

Chapter 2

Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe

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Introduction

One of the principal objectives of the European Union (EU) is to allow the free movement of labour. In the early years of the twenty-first century, increasing numbers of archaeologists sought to take advantage of opportunities in countries other than their own, and the *Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe* project sought to examine how this mobility of individual workers was affecting archaeological practice in Europe.

Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe examined the archaeological labour market across 12 EU states between 2006 and 2008. With archaeological practice organised in very different ways in the participating states, differing structures might have been leading to obstacles that limited opportunities for individual archaeologists.

As well as looking at obstacles and opportunities, this project also established the numbers of archaeologists working in each of these states and examined other labour market information and trends, such as the age, gender and qualifications of these archaeologists and explored training investment by archaeological employers.

The project was primarily funded by the European Union through the European Commission (EC)'s Leonardo da Vinci II funding stream. The EC contributed 225,469 € (47%) of a total budget of 482,504 €, with project partners identifying their own national sources of funding that covered the remaining 257,035 € (53%). Much of the data presented in this chapter first appeared (in slightly different form) in Aitchison (2009a) and the analysis in Aitchison (2010).

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Overview

The project, as originally planned, involved participation by organisations in the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Greece and Cyprus. At the project development stage, and when an application for funding was made to the European Commission, it was also hoped that a Maltese partner would be able to participate, but unfortunately they had to withdraw. However, the budget that had originally been assigned to work in Malta was reallocated to allow a partner from Slovakia to join the project at an early stage.

A range of different kinds of organisations were represented in this partnership—two professional associations (the Institute for Archaeologists in the UK and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland), a trade association (Syllogos Ellinon Archaiologon in Greece), two universities (the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium and the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia), the state Department of Antiquities in Cyprus, the archaeological components of the national Academies of Science in the Czech and Slovak Republics, the German association of regional state archaeologists and a private company (Vestigia in the Netherlands).

Subsequently, after the project had started work, the professional association for archaeologists in Hungary and a forum for Austrian archaeologists asked if they could join and contribute to the project's work. They were able to do so, although they could not receive any funding from the European Commission and so had to completely self-fund their research.

Activity

Each partner led a national survey and produced a detailed report on archaeological employment in their country, in their national language(s) and English. All of these are hosted on the project's website, <http://www.discovering-archaeologists.eu>. In addition to these, two transnational reports were produced—one comparing the results across the 12 states (Aitchison 2009a) and one comparing qualifications (Collis 2009).

Results

Structures

Archaeological practice in the participating states was organised on different models, with varying levels of commercial activity balanced against state agency engagement. Different states define who can be considered to be an archaeologist in different ways; in some states, the definition of “an archaeologist” can be a

Table 2.1 Professional archaeologists by country

Country	Number of archaeologists	Number of support staff	Total
Austria	743	222	965
Belgium	765	467	1,232
Cyprus	52	437	491
Czech Republic	425	352	777
Germany	2,500	8,049	10,549
Greece	1,856	Unknown	1,856
Hungary	620	Unknown	620
Ireland	1,709	102	1,811
Netherlands	761	275	1,036
Slovak Republic	186	121	307
Slovenia	175	Unknown	175
United Kingdom	6,865	866	7,731
Total	16,657	10,891	27,550

protected title, legally only available to individual with particular qualifications or credentials, while in others (such as the United Kingdom) there are no formal restrictions upon who can be called an archaeologist. This project tried to take as broad a view as reasonably possible, in order to include data on all the individuals who work on gathering, interpreting or presenting archaeological material.

Employment

Across the 12 participating states, an estimated 16,657 people worked as archaeologists at the time of the surveys, representing 0.02% of the combined total workforces of those states. The highest proportion of the total workforce that were archaeologists was in Ireland, where archaeologists made up 0.10% of the total workforce. In the states where archaeology is primarily a private-sector activity, relatively far more jobs are available than in the countries where archaeological work is primarily undertaken by state agencies (Tables 2.1 and 2.2).

Nature of the Workforce

Of the archaeologists for whom data were available about their genders, 54% were male and 46% female. This closely matched the proportions in the total EU workforce of 53:47 (Romans and Preclin 2008). Only in Greece and Cyprus were the relative numbers of female archaeologists significantly higher (Table 2.3).

