have the following distribution: 57% are journal articles, 38 % book articles, and 5 % books/monographs. Thus, the majority of the scholarly publication output appears in journals, but also books are important publication channels for Norwegian sociologists.

### *Journal profile: A broad range of journals, written in Norwegian and English*

In the period 2004 to 2008, the 177 sociologists included in the evaluation have published 538 articles in 235 different scholarly journals. Of these, 154 journals are only used once, i.e. with only one article published. The most frequently used journals are Norwegian sociology/social science journals such as: *Sosiologisk Tidsskrift*, *Søkelys på arbeidslivet*, *Tidsskrift for velferdsforskning*, *Tidsskrift for samfunnsforskning* and *Sosiologi i dag*. 16 % of the journal articles are in highly classified journals (level 2 in the performance based budgeting for Norwegian higher education institutions).

### *Differences between departments*

Of the total publication output (journal articles, monographs and book chapters), 17 % is at level 2, which is somewhat lower than the defined 20 per cent threshold for level 2. However, there are large differences in level 2 publishing between the departments/units. The departments at UiB and NTNU have both proportions of 25 %, while AFI, SSB and HiBo have 0, 4 and 5 % respectively. The other units have proportions in the range of 12 and 21 %.

### *Language: 50 per cent English*

The analysis of publication language of the publications (journal articles, book articles and monographs) shows that there is an almost equal division between Norwegian and English, while only 2 % are written in other languages. The proportion of publications written in English is higher for journal articles (61 %) than for book articles (39%) and books (22%). The proportion of publications in English varies from 23 to 68% between the departments/units.

### *Co-authorship*

49 % of book articles, 51% of journal articles are co-authored, i.e. they have more than one author. During the period 2004-2008 we find an increase in co-authorship both when we consider book articles and journal articles. We find substantial differences in co-authorship percentages across departments/units, varying from 14 to 71 %.

### *Productivity differences*

There are large variations in the productivity of publications both between researchers and between departments. Overall the researchers have produced 1.08 article equivalents per researcher man year during the period. The productivity per researcher man year is highest at UiO with 1.91 article equivalents, followed by UiS with 1.64 and ISF with 1.30. HiBO has the lowest productivity with 0.56 article equivalents per researcher man year.

There are also differences in the productivity between academic positions, and full professors have a higher number of article equivalents than associate professors. The female researchers are somewhat more productive than their male colleagues.

*Summary table. Publication indicators of individual units*

<b>Department</b>	<b>Number of publications</b>	<b>Proportion of overall publication output</b>	<b>Number of article equivalents per researcher man year</b>	<b>Per cent level 2</b>	<b>Per cent English*</b>
UiO	183	19 %	1.91	15 %	48 %
UiB	76	8 %	1.02	25 %	65 %
NTNU	147	16 %	1.01	25 %	61 %
UiT	28	3 %	0.65	18 %	43 %
UiS	94	10 %	1.64	13 %	68 %
HiBo	44	5 %	0.56	5 %	27 %
HiO	33	4 %	0.75	18 %	48 %
AFI	35	4 %	1.15	0 %	31 %
FAFO	48	5 %	0.80	15 %	23 %
ISF	56	6 %	1.30	14 %	38 %
NOVA	126	13 %	1.23	21 %	48 %
SIFO	41	4 %	0.66	12 %	68 %
SSB	28	3 %	0.75	4 %	39 %
Total	939	100 %	1.08	17 %	50 %



# 1 Data sources and methods

Publication data have increasingly been applied as performance indicators in the context of science policy and research evaluation. The basis for the use of such indicators is that new knowledge – the principal objective of basic and applied research – is disseminated to the research community through publications. Publications can thereby be used as indirect measures of knowledge production. Through a publication analysis information can be obtained on various aspects of the scientific activity, such as research profiles, publication and journal profiles, scientific productivity, publication language and collaboration. However, although this information may be useful in evaluation contexts, a publication analysis can never substitute an evaluation carried out by peers. In order to make evaluations of the content and quality of the research, the publications need to be assessed and read by other peers.

The present report presents the results of a bibliometric study of the departments/institutes included in the evaluation of sociology research in Norway. It focuses on the publication output during the 5 year period 01.01.2004-31.12.2008. Both the overall level (i.e. all publications published by the researchers included in the evaluation) and the department/institute level are analysed.

