

THE ANALYSIS OF
RETIREMENT IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA:
CASE OF FULL
PROFESSORS WHO DO
NOT JUSTIFY THEIR
ACADEMIC RANKS

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INTRODUCTION

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“REVOLUTION OR EVOLUTION?” – THAT IS NOT THE QUESTION

This analysis comes as a follow up from data collected in the December 2017 report titled “Academic Integrity of the Professors of University of Prishtina”, published by ORCA. In this report we found out that 72% of professors do not justify their academic ranks, when we take into account the criteria of scientific papers needed per academic rank. What we raised as a special issue was the case of 122 full professors, who have the highest academic rank and thus a contract for an undetermined amount of time. So, we are talking about professors who do not owe the University anymore, in the meaning of publishing scientific papers or academic or professional advancement, while their job position is inviolable.

The day the report was published there was debate and one of the issues raised by a participant related to the issue of the 122 full professors who do not justify their academic rank, was if we need a “revolution or evolution” as an approach to the issue of not justifying the academic ranks. The proposal was to not take measures, but to wait a short time so that the professors who do not justify their academic ranks will slowly retire, assuming that they aging will in turn improve the quality. This was the “evolution” approach proposed against our “revolution” recommendations for verifying ranks by a central authority.

While we know that in academia it is said that progress is slow and also doubting for a second that we could be naïve, we dug in to see what evolution would mean in the case of professors who do not justify their academic ranks.

From this analysis we saw that:

The last full professor who doesn’t justify their academic rank will retire in 2036. This means that children who are currently 3 years old will be mentored by this professor in their bachelor thesis; children who are 5 years old will be mentored by this professor in their master thesis; and children who are 10 years old now have the opportunity to be mentored by this professor in their PhD dissertation.

This analysis provides progressive data, meaning years in continuation, of the retirement of professors who do not justify their academic ranks in all academic units, with a special focus on full professors for the reasons mentioned before.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The University of Prishtina declares on its website that they have 42,006 students and 900 academic staff members. From a simple calculation we can see that the ratio of academic staff and students in the University of Prishtina is 1:47. Aarhus University in Denmark in 2016 had the ratio of academic staff – students of 1:4, while the Vienna University in 2016/2017 had a ratio of 1:14.

In 2017, the University of Prishtina had 481 CVs of professors with academic ranks (assistant professor, associate professor and full professors) in their website. Out of 481, 346 (or 72%) do not justify their academic ranks.¹ Out of 346 professors who do not justify their academic ranks, 122 are full professors.

In 2018, 21 professors who do not justify their academic ranks retired. 16 of them were full professors.

33 other professors of different ranks who do not justify their academic ranks continue to teach.

The last full professor who doesn't justify their academic rank will retire in 2036. This means that children who are currently 3 years old will be

mentored by this professor in their bachelor thesis; children who are 5 years old will be mentored by this professor in their master thesis; and children who are 10 years old now have the opportunity to be mentored by this professor in their PhD dissertation.

The University of Prishtina must create serious mechanisms and policies that address the issue of professors not justifying their academic ranks.

The University of Prishtina must also desist from the practice of continuing the employment of retired professors, especially in cases when these professors do not justify their academic ranks.

The University of Prishtina must increase the number of academic staff per student in accordance with the standards of quality of academic staff foreseen by the dispositions in power.

A general assessment of academic ranks in higher education institutions is needed. A mechanism or an institution with international participation to verify and unify the academic ranking must be created.

1. The Academic Integrity of Professors of the University of Prishtina, ORCA, December 2017, link: <http://orca-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/The-Academic-Integrity-of-Professors-of-the-University-of-Prishtina.pdf>

RESULTS

“Academic Integrity of Professors of the University of Prishtina”² published by ORCA on December 2017, revealed that 346 out of 481 professors (or 72%) do not justify their academic ranks based on the methodology outlined below.

140 out of 481 professors are full professors (meaning that they have a permanent contract with the university); 122 out of 140 do not justify their academic rank based on the methodology.

The analytic approach of this paper is to understand the age factor in correlation with the retirement of professors who do not justify their academic rank. The retirement age in Kosovo is 65 years old, regulated by the law on pension schemes financed by the state.³ The law does not limit the right to work after retirement, and in the case of the University of Prishtina many employees, specifically employees with academic ranks, such as professors, continue to teach even after they retire.

This analysis brings the exact number of current professors who are of retirement age in 2018, or have already passed this age.

Full professors who do not justify their academic rank

Out of 346 professors who do not justify their academic rank, 122 are full professors (in total: 140 full professors were employed up to December 2017, which means only 18 full professors justify their current

academic title), which is the highest and permanent academic rank.