Table 2.2 Percentage of workers that are professional archaeologists

Country	Number of archaeologists	Total number of all workers (from Romans and Preclin 2008)	% that are archaeologists
Austria	743	3,450,000	0.02
Belgium	765	3,731,000	0.02
Cyprus	52	301,000	0.02
Czech Republic	425	4,125,000	0.01
Germany	2,500	33,649,000	0.01
Greece	1,856	2,899,000	0.06
Hungary	620	3,440,000	0.02
Ireland	1,709	1,749,000	0.10
Netherlands	761	7,349,000	0.01
Slovak Republic	186	2,044,000	0.01
Slovenia	175	829,000	0.02
United Kingdom	6,865	24,561,000	0.03
Total	16,657	88,127,000	0.02

Table 2.3 Archaeologists' genders

Country	Female		Male	
Austria	233	51%	221	49%
Belgium	357	47%	408	53%
Cyprus	36	69%	16	31%
Czech Republic	134	32%	291	68%
Germany	717	37%	1,220	63%
Greece	872	76%	272	24%
Hungary	244	48%	264	52%
Ireland	359	45%	438	55%
Netherlands	130	37%	218	63%
Slovak Republic	66	36%	119	64%
Slovenia	22	45%	27	55%
United Kingdom	1,013	41%	1,432	59%
Total	4,183	46%	4,926	54%

On average, European archaeologists were 39 years old. Very few European archaeologists were disabled—1.5% of the total number of workers for whom data were available. Only in Germany was there significant variation from the low average figure, as 6.0% of German archaeologists were considered to be disabled.

Nature of the Work

Across the 12 participating states, 86% of the archaeologists for whom data were available worked full-time and 14% part-time. This is comparable to the overall EU ratio for all workers of 82:18, but few states actually reported proportions

Table 2.4 Archaeologists' average earnings by state

Country	Average salary for archaeologists	Average archaeological salary compared with national average (%)	National average salary for all workers	Gross total archaeological salaries (workers × average salary)
Austria	31,518 €	122	25,797 €	23.4 m €
Belgium	28,819 €	104	27,780 €	22.0 m €
Cyprus	40,656 €	175	23,122 €	2.1 m €
Czech Republic	10,145 €	108	9,455 €	4.3 m €
Germany	31,071 €	108	29,016 €	77.7 m €
Greece	28,925 €	108	26,987 €	53.7 m €
Hungary	11,432 €	119	9,619 €	7.1 m €
Ireland	37,680 €	97	38,745 €	64.4 m €
Netherlands	Unknown	Unknown	30,000 €	Unknown
Slovak Republic	6,030 €	83	7,248 €	1.1 m €
Slovenia	16,827 €	111	15,116 €	2.9 m €
United Kingdom	34,392 €	78	44,261 €	236.1 m €
All states (nb all workers: 2005 figure)	31,134 €	107	28,992 €	518.6 m €

close to this figure, as on a state-by-state basis it was either normal for there to be nearly no part-time archaeologists or for approximately one in four archaeologists to work part-time.

Salaries

Typically, in the 11 participating states for which salary data were available, archaeologists were paid slightly more than the national average, and the calculated average salary for all archaeologists studied was slightly higher (107%) than the EU average for all workers. Where archaeological practice was principally undertaken by state agencies, archaeologists' salaries tended to be higher than where archaeology was largely undertaken as a commercial activity, but far fewer individuals work in the profession. This is best demonstrated by the data from Cyprus, which simultaneously has the smallest working population of archaeologists of any country that participated in the project and the highest average salaries. By contrast, in the UK, where there were far more archaeologists working than in any other participant country—almost entirely because of the size of the private sector in UK archaeology—average archaeological salaries were only 78% of the average for all workers, lower than in any other participating country (Table 2.4).