## *Data sources*

The analyses in this report are primarily based on the publications registered in the publically accessible database Frida<sup>1</sup> and ForskDok<sup>2</sup>, and *not* on the comprehensive publication lists compiled for the evaluation. Frida and ForskDok are two different registration systems for scientific publications employed by Norwegian universities and other higher education institutions, and include the scholarly publications for all the Higher education institutions to be included in the evaluation. The Frida/ForskDok publication data are summarised in the Norwegian DBH database (see explanation of acronyms on pages 2-3) and are used for the calculation of the performance based budgeting of Norwegian higher education institutions (see Appendix 2). Publication data for NTNU, UiB, UiO, UiT and HiO are registered in the Frida system, while the other higher education institutions use the ForskDok system. Institutes outside the Higher education sector do not register their publications in these databases. In our study, for NOVA, ISF, FAFO, SIFO, AFI, SSB and Nordland Research Institute, we therefore had to rely on publication lists that were submitted by the researchers, supplied with information from NIFU STEPs publication database of covering the research institutes (Nøkkeltalldatabasen).

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<sup>1</sup> At <http://wo.uio.no/as/WebObjects/frida.woa/5/wa/fres?la=en>. We received all data directly from Frida, and did not search the publications through this public site.

<sup>2</sup> At <http://www.bibsys.no/norsk/produkter/forskDok/index.php>. We received all data directly from ForskDok, and did not search the publications through this public site

### *Included departments and researchers*

The analysis encompasses scholarly publications of the 177 researchers at the 13 departments/institutes to be included in the evaluation (Table 1.1).<sup>3</sup> Only tenured academic employees and post doc fellows are included in the evaluation. While all personnel within these categories of academic positions are included at some units (the “pure” sociology departments), others have made a selection based on the criteria and field delimitation of the evaluation. Thus, the analysis does not give a complete overview of scholarly output at the units.

Table 1.1 gives an overview of the academic positions of the 177 selected researchers included in the evaluation. It should be noted that because some of the researchers have changed both position and working place over a 5-year period. Here, we classify the researchers according to their current main position based on the information in the CVs that were submitted by the researchers in 2009.

*Table 1.1 Evaluation of Norwegian sociology: Number of included researchers by department and position*

<b>Department/unit</b>	<b>Full professor</b>	<b>Associate professor</b>	<b>Post doc</b>	<b>Researcher/other*</b>	<b>Total</b>
UiO	18	1	3	2	24
UiB	6	8	1	1	16
NTNU	16	6	1		23
UiT	4	3		1	8
UiS	3	4		1	8
HiBo	5	8		5	18
HiO	3	5			8
AFI				9	9
FAFO				11	11
ISF				13	13
NOVA				22	22
SIFO				10	10
SSB				7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>177</b>

\*Other includes for example head of department.

At the higher education institutions the large majority of the personnel encompassed by the evaluation are Full professors or Associate professors, and there are only a few Post doc fellows included. At the research institutes most of the persons have positions as Researchers or Senior researchers.

As described above, some employees have not been affiliated with their current departments/institutes for the entire five year period. In these cases we have included all publications of the individuals examined, but not work carried out before they became affiliated at the respective departments. This is accordance with the principles underlying the performance based budgeting system. Here, one requirement is that only publications where a particular department is listed as author address can be included as point giving

<sup>3</sup> The few researchers at Nordland Research Institute have been included as part HiBo since there are strong links between the two organisations.

publications. When calculating productivity indicators we have adjusted the denominator accordingly.

#### *Categories of scholarly publications included*

The analysis is limited to the publication categories included in the Norwegian performance based budgeting of higher education institutions; monographs and contributions to anthologies (book articles) published at publishing houses classified as scientific/scholarly by the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR), and articles<sup>4</sup> in series and journals classified as scientific/scholarly by UHR. The UHR classifies all relevant journals/series and publishers at two levels: the normal level (level 1) and a higher level (level 2) which is given extra weight in the performance based funding model and only includes the leading and most selective journals and publishers. The UHR annually revises the classification list.<sup>5</sup> The annual revisions imply that the level of a journal or publisher may change from one year to the next. When “quality level” is included in the analysis, the level at the year of publication applies.

Publications which are outside these channels are *not* included in our analysis. For example, unpublished PhD-dissertations, articles in conference proceedings, reports, as well as popular science articles and contributions to the Norwegian public debate in other publication channels are outside the scope of the analysis. This needs to be taken into consideration when interpreting the results. For example, the research institutes in particular, typically have a significant amount of report publishing.

In sum, the analysis covers all articles in journals/series classified as scientific/scholarly, and monographs as well as articles in anthologies published by publishers classified as scientific/scholarly. All analyses are limited to the period 2004 to 2008.

#### *Article equivalents and co-author weights*

In Chapter 3 the publications are counted as “article equivalents”. One article equivalent equals one scholarly article authored by one researcher: Articles (in scholarly journals or books) count 1, whereas monographs are given higher weight and count 5.