Out of 122 full professors who do not justify their academic rank, 36 or 29% are expected to retire in 2018 as they are 65 years old or more. 75 or 61% of full professors who do not justify their academic rank are expected to retire over the course of the next 18 years; meaning that the youngest full professor who doesn't justify his rank will retire in 2036. 11 cases were not able to be tracked as the professors didn't publish their CVs or didn't declare their date of birth. For three cases, we were able to confirm through other sources such as a faculty website⁴ or media⁵ that one professor retired and is no longer employed, while two other professors have already entered the retirement age but are still employed according to the faculty website.

Furthermore, out of the 36 professors who are expected to be retired in 2018, only 16 or 44% of them retired, while the remaining 56% or 20 are still teaching. Overall, 16 (13%) out of 122 full professors who do not justify their academic rank retired, which means 87% or 106 full professors who do not justify their academic rank are still part of academic staff of the University of Prishtina.

2. Ibid.

3. LAW NO. 04/L-131 ON PENSION SCHEMES FINANCED BY THE STATE
Link: <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=9517>

4. Academic staff, link: <https://juridiku.uni-pr.edu/Personeli/Personeli-akademik.aspx>

5. UP professor is promoted ten days before his retirement, 31.05.2017,
Link: <https://kallxo.com/avancohet-profesori-se-10-dite-para-pensionimit/>

Years of retirement	Full professors who do not justify their academic ranks	
2018	36	29%
2019-2036	75	61%
Cannot be determined	11	10%

Table 1. The table of full professors who do not justify their academic rank and the expected retirement rate

Full professors who do not justify their academic rank 2018-2036		
Retired	16	13%
Not retired	106	87%
TOTAL	122	100%

Table 2. Full Professors who do not justify their academic rank: retired and not retired.

Detailed timeline of full professors' retirement		
Year of retirement	Current age	No. of full professors who do not justify their academic rank
2018	69	2
	68	5
	67	6
	66	11
	65	12
2019	64	11
2020	63	6
2021	62	10
2022	61	10
2023	60	8
2024	59	6
2025	58	7
2026	57	2
2027	56	6
2028	55	3
2029	54	2
2030	53	0
2031	52	1
2032	51	0
2033	50	2
2034	49	0
2035	48	0
2036	47	1
N/A	N/A	11
2018-2036		122

Table 3. Detailed timeline of retirement of full professors who do not justify their academic rank

The retirement age of professors who do not justify their academic ranks (assistant professors, associate professors and full professors) - 2018

In 2018, 54 professors who do not justify their academic rank were 65 years old or more; 36 or 67% of them are full professors, 11 or 20% are associate professors, and seven or 13% are assistant professors.

Out of 54, 21 or 39% of the professors who do not justify their academic rank are retired from work, while 33 or 61% are still teaching.

Out of the 21 professors who retired, 16 are full professors, three are associate professors and two are assistant professors.

Out of the 33 (61%) professors who are still teaching, 20 are full professors, eight are associate professors and five are assistant professors.

Professors retired in 2018	21	39%
Professors above 65 still teaching	33	61%
Total number of professors above 65 in 2018	54	100%

Table 4. Total number of professors who do not justify their academic rank who are 65 or more in 2018 – retired from the University, and still teaching.

Professors who do not justify their academic rank (expected to retire in 2018)			Retired in 2018		Not retired in 2018	
Academic rank	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Full professor	36	67%	16	44%	20	56%
Associate professor	11	20%	3	27%	8	73%
Assistant professor	7	13%	2	29%	5	71%
Total	54	100%	21	38%	33	61%

Table 5. Detailed outline of professor who do not justify their academic ranks who are 65 or more, according to academic ranks and whether they retired in 2018.

Overview per academic unit

In 2018, the number of employed professors decreased by 2%, where 33 professors are no longer listed as academic staff in the website of the University of Prishtina. 23 new professors were added to the academic staff of UP. In total 471 professors are currently employed at the University of Prishtina, whereas last year the total number of employed professors was 481.

Out of the 33 professors who are no longer listed as academic staff, 21 of them are 65 years or more according to their birthdates in the official CVs published on the website of their academic units, while for the 12 professors who are no longer listed, the reason is not related to retirement or it wasn't possible to verify their age on the official CVs.

	FACULTIES	2017	New Academic Staff	Absent Staff for unknown reasons 2018	Absent professors due to retirement 2018	2018
1	Faculty of Education	36	2			38
2	Faculty of Physical and Sportive Education	14				14
3	Faculty of Law	40	2			42
4	Faculty of Philosophy	32	2	1	1	32
5	Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences	62	8	3	2	65
6	Faculty of Economy	45				45
7	Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering	23	2	1	3	21
8	Faculty of Mechanical Engineering	29	2		2	29
9	Faculty of Medicine	95	2	1	7	89
10	Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary	33				33
11	Faculty of Philology	50		6	6	38
12	Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture	22	3			25
Total number of academic staff		481	23	12	21	471

Table 6. The total number of academic staff in 2017 and 2018, new staff and retired staff.