Table 2.5 Organisations reporting growth (of staff numbers)—numbers represent percentage of organisations reporting growth minus percentage of organisations reporting shrinkage

Country	Growth over previous 5 years (since 2002–03) (%)	Growth over previous 3 years (since 2004–05) (%)	Growth over previous year (since 2006–07) (%)
Austria	–18	–22	–14
Belgium	+24	+15	+6
Cyprus	+23	+29	+29
Czech Republic	+30	+23	+6
Germany	+8	0	–2
Greece	+11	+2	–10
Hungary	Unknown		
Ireland	+39	+32	+21
Netherlands	+61	+54	+36
Slovak Republic	+20	+11	+2
Slovenia	+45	+4	–4
United Kingdom	+18	+17	+10

Table 2.6 Organisations anticipating growth (of staff numbers)

Country	Growth in the next year (2008–09) (%)	Growth in the next 3 years (to 2010–11) (%)
Austria	+4	–3
Belgium	+3	+12
Cyprus	+33	+33
Czech Republic	+11	+21
Germany	–2	–12
Greece	+2	+39
Hungary	Unknown	
Ireland	+26	+42
Netherlands	+27	+38
Slovak Republic	+9	+3
Slovenia	+13	+32
United Kingdom	+14	+26

Growth of the Sector

In almost all participating states, in terms of the number of people employed, archaeology had expanded over the 5 years prior to the survey and (at the time data were collected, typically in 2007) further growth was anticipated. Since then, the global economic crisis has adversely affected archaeology in many of the participating states (Aitchison 2009b), and the confident perspectives of 2007–08 have to be seen as a snapshot of those times. Interestingly, archaeologists in the two Germanophone states were those with the least optimistic future outlook (Tables 2.5 and 2.6).

Table 2.7 Highest level of qualifications gained

Country	School level		Undergraduate degree		Postgraduate (masters) degree		Doctorate		Post-doctorate (habilitation)	
Austria	235	48%	5	1%	113	23%	108	22%	29	6%
Belgium	0	0%	0	0%	108	87%	16	13%	0	0%
Cyprus	0	0%	4	8%	23	44%	25	48%	0	0%
Czech Republic	5	2%	13	4%	219	70%	50	16%	26	8%
Germany	412	45%	47	5%	232	25%	184	20%	48	5%
Greece	0	0%	704	53%	401	29%	234	17%	2	1%
Hungary	0	0%	0	0%	415	82%	76	15%	17	3%
Ireland	165	20%	315	39%	298	37%	25	3%	4	<1%
Netherlands	17	6%	2	1%	141	50%	122	43%	0	0%
Slovak Republic	0	0%	1	1%	103	62%	37	22%	24	15%
Slovenia	6	12%	27	54%	7	14%	9	18%	1	2%
United Kingdom	97	4%	1,266	55%	672	29%	263	11%	9	<1%
Total	937	13%	2,384	32%	2,732	37%	1,149	16%	160	2%

Corrected and updated from Aitchison (2009a, 18) using information from Karl (2008, 68) and Krausse and Nübold (2008, 44–46), treating German and Austrian *Fachhochschule* vocational degrees as the equivalent of undergraduate degrees elsewhere and *Magister* awards from universities as the academic equivalent of postgraduate degrees awarded elsewhere

Qualifications

In every participating state, it was normal for people working as archaeologists to hold a degree.

In eight of the participating countries less than 2% of practitioners were not graduates. The only exceptions to this were Slovenia, where a relatively small dataset may have skewed the results, Ireland, where 20% of workers do not hold degrees, and both Austria and Germany. In the two German-speaking countries, it is normal for labourers to be employed in archaeological fieldwork projects (often including participants drawn from AMS-Maßnahmen, 1-Euro Worker or Arbeitsbeschaffungsmaßnahmen) whereas in all of the other partner countries almost all fieldwork is undertaken by graduate level workers.

Five percent of archaeologists had gained their highest qualification in a European Union state other than the state in which they now work (Table 2.7).