Moreover, the figures are weighted for co-authorship by dividing the publication scores by the number of authors contributing. In this way an article co-authored by two persons counts as 0.5 (that is, 0.5 for each of them).

We examined the researchers’ CVs and identified for how long they had been working at their current institutions. The large majority of the included researchers had apparently

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<sup>4</sup> Including regular articles and review articles but not book reviews, editorials or letters. Conference reports are not included unless they are published by publishers classified as scientific.

<sup>5</sup> The register is publically available at <http://dbh.nsd.uib.no/kanaler/>. See Appendix 2 for a description of the basis for classification.

been working at their current departments for the entire five year period. As described above, for the other persons we only have included publications from the years they have been working at the unit and adjusted the productivity indicator accordingly. We did also adjust the indicator for periods of leave. Unless explicitly stated in the CV, all persons were attributed full time positions.

#### *Data limitations*

Even when unique, and a large improvement for bibliometric analyses, the Norwegian publications databases used in the performance based budgeting – and in our analysis – are not without shortcomings. For example, some publications may be missing, and there may be cases where a publication has been given incorrect classification code or has been multiply reported. It should also be noted that 2004 was a introduction/test year of the databases. This years' data was not used for the performance based budgeting, and the coverage for 2004 may not be as good as for the following years. In our analyses we, nevertheless, rely solely on the classification data in Frida and ForskDok and, for the research institutes, the submitted publication lists.

It should also be noted that scientific productivity generally is very skewed. Some researchers only have negligible scientific production, while others are very prolific. Thus one or a few researchers may contribute significantly to the overall research output of a unit.

## 2 Publication profiles: Frequently used journals, language and co-authorship

This chapter analyses the publication patterns for the 177 sociologists included in the evaluation, in terms of overall publication output, frequently used journals, publication language and co-authorship. In the analysis, only “unique”<sup>6</sup> publications are included.

Table 2.1 shows the overall results of the publication analysis by publication type, year and publication level. In total, the study encompasses 939 items published by the sociologists during the period 2004-2008. Of these, 57% are journal articles, 38 % book articles, and 5 % books/monographs. Thus, the majority of the scholarly publication output appears in journals, but also books are important publication channels for Norwegian sociologists. Obviously, publishing a monograph is much more demanding than publishing an article. In the productivity analysis in next chapter we have weighted one monograph as five articles. In comparison, if we instead had used a weighted measure, the monograph proportion would increase from 5 to 20 %.

As described in the Method chapter, we have analysed the publication output by using the classification system applied in the bibliometric model for performance based budgeting of research institutions. Here, the journals and publishers are classified in two levels and the highest level (level 2) includes only the leading and most selective international journals and publishers. Table 2.1 shows how the publications are distributed on the two publication levels. The proportion of publications in level 2 channels has increased during the time period, particularly from 2007 (15 %) to 2008 (24 %). Overall, 17 % of the publications are published in level 2 channels. For the journal articles this proportion is 16% and for book articles 19 %. As level 2 is defined to cover approximately 20 per cent of the publications in a field/discipline, the proportion of level 2 publishing among the included sociologist is slightly below this average.

The total number of publications has increased significantly during the period 2004-2008. One reasons for this is that the sociologists only have been credited publications they have published while being affiliated with their current institutions (see Method chapter). Thus, the first years of the period include the publications of fewer persons than the later years. Moreover, the introduction/test year of the Firda/Forskodok publication databases applied (2004), the coverage was not as good as for the following years. Thus, due to these methodological facts, the numbers cannot be used to infer that there has been an increase in the productivity. We will accordingly only analyse the whole period in the following analyses and not individual years.

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<sup>6</sup> Some publications were multiply reported. The reason is that when a publication is written by several authors it will appear on the publication lists of all the authors, and will accordingly occur more than one time. In order to handle this problem we removed all the multiply reported items in the analysis of (but not in the analysis of individual productivity, cf. Chapter 3), i.e. only unique publications were left.

*Table 2.1 Norwegian sociology: Scholarly publications by publication level and year (2004-2008), per cent*

Type	Publication level	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2004-2008
Monographs	Per cent level 1	75	100	100	83	100	96
	Per cent level 2	25	0	0	17	0	4
N (publications)		4	14	11	6	10	45
Book articles	Per cent level 1	80	82	84	82	78	81
	Per cent level 2	20	18	16	18	22	19
N (publications)		51	60	64	88	93	356
Journal articles	Per cent level 1	95	86	83	86	73	84
	Per cent level 2	5	14	17	14	27	16
N (publications)		78	104	105	133	118	538
Total	Per cent level 1	89	85	84	85	76	83
	Per cent level 2	11	15	16	15	24	17
N (publications)		133	178	180	227	221	939

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation.

