

# ACADEMIC TEACHING IN CROATIA: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

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1. Academic teaching in Croatia
  - 1.1. The legislative context
  - 1.2. The research results
2. The future perspectives



## Legislative acts

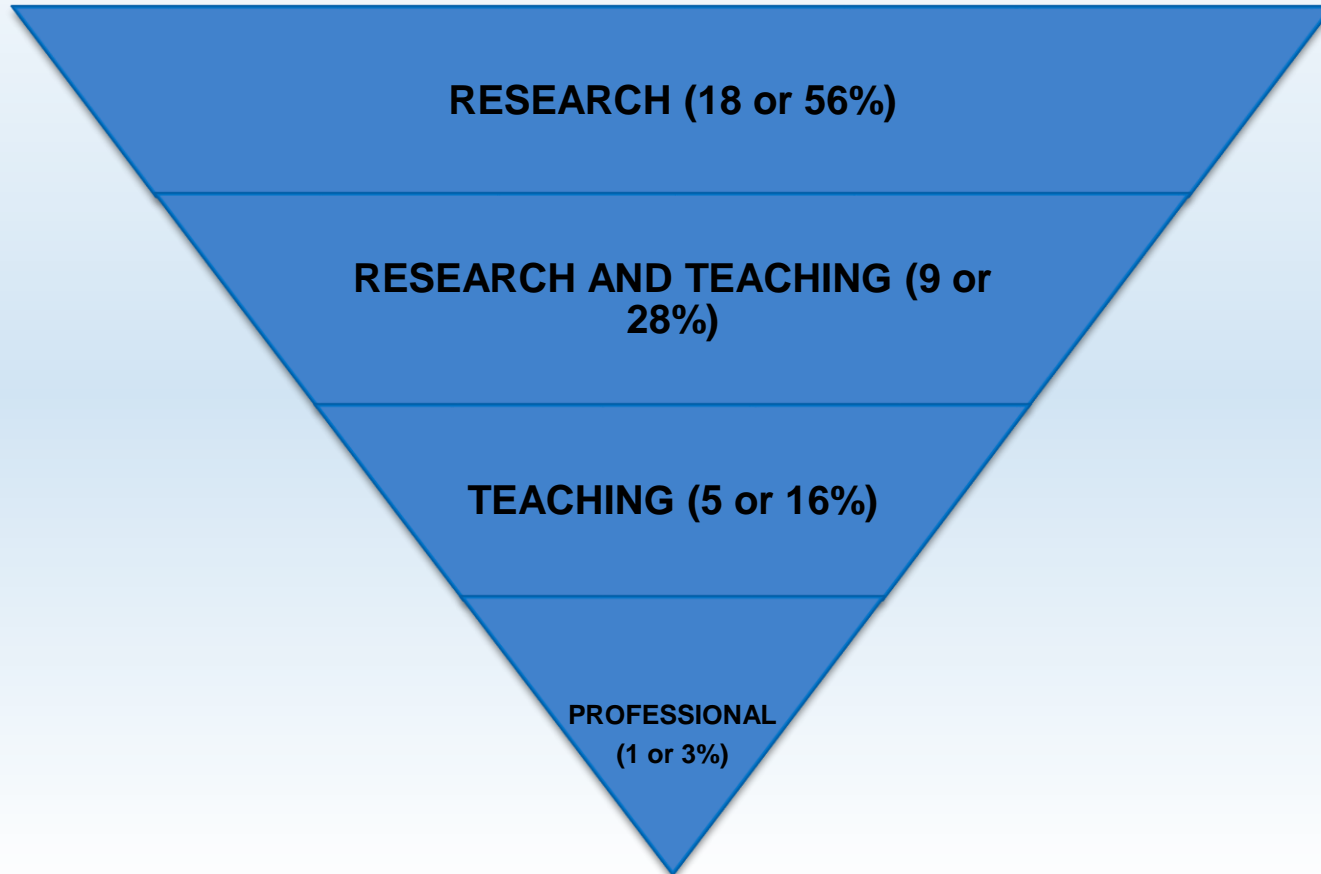
- The Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act (2013)
- Decision on the Necessary Requirements for the Evaluation of the Teaching and Professional Activities in the Procedure of Election to Scientific-Educational Titles (2005) – Rector's Council Requirements



- ▶ Research criteria is dominantly taken into account when gaining academic promotion
- ▶ From a total of 32 Rector's Council criteria (for the teaching and professional activities evaluation)
  - ▶ 5 (16%) can be construed as teaching domain criteria ,
  - ▶ 18 (56%) as research domain criteria,
  - ▶ 9 (28%) of the criteria contain both the teaching and research component
  - ▶ 1 (3%) criterion can be subsumed under the category of other (professional) criteria