Countries of Origin

Ninety-two percent of archaeologists in the 12 countries studied worked in the state of their own origin. A further 6% were from other EU states, with 1% of workers coming from outside the European Union. This demonstrates that archaeologists are more transnationally mobile than the European Union average [2.2% of the European workforce live in another EU member state and non-EU nationals

Table 2.8 Countries of origin

Country	Total number of individuals for whom data are available	Number working in home state		Number from elsewhere in European Union		Number from elsewhere in world	
Austria	479	90%	433	8%	37	2%	9
Belgium	124	98%	121	2%	3	0%	0
Cyprus	52	79%	41	15%	9	4%	2
Czech Republic	313	98%	306	2%	7	0%	0
Germany	1,858	95%	1,773	3%	56	2%	29
Greece	1,570	99%	1,560	1%	8	<1%	2
Hungary	508	93%	473	5%	25	2%	10
Ireland	485	55%	269	42%	202	3%	14
Netherlands	499	95%	476	3%	16	1%	7
Slovak Republic	174	98%	171	1%	2	1%	1
Slovenia	126	95%	120	5%	6	0%	0
United Kingdom	2,611	93%	2,342	5%	130	2%	49
Total	8,799	92%	8,085	6%	501	1%	123

comprise 3.8% of the EU workforce (EC 2008)], although there are obstacles relating to qualifications, licensing and language competencies preventing full transnationality in some states.

The most remarkable figures relating to countries of origin were from Ireland, where 45% of archaeologists working in that country in 2007 were not from the island of Ireland. This was in response to a boom in archaeological employment related to an period of major road-building projects; following this survey, the end of those projects, combined with the effects of the global economic crisis, mean that the numbers of people working in Irish archaeology declined rapidly (Eogan and Sullivan 2009) and it is considered that many of those non-Irish archaeologists may have either left the sector or the country (Table 2.8).

Barriers to Mobility

The aim of this project was to improve understanding of the requirements for, and capacity to provide, transparent qualifications for archaeologists across Europe. By permitting qualifications obtained in one country to be recognised in another would better facilitate transnational mobility.

The project has shown that there are opportunities for archaeologists to move from one state to another to work, and it has successfully identified that in order to find employment in the 12 participant EU member states, archaeologists need to be qualified, normally at least at graduate level.

While some archaeologists are able to work outside their own countries, this does not mean that the qualifications that archaeologists hold are universally accepted in all states other than their own. Often, this is compounded by different traditions of licensing systems (to obtain permits to undertake intrusive investigations). While these are frequently based, at least in part, upon academic qualifications, restrictive licensing requirements can block free movement of archaeological practitioners from one state to another.

Collis' analysis of the qualification results (2009, 16) considers that there was an obstacle to free movement here, as there was not yet a system of qualifications in the European Union which would allow correlation of degrees between countries, with the major problems for archaeology specifically being:

1. The lack of a first degree in archaeology in some countries
2. The differences in the legal definition of an archaeologist (or the lack of such a legal status)
3. The different aims of university degrees in the content of courses and the way in which they are examined, leading to variation in the acceptability of diplomas in other countries or institutions (e.g., to change courses)
4. The differing structures in the way in which field archaeology, especially excavations, are organised, and the personnel taking part
5. Differences in the nature of the Doctorate and Habilitation

However, he does recognise that the adoption of the Bologna declaration (EHA 1999) will potentially make movement easier for individual students.

The project also found that archaeologists will need language skills (which are sometimes an absolute requirement in order to be able to practice) to be able to work in states other than their own.

Training Needs

Issues relating to specific training needs were assessed in each participating country, but because of the variety of ways in which these questions were asked by the project partners (in order to accommodate the differing structures and approaches to archaeological work in each participating member state), the information obtained cannot be usefully compared from state to state.

Further Outcomes

The project's results for Austria were potentially the most controversial, with serious issues being raised regarding the relationships of particular employer organisations, alluded to in Karl (2008) and discussed in further detail in Karl (2011).

Conclusions and Future Plans

Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe found that over 500 million € was being spent on archaeologists' salaries in 12 European states in 2007–08. With staff costs typically representing 70% of the expenditure involved in archaeological practice, this suggests that around 740 million € was spent on archaeology in those countries at that time, with over 16,500 professional archaeological workers delivering this service.

This was data collection and analysis on a previously unprecedented scale, quantifying and documenting the roles, responsibilities and rewards of archaeologists around Europe, with subsequent analysis and comparison of the political structures that these people are working within, comparing and contrasting state and non-state models of delivery and management.