Table 2.2 shows the distribution of publications by type and department/institute. UiO has the highest number of publications (19 % of the total), followed by NTNU and NOVA (proportions of 16 % and 13 %, respectively). Most of the units have more than 50 % of their publication output in journals; the exceptions are HiBo with 34% and UiB with 45 %. UiS and SSB have the highest proportions of journal articles with 78 and 68%, respectively.

*Table 2.2 Norwegian sociology: Number and proportion of publications by type and department, totals for 2004-2008.*

Department	Monographs		Book articles		Journal articles		Total publications	
	#	%	#	%	#	*	#	%*
UiO	17	9 %	50	27 %	116	63 %	183	19 %
UiB	4	5 %	38	50 %	34	45 %	76	8 %
NTNU	3	2 %	71	48 %	73	50 %	147	16 %
UiT	1	4 %	12	43 %	15	54 %	28	3 %
UiS		0 %	21	22 %	73	78 %	94	10 %
HiBo	3	7 %	26	59 %	15	34 %	44	5 %
HiO	2	6 %	12	36 %	19	58 %	33	4 %
AFI	2	6 %	14	40 %	19	54 %	35	4 %
FAFO	1	2 %	19	40 %	28	58 %	48	5 %
ISF	3	5 %	19	34 %	34	61 %	56	6 %
NOVA	6	5 %	48	38 %	72	57 %	126	13 %
SIFO	2	5 %	18	44 %	21	51 %	41	4 %
SSB	1	4 %	8	29 %	19	68 %	28	3 %
<b>Total</b>	45	5 %	356	38 %	538	57 %	939	100 %

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation.

\*) Proportion of the overall publication output.

In the studied 5-year period, the 177 sociologists have published 538 articles in 235 different journals. Of these, 154 journals are only used once. Table 2.3 shows the number of articles by journal. Only journals with at least three articles are shown in the table.

**Table 2.3** *Norwegian sociology: Frequently used journals, number of articles 2004-2008 and journal level*

Journal	Level <sup>a</sup>	Numb	Journal	Level <sup>a</sup>	Numb
Sosiologisk Tidsskrift	1	30	Journal of European Social Policy	1	4
Søkelys på arbeidslivet (/Søkelys på arbeidsmarkedet)	1	27	NORA. Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender research	2	4
Tidsskrift for velferdsforskning	1	24	Norsk Medietidsskrift	1	4
Tidsskrift for samfunnsforskning	1	20	Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift	1	4
Sosiologi i dag	1	18	Scandinavian Journal of Management	1	4
European Sociological Review	1&2	12	Tidsskrift for psykisk helsearbeid	1	4
Sosiologisk Årbok	1	11	Young. Nordic Journal Youth Research	1	4
Tidsskrift for Ungdomsforskning	1	11	Economics Letters	1	3
Acta Sociologica	2	9	International Journal of Consumer Stud	1	3
Tidsskrift for Den norske lægeforening	1	9	International Journal of Human Resource Management	1	3
Tidsskrift for kjønnsforskning	1	9	International Journal of Social Welfare	1&2	3
Barn	1	8	Journal of Comparative Family Studies	1	3
Comparative Social Research	1	8	Journal of Social Policy	2	3
Scandinavian Journal of Public Health	1	7	Mathematical and Computer Modelling of Dynamical Systems	1	3
Social Science and Medicine	1&2	6	Policing : an international Journal of Police Strategies and Management	1	3
European Journal of Political Research	2	5	Psychological Reports	1	3
European Societies	2	5	Rhetorica Scandinavica	1	3
Norsk Epidemiologi	1	5	Scandinavian Political Studies	1	3
European Journal of Public Health	1	4	Social Analysis: Journal of Cultural and Social Practice	1&2	3
International Journal Modern Physics C	1	4	Social Indicators Research	1	3
International Journal of Sociology	1	4	Sociologisk forskning	1	3
153 level 1 journals with 1 and 2 articles each					184
41 level 2 journals with 1 and 2 articles each					45
<b>Total</b>					<b>538</b>
Total Level 1					451
Total Level 2					87

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation.

<sup>a</sup> Due to the annual level revisions one journal may be rated at both level 1 and 2, i.e. our institutions have published in a journal both when it was rated at level 1, and when it was rated at level 2.

Five Norwegian sociology/social science journals are the most most frequently used channels for publication: *Sosiologisk Tidsskrift*, *Søkelys på arbeidslivet*, *Tidsskrift for velferdsforskning*, *Tidsskrift for samfunnsforskning*, *Sosiologi i dag*. The total distribution of articles by journal level for all units is shown in Table 2.4.

