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**Abstract**

The academic profession is internally divided as never before. This cross-national comparative analysis of stratification in Higher Education is based on a sample of European academic scientists (N = 8,466) from universities in 11 countries. The analysis identifies three types of stratification: academic performance stratification, academic salary stratification, and international research stratification. This emergent stratification of the global scientific community is predominantly research-based, and internationalisation in research is at its centre; prestige-driven, internationally competitive, and central to academic recognition systems, research is the single most stratifying factor in Higher Education at the level of the individual scientist today. These stratification processes pull the various segments of the academic profession in different directions. The study analyses highly productive academics (‘research top performers’), highly paid academics (‘academic top earners’<sup>TM</sup>), and highly internationalised academics (‘research internationalists’<sup>TM</sup>) and explores the implications for individual scientists. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)