Some broadly comparable work has been done in other parts of the world, with research in Australia (Ulm et al. 2012) being deliberately modelled on the *Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe* model and producing an estimate that there were between 500 and 600 professional archaeologists working in Australia in 2010. Lawler (2010) directly applied the methodology of the project in Bosnia-Herzegovina and produced an estimate of between 25 and 35 individual archaeologists working in that country.

Giraud (2010, 161) estimated there were 3,500 archaeologists working in France in 2008, the majority of whom (c. 55%) work for the quasi-autonomous non-governmental agency INRAP, which had a budget of 137 million € in 2008 (ibid., 158) and Parga-Dans (2010, 48) presented a detailed analysis of commercial archaeology in Spain in 2008, which included an estimate of 2,358 archaeologists working for commercial companies in that country.

The number of people working in Japanese archaeology, which is largely delivered through a non-competitive system but which has been having to cope with ongoing national economic difficulties since the 1990s, declined from a peak in 2000 of 7,111 individuals to 6,255 in 2008 (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2009).

Previous estimates of the numbers working in US archaeology (Zeder 1998) have focussed on those engaged in academic archaeology, but Altschul and Patterson (2010) presented an estimate of 11,350 people working as professional archaeologists in all sectors across the USA in 2008, with expenditure on cultural resource management being estimated at between US\$600 million and US\$1 billion (433–721 million €) (Table 2.9).

The only previously published estimate of the total number of archaeologists working in the whole world has been presented by Flatman (2011, 10), who produced a figure of c. 40,000 archaeologists working in global archaeology; this figure is fair, but, considering the figures brought together here (a total of at least 40,000 working in the *Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe* countries, plus Bosnia, France, Spain, Australia, Japan and the USA—which certainly includes the countries with the largest working populations in the sector, but does not include much of Europe, parts of north America, parts of Asia and all of Africa

Table 2.9 Published estimates of the numbers of working archaeologists (2008–10)

Country	Number of archaeologists
Austria	743
Belgium	765
Cyprus	52
Czech Republic	425
Germany	2,500
Greece	1,856
Hungary	620
Ireland	1,709
Netherlands	761
Slovak Republic	186
Slovenia	175
United Kingdom	6,865
Bosnia-Herzegovina	30
Australia	550
France	3,500
Spain	2,358
Japan	6,255
USA	11,350
Total	40,700

and South America), Flatman is perhaps slightly conservative and there may be closer to 50,000 people earning a living from professional archaeology in the world in 2011.

Individual archaeologists, employers and policy makers are now able to compare the nature of archaeological work in 12 European states. As well as providing this labour market intelligence, the aim of this project was to improve understanding of the requirements for, and capacity to provide, transparent qualifications for archaeologists across Europe, so making it easier for individuals to live and work in states other than their own.

The European Commission's feedback on the completion of the project was overwhelmingly positive and can be read as being potentially supportive of any future iteration of the project. Previously, such workforce data had been collected in only the United Kingdom (on two previous occasions) and in Ireland (once before). In those countries, the data has been able to feed into longitudinal analyses of change over time, and it is hoped that if the survey could be repeated again in the future then opportunities to identify trends would be enhanced. As well as expanding the time range, the spread of the research could also be expanded. Firm interest in participation in any future project has already having been received from potential partners in Spain, Romania, Portugal and Poland and colleagues in several other countries have also indicated that they would potentially like to take part, and there are plans to reform and expand the partnership to repeat this exercise, potentially gathering data between 2012 and 2014. This could even feed into a broader set of projects to collect comparable data worldwide.

Since 2007, the global economic situation has changed in ways that the project participants were not able to imagine, with considerable adverse effects upon archaeological practice—much of which is documented in Aitchison (2009b) and Schlanger and Aitchison (2010). The European Commission's priorities now focus on consolidating and rejuvenating the labour market in the altered economic climate, but making sure individuals and employers are as well informed as possible remains a priority. The project partners will learn from the drawbacks that the project encountered, build upon our successes and address the realities of the changes that have taken place since the previous survey, with the shared aim of producing an even more comprehensive and useful account of the working lives of archaeologists in Europe.

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