*Table 2.4 Norwegian sociology: Journal articles 2004-2008, by department and journal level*

	Level 1	Level 2	Total		Level 1	Level 2	Total
UiO	98	18 (16%)	116	SIFO	18	3 (14%)	21
NTNU	55	18 (25%)	73	AFI	19	0 (0 %)	19
UiS	64	9 (12%)	73	HiO	16	3 (16%)	19
NOVA	58	14 (19%)	72	SSB	18	1 (5 %)	19
ISF	30	4 (12%)	34	HiBo	13	2 (13%)	15
UiB	26	8 (24%)	34	UiT	13	2 (13%)	15
FAFO	23	5 (18%)	28	Total	451	87 (16%)	538

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation.

There are quite large differences between the departments/units in terms of their journal level patterns. NTNU and UiB have the highest proportions level 2 articles, 25 and 24 %, respectively, while AFI and SSB have the lowest, 0 and 5 %.

When interpreting these figures it is however important to realize that the units have very different functions within the Norwegian research system. Some are traditional university departments, some represent units with strong teaching obligations and some are applied units mainly involved in contract research or analyses related to policy. Generally, the major part of the activity at the units within the “institute sector (governmental and private research institutes) is based on external grants, accordingly the research is usually applied and based on contracts. In such contexts the report is often the most appropriate publication channel. The universities, on the other hand, have a special responsibility for long term basic research, and the possibilities for doing research publishable through scholarly publication channels are usually better.

*Table 2.5 Norwegian sociology: The language of the publications\* (totals for 2004-2008). Per cent*

Type	Norwegian	English	Other languages	N
Monographs	73	22	4	45
Book articles	57	39	4	352
Journal articles	38	61	1	538
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>935</b>

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation. 4 book articles with unknown language have been omitted.

The analysis of publication language shows that there is an almost equal division between Norwegian and English, while only 2 % of the publications are written in other languages (Table 2.5). The proportion of publications written in English is higher for journal articles (61 %) than for book articles (39%) and books (22%).



*Table 2.6 Norwegian sociology: The publication level and language of the publications by department (totals for 2004-2008). Per cent*

Department	Per cent English*	Per cent level 2	N	Department	Per cent English*	Per cent level 2	N
UiO	48	15	183	AFI	31	0	35
UiB	65	25	76	FAFO	23	15	48
NTNU	61	25	147	ISF	38	14	56
UiT	43	18	28	NOVA	48	21	126
UiS	68	13	94	SIFO	68	12	41
HiBo	27	5	44	SSB	39	4	28
HiO	48	18	33	Total	50	17	939

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation. Included publications: Monographs, book articles and journal articles. \*) 4 book articles with unknown language have been omitted.

The proportion of publications in English varies between the departments/units (Table 2.6). UiS and SIFO have 68% of their publications written in English. Also UiB and NTNU have more than 60 % of their publications in English. At the other end we find FAFO and HiBo with 23 and 27 % in English, respectively. The balance between English-Norwegian languages generally reflects the extent to which the research output is directed towards an international and national audience.

There are also quite large differences in level 2 publication between the units. UiB and NTNU have both proportions of 25 %, while AFI, SSB and HiBo have 0, 4 and 5 %, respectively. The other units have proportions in the range of 12 and 21 %.

### *Co-authorship*

Table 2.7 shows the proportion of the different kinds of publications that have more than one author. 49 % of book articles and 51 % of journal articles are co-authored. During the period 2004-2008 we find an increase in co-authorship for all the publication types.

*Table 2.7 Norwegian sociology: Co-authorship of scholarly publications: Proportion of co-authored publications by type and year, 2004-2008, per cent*

Type	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2004-2008
Monographs	25	50	55	50	60	51
Book articles	35	53	42	47	59	49
Journal articles	44	53	50	54	53	51
<b>Total per cent co-authored</b>	40	53	48	51	56	50
<i>Total number of publications</i>	133	178	180	227	221	939

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation.

Table 2.8 shows similar figures for the individual of departments/units. The proportion of co-authored publication is highest for SIFO (71 %) and lowest for AFI (14 %).

Table 2.8 Norwegian sociology: Co-authorship of scholarly publications: Proportion of co-authored publications by type and department, totals for 2004-2008. Per cent

Department	Monographs		Book articles		Journal articles		Total publications	
	#	Per cent co-authored	#	Per cent co-authored	#	Per cent co-authored	#	Per cent co-authored
UiO	17	59	50	48	116	41	183	44
UiB	4	50	38	18	34	41	76	30
NTNU	3	33	71	68	73	73	147	69
UiT	1	0	12	50	15	27	28	36
UiS			21	62	73	55	94	56
HiBo	3	67	26	31	15	13	44	27
HiO	2	50	12	58	19	74	33	67
AFI	2	0	14	0	19	26	35	14
FAFO	1	100	19	63	28	61	48	63
ISF	3	33	19	32	34	41	56	38
NOVA	6	67	48	56	72	56	126	56
SIFO	2	50	18	72	21	71	41	71
SSB	1	0	8	25	19	58	28	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>50</b>

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation.