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH OF CVS

Legal Basis

1. Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Kosovo⁶

2. University of Prishtina Statute, article 175⁷

3. Recommendation 1/344 of the University of Prishtina Senate on relevant scientific publications for electing academic staff was taken into consideration only as orientation in cases when it was not in contradiction with the Statute, especially since ORCA has published its analysis on the disparities between the Recommendation 1/344 and the UP Statute).⁸

ORCA has researched the publications in international scientific journals, defined as a criterion by the Law on Higher Education in Kosovo, the University of Prishtina Statute for receiving one of the academic ranks: assistant professor, associate professor or full professor. This criterion ensures continued scientific activity, which is key to gaining knowledge on contemporary methods and results, upon which teaching and sustainable scientific contribution is guaranteed.

Research object

The CVs of 122 full professors with regular work relationships in 12 faculties of the University of Prishtina who do not fulfil the criteria to be full professors according to the Law on Higher Education and the University of Prishtina Statute.

Because of the specific nature of their work, ORCA did not research the artistic work that is the criteria equivalent to scientific papers for the Faculty of Arts. Thus, Faculty of Arts professors were not researched by ORCA.

The duration of research

All the CVs that were researched were taken from the official website of the University of Prishtina, uni-pr.edu, during the research period of 01.06.2017-31.08.2017. To guarantee the accuracy of the data, these CVs went through a second round of research during the time period of 01.09.2017 – 30.09.2017. All changes evidenced during the second round of research were applied in the database upon which this report was built.

The retirement research was conducted in December 2017, and was double checked in April 2018. All changes evidenced during the second round of research were applied in the database upon which this report was built.

6. The Law on Higher Education, Link:<https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=2761>

7. The Statute of the University of Prishtina

8. Recommendation 1/344 of the University of Prishtina's Senate, approved on 22.06.2017

Methodology: researching justification for academic ranks

Regardless of when professors received their academic ranks, ORCA researched the justification for their rankings as per the legal regulations in force. While it is clear that some professors have received academic ranks at a time when there were other provisions in power, ORCA has tried to present the current situation of scientific papers published in scientific journals that fulfil the criteria and principles defined in this methodology.

For the academic rank of full professor, the professor must have at least five scientific papers in peer reviewed international scientific journals, relevant according to the Statute of University of Prishtina, as first or corresponding author.⁹

Qualifications of a scientific paper

Based on the judiciary acts mentioned above, ORCA did not qualify papers published in conference proceedings, reports, projects or books that are not international scientific journals as relevant publications.

Papers that are in the process of being published, or papers for which the authors have received confirmation or anything else from the journals, but have not been published, are not qualified as relevant scientific publications by the Statute of the University of Prishtina, and were not included as scientific papers in our research.

Papers in regional scientific journals, have to be indexed in at least one of the academic indexing databases, Scopus or Web of Science, to be relevant. Thus, ORCA did not qualify the papers in regional journals outside of these databases as relevant.¹⁰

ORCA also did not qualify papers that were only published as abstracts and that cannot be accessed even through subscriptions as relevant for the aforementioned criterion.

Documents upon which the research was based

The papers published in journals on lists of predatory journals were not considered as relevant scientific publications. The methodology used by ORCA to identify predatory journals is based on:

1. Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing compiled by some of the most prestigious organizations of scientific publishing: Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA), World Association of Medical Editors (WAME);¹¹

2. Jeffrey Beall's lists, updated last on January 2017.¹²

In cases when publications were in predatory journals, ORCA accepted them if at the time of the publication the journal was indexed in academic indexing databases Web of Science or Scopus.¹³

9. Article 175, point 1.2.1 of the UP Statute

10. Point 3 of Recommendation 1/344

11. Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing <https://publicationethics.org/files/Principles%20of%20Transparency%20and%20Best%20Practice%20in%20Scholarly%20Publishing.pdf>

12. Criteria for Determining Predatory Open-Access Publishers by Jeffrey Beall <https://beallist.weebly.com/uploads/3/0/9/5/30958339/criteria-2015.pdf>

13. Point 5 of Recommendation 1/344

PRINCIPLES OF TRANSPARENCY BY COPE, DOAJ, OASPA AND WAME:

1. Peer review process: All of a journal's content, apart from any editorial material that is clearly marked as such, shall be subjected to peer review. Peer review is defined as obtaining advice on individual manuscripts from reviewers who are experts in the field and who are not part of the journal's editorial staff. This process, as well as any policies related to the journal's peer review procedures, shall be clearly described on the journal's website.
2. Governing Body: Journals shall have editorial boards or other governing bodies whose members are recognized experts in the subject areas included within the journal's scope. The full names and affiliations of the journal's editors shall be provided on the journal's website.
3. Editorial team/contact information journals shall provide the full names and affiliations of the journal's editors on the journal's website as well as contact information for the editorial office.
4. Author fees: Any fees or charges that are required for manuscript processing and/or publishing materials in the journal shall be clearly stated in a place that is easy for potential authors to find prior to submitting their manuscripts for review or explained to authors before they begin preparing their manuscript for submission.
5. Copyright: Copyright and licensing information shall be clearly described on the journal's website, and licensing terms shall be indicated on all published articles, both HTML and PDFs.
6. Identification of and dealing with allegations of research misconduct: Publishers and editors shall take reasonable steps to identify and prevent the publication of papers where research misconduct has occurred, including plagiarism, citation manipulation, and data falsification/fabrication, among others. In no case shall a journal or its editors encourage such misconduct, or knowingly allow such misconduct to take place. In the event that a journal's publisher or editors are made aware of any allegation of research misconduct relating to a published article in their journal – the publisher or editor shall follow COPE's guidelines (or equivalent) in dealing with allegations.
7. Ownership and management: Information about the ownership and/or management of a journal shall be clearly indicated on the journal's website. Publishers shall not use organizational names that would mislead potential authors and editors about the nature of the journal's owner.
8. Web site: A journal's website, including the text that it contains, shall demonstrate that care has been taken to ensure high ethical and professional standards.
9. Name of journal: The journal name shall be unique and not be one that is easily confused with another journal or that might mislead potential authors and readers about the journal's origin or association with other journals.
10. Conflicts of interest: A journal shall have clear policies on handling potential conflicts of interest of editors, authors, and reviewers and the policies should be clearly stated.

11. Access: The way(s) in which the journal and individual articles are available to readers and whether there are associated subscription or pay per view fees shall be stated.
12. Revenue sources: Business models or revenue sources (ie, author fees, subscriptions, advertising, reprints, institutional support, and organizational support) shall be clearly stated or otherwise evident on the journal's website.
13. Advertising: Journals shall state their advertising policy if relevant, including what types of ads will be considered, who makes decisions regarding accepting ads and whether they are linked to content or reader behavior (online only) or are displayed at random.
14. Publishing schedule: The periodicity at which a journal publishes shall be clearly indicated.
15. Archiving: A journal's plan for electronic backup and preservation of access to the journal content (for example, access to main articles via CLOCKSS or PubMed Central) in the event a journal is no longer published shall be clearly indicated.
16. Direct marketing: Any direct marketing activities, including solicitation of manuscripts that are conducted on behalf of the journal, shall be appropriate, well targeted, and unobtrusive.

Other indicators that define predatory journals by the methodology used for listing such journals by Jeffrey Beall

A journal is considered predatory:

1. If the editing staff of the journal hold relevant scientific positions in the respective field and the members of the journal's editorial team continuously publish in that journal.
2. If working contact details of the editing staff are not accessible on the journal's website.
3. If the journal promotes the fact that it is listed on predatory or confusing indices, such as Index Copernicus etc. A serious journal should not be promoting its listing on predatory indices.
4. The frequency in which the journal is published is not stated clearly and should not be subject to drastic fluctuations in time.
5. If the papers published in a journal are characterized by grammar and spelling errors (in English), and has inadequate presentation of symbols used in numerical calculations. Any serious journal should have capacities for proof-reading.
6. If the published papers in a journal are characterized with aesthetic divergences or are not written in the format requested by the paper. For example, if two papers on the same journal are written in different styles, or if one paper is written in one style/format in some parts, and in a different style/format in other parts.

ORCA does not judge the knowledge or the intention of authors as for their publications in predatory journals, but is sufficient with evidencing the situation.

Individual and collective research

Every researcher had a certain number of CVs randomly assigned. Each researcher researched if the journal where the scientific paper was published violated the aforementioned principles. The researchers checked if the scientific journal fulfilled the criteria placed by the Principles of Transparency on legitimate scientific journals, or whether they fulfilled the criteria placed by Beall's list of predatory journals.

The data extracted from the research was placed in a standardized database where further collective research was conducted.

After the individual research was concluded, the first round of researchers' college gathered to review each journal listed by the researcher. After the review, the results were sent to an external consultant for a double review and for professional expertise. After the consultant's results, the second researchers' college gathered to review the results of the consultant and concluded the research with a consensus.

Methodology of retiring professors

Based on the research of CVs conducted in 2017 (methodology outlined in the first section), we had raw data on how many professors fulfilled the criteria to be professors at the University of Prishtina.

This data was then analysed based on age, specifically retirement age. We researched the retirement year of 122 full professors (who have permanent contracts with the University), who do not fulfil the criteria to be professors, to see when they will retire.

This research was based on official documents, such as the CVs of the professors where they declared their birthdate, media reports, and the official website of the University of Prishtina.

The research was conducted in December 2017 and updated in April 2018.

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