### 3 Number of publications per researcher

This chapter analyses the publication activity using weighted publication measures. In order to have a comparable measure for publication activity, we have used *article equivalent*. An article equivalent equals one scholarly article authored by one researcher. Articles (in scholarly journals or books) count 1. Monographs count 5. The main focus is on productivity where the *article equivalents* are divided by the number of researchers man years, resulting in an average measure for publication activity per researcher (see explanations in Chapter 1).

It is important to recall that we have included only publications from the period the researchers have been affiliated with their respective departments. We have adjusted the productivity measures according to the length of affiliation with current department and also excluded periods of leave (e.g. parental).

Table 3.1 shows that the sociologists have produced 1.08 article equivalents per researcher man year. In comparison, this is higher than the productivity found in an ongoing evaluation of Norwegian human geography (0.87 article equivalents per researcher year).

*Table 3.1 Norwegian sociology: Number of publications 2004-2008*

	<b>Number of publications - whole counts</b>	<b>Number of publications – fractionalised*</b>	<b>Number of article equivalents</b>	<b>Number of publications whole counts per researcher man year</b>	<b>Number of article equivalents per researcher man year</b>
Monographs	45	34.8	171.5	0.06	0.22
Book articles	356	268.9	268.9	0.46	0.35
Journal articles	538	387.5	387.5	0.70	0.51
Total	939	691.2	827.9	1.23	1.08

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation.

\*) Weighted for co-authorship

Table 3.2 gives the productivity measures for the individual departments. UiO is by far the largest department in term of publication output with 189.2 article equivalents during the period 2004-2008, followed by NOVA with 105.1 and NTNU with 101.9 article equivalents.

The productivity per researcher man year is also highest at UiO with 1.91 article equivalents, followed by UiS with 1.64 and ISF with 1.30. UiT and SIFO have to lowest productivity with 0.65 and 0.66 article equivalents per researcher man year. Thus, the researchers at UiO have produced three times as many publications per researcher year than the personell at UiT and SIFO.

Most departments have large productivity variations among the selected researchers (not shown in tables).

*Table 3.2 Norwegian sociology: Article equivalents per researcher man year by department (totals for 2004-2008)*

Department	Number of article equivalents	Number of researcher man year	Number of article equivalents per researcher man year	Number of article equivalents per researcher man year compared to average/total
UiO	189.2	99.1	1.91	+ 76 %
UiB	79.5	78.0	1.02	- 6 %
NTNU	101.9	100.5	1.01	- 6 %
UiT	26.1	40.0	0.65	- 40 %
UiS	65.5	40.0	1.64	+ 52 %
HiBo	46.3	82.7	0.56	- 48 %
HiO	26.4	35.0	0.75	- 31 %
AFI	41.0	35.8	1.15	+ 6 %
FAFO	34.9	43.9	0.80	- 26 %
ISF	53.6	41.3	1.30	+ 20 %
NOVA	105.1	85.8	1.23	+ 14 %
SIFO	33.0	50.0	0.66	- 39 %
SSB	25.4	34.0	0.75	- 31 %
TOTAL	827.9	766.0	1.08	

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation.

In interpreting these figures it should be recalled that the conditions and traditions for doing research may differ between the units, e.g. in the amount of the teaching load and time available for doing research. For example, the activity of independent research institutes is generally dominated by contract research and the results are often published as “grey literature” like reports and less often as articles in journals and books. Nevertheless, institutes like ISF, NOVA, and AFI have a higher productivity than some the university departments.

In Table 3.3 the researchers are categorised according to their total number of article equivalents in the 5 year-period.

**Table 3.3** Norwegian sociology: Number of publications per researcher by academic position and gender (totals for 2004-2008). Per cent

Position	Gender	Article equivalents per year					*Mean	N (researchers)
		0	0.10-0.49	0.50-0.89	0.90-1.99	>2.00		
Full professors	Females	4%	12%	8%	44%	32%	1.44	25
	Males	6%	9%	32%	35%	18%	1.37	34
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>1.40</b>	<b>59</b>
Associate professors	Females	7%	29%	36%	7%	21%	0.99	14
	Males	20%	35%	30%	15%	0%	0.47	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>0.69</b>	<b>34</b>
Post doc etc. High edu inst	Females	0%	0%	33%	0%	67%	3.50	3
	Males	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0.25	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>1.87</b>	<b>6</b>
Researcher I	Females	7%	0%	47%	33%	13%	1.07	15
	Males	7%	7%	0%	60%	27%	1.69	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>1.38</b>	<b>30</b>
Researcher II	Females	25%	13%	29%	29%	4%	0.71	24
	Males	5%	37%	26%	32%	0%	0.68	19
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Total (per cent)</b>	Females	11%	12%	27%	30%	20%	1.15	81
	Males	5%	22%	24%	33%	11%	1.04	91
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>1.10</b>	<b>172</b>

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation (excluding 5 researchers without affiliations with their current department). Persons with administrative positions (e.g. head of departments) are redistributed based on their academic positions.

*Explanation:* In this table the units of analysis is researchers, *not* publications. The table shows the proportion of researchers with 0, 0.10-0.49, 0.50-0.89, 0.90-1.99, and 2.00 and above article equivalents in the period (row percentages).

\*The second last column shows the average number of article equivalents per researchers.

10% per cent of the sociologists have no article equivalents in the period. 17 % have 0.10-0.49 article equivalents per year. 15 % of the persons are prolific with more than 2.00 article equivalents per year (Table 3.3).

Full professors have a significantly higher article equivalent number than Associate professors (1.40 compared to 0.69), i.e. they have a larger percentage of researchers in the two highest equivalent categories compared to Associate professors. Similarly, persons with Researcher I position (highest academic position in the Institute sector) are more prolific than persons with Researcher II position (second highest academic position in the Institute sector), 1.38 and 0.70 article equivalents per researcher year, respectively.

Overall, the female sociologists are slightly more productive than the male sociologists, 1.15 and 1.04 article equivalents per year, respectively. The female professors and associate professors are more productive than their male colleagues, while the male Research I personnel have a higher productivity than female Researcher I.

As shown in Table 3.4, the publication activity varies both by age and gender. The productivity is highest for the personnel in the 30-39 age group, but the number of persons in this category is rather limited. Two of three of the included sociologists are above 50 years, and the productivity is higher for the above 60 than for the 50-59 age group, 1.19 and 1.00 article equivalents per year, respectively.

*Table 3.4 Norwegian sociology: Average number of article equivalents per year per researcher by age and gender (totals for 2004-2008). Means*

Age	Gender	Article equivalents per year				N (researchers)
		Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std. Deviation	
30-39	Females	1.71	0	6.5	2.06	9
	Males	0.70	0	1.4	0.55	6
	Total	1.31	0	6.5	1.67	15
40-49	Females	1.04	0	3.5	0.90	25
	Males	1.02	0	5.9	1.27	19
	Total	1.03	0	5.9	1.06	44
50-59	Females	1.14	0	2.7	0.90	28
	Males	0.87	0	4.0	0.84	30
	Total	1.00	0	4.0	0.87	58
60 and above	Females	1.06	0	2.3	0.68	19
	Males	1.26	0	4.8	1.12	36
	Total	1.19	0	4.8	0.99	55
<b>Total</b>	Females	1.15	0	6.5	1.04	81
	Males	1.04	0	5.9	1.04	91
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1.10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>172</b>

The sample includes the publications of the 177 researchers selected for the evaluation (excluding 5 researchers without affiliations with their current department).

# Appendix 1 “Level 2” journals and publishers

Table A 1 “Level 2” journals and publishers within sociology\*

Journals	Publishers		
Acta Sociologica	AltaMira Press	Intellect Ltd.	Stauffenburg Verlag
African Social Studies Series	Ashgate	James Currey Publishers	Suhrkamp
African Sources for African History	Belknap Press of Harvard University Press	John Benjamins Publishing Company	Syracuse University Press
American Journal of Sociology	Berg Publishers	Johns Hopkins University Press	T&T Clark
American Sociological Review	Berghahn Books	Kluwer Law International	University of British Columbia Press
Annual Review of Sociology	Blackwell Publishing	Lawrence Erlbaum Associates	University of California Press
British Journal of Sociology	Blackwell Verlag	Librairie Droz	University of Chicago Press
British Journal of Sociology of Education	Boydell & Brewer	LIT Verlag	University of Hawai'i Press
Comparative Studies in Society and History	Brepols	M. E. Sharpe	University of Michigan Press
Ethnic and Racial Studies	Brill Academic Publishers	Martinus Nijhoff Publishers	University of Minnesota Press
European Societies: The Official Journal of the European Sociological Association	C.H. Beck	Max Niemeyer	University of Pennsylvania Press
European Sociological Review	Cambridge University Press	MIT Press	University of Washington Press
International Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology	Columbia University Press	Mohr Siebeck	Universitätsverlag Winter
Policing & society	Continuum	Motilal Banarsidass	Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht
Religion and the Social Order	Cornell University Press	Mouton de Gruyter	Verlag J. B. Metzler
Social and Critical Theory	D.S. Brewer	Multilingual Matters	Verso
Social Forces	Duckworth	Ox Bow Press	Wallstein Verlag
Social problems	Duculot	Oxford University Press	Walter de Gruyter
Social Sciences in Asia	Duke University Press	Palgrave Macmillan	Waxmann Verlag
Society & Natural Resources	Edinburgh University Press	Peeters Publishers	Wilhelm Fink Verlag
Sociological methodology	Edition text + kritik	Pendragon Press	Yale University Press
Sociological Methods & Research	Edward Elgar Publishing	Polity Press	Zed Books
Sociological Review	Equinox Publishing	Praeger	
Sociological theory	Falmer Press	Prentice-Hall	
Sociology	Frank Cass Publishers	Presses Universitaires de France	
Sociology of education	Franz Steiner Verlag	Princeton University Press	
Sociology of Health and Illness	Harrassowitz Verlag	Rodopi	
Studies in Critical Social Sciences	Hart Publishing Ltd	Routledge	
Supplements to the Study of Time	Harvard University Press	RoutledgeFalmer	
Theory and society	Honoré Champion	Rowman & Littlefield Publishers	
Work and occupations	I.B. Tauris	Sage Publications	
Work, Employment and Society	IKO - Verlag	Stanford University Press	

\*) Journals and publishers accredited as level 2 journals by UHR's National Councils (ref. 1.1.2010). In the analysis also “level 2” journals in other subjects are included.

## Appendix 2 Performance based budgeting of Norwegian higher education institutions

### *Performance-based budgeting of Norwegian higher education institutions*

Part of the state core funding of Norwegian higher education institutions is based on performance indicators, comprising both education and research activities. In total, the research component accounts for about 15 per cent of the core funding (most of this, but not all, is performance-based). The performance-based education indicators account for about 25 per cent of core funding. The research component is the interesting one in our context – and particularly its publication score indicator (first implemented for the budget year 2006). The research component includes four indicators as shown in the table below. In total, 1.8 per cent of the core funding in the sector is allocated on the basis of the publication scores (more for the universities and less for the university colleges).

#### *Research indicators and their weighting*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Doctoral candidates	0.3
EU research funding	0.2
RCN research funding	0.2
Scholarly publications	0.3

Note: These are the present indicators and weights for the higher education sector. According to plans, a similar model will also be implemented for the institute sector.

The funding formula for publication activity includes two dimensions. First, articles in journals (ISSN-titles), articles in books and books/monographs (ISBN-titles) are given different weights. Moreover, publication outlets are divided into two levels in order to avoid an incentive to productivity only. The outlets given extra weight are those defined to be the leading and most selective international journals, series and publishers (limited to about 20 per cent of the publications). The national councils in each discipline or field of research participate annually in determining and revising the highest level under the guidance of the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions. The table below shows the relative weights given the different types of publications at the two levels.

#### *Publication weights*

<b>Publication type</b>	<b>Outlets at normal level</b>	<b>Outlets at high level</b>
Articles in ISSN-titles (journals)	1	3
Articles in ISBN-titles (books)	0.7	1
Books (ISBN-titles)	5	8

Note: Co-authored publications are shared among the participating institutions.

The formula only includes “scholarly publications”. Series in which more than two-thirds of the authors are from the same institution, for instance, are not included. There are plans for also including other types of publications and forms of communication, but so far these plans have not been implemented. The definition is that a scholarly publication must:


1. present new insight;
2. be presented in a form that allows the research findings to be verified and/or used in new research activity;
3. be written in a language and have a distribution that makes the publication accessible to most interested researchers;
4. appear in a publication channel (journal, series, book publisher, website) that has routines for external peer review. (Source: “Vekt på forskning” English translation, UHR 2007).

The effects of the new model remain to be studied – to what degree it gives proper incentives or negative side effects. In its first year the model in most cases resulted in only a marginal redistribution of research funds in the higher education sector, but it certainly focused more attention on research performance – and sparked heated debate about the funding model. The greatest effects were seen for UiO and NTNU, with the former emerging as the winner (with a NOK 45 million increase, whereas NTNU had a NOK 43 million decrease).

Source: Box 4.1 i “Norwegian Development Research – An Evaluation”. Oslo, Research Council of Norway, 2007.







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