The Decision on the Necessary Requirements **for the Evaluation of the Teaching and Professional Activities** in the Procedure of Election to Scientific-Educational Titles (2005) - Rector's Council Requirements



- ▶ Academic acts stipulate dedicating equal number of working hours to both (teaching and research), while academic promotion requirements give priority to research over (the quality of) teaching
- ▶ These findings indicate a neglect of the teaching requirements for the academics' promotion in Croatia and imply a disavowal of the teaching profession in addition to discouraging the development of the teaching competencies in the HE system



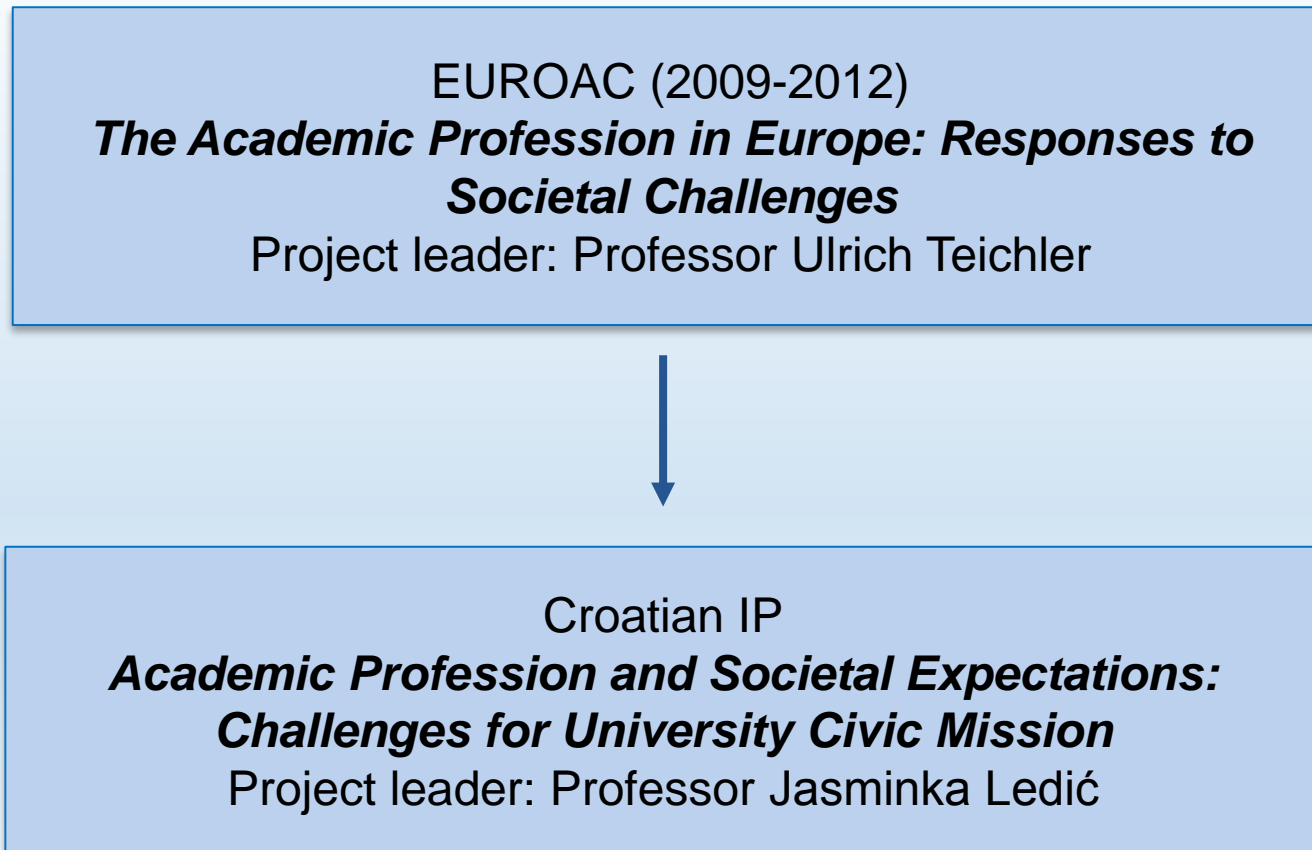
- ▶ Previous academic teaching research in Croatia (Kalin, 2004; Kovač, 1996, 2001; Kovač, Ledić & Rafajac, 2003; Ledić 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1994, 2009; Rački, Peko & Varga, 2010; Turk, 2009; Vizek Vidović, 2009) indicate that:
  - There is a correlation between lower assessments of the academic teaching quality and a lack of adequate support system for teaching



- The necessity to invest in the development of (lifelong) educational programmes for academics to acquire and develop teaching competencies;
- The necessity to revise the legislation for promoting academics, thus achieving equal appraisal of their teaching and research activities.







- ▶ Recent research on academic teaching in Croatia (Rončević & Rafajac, 2012; Turk, 2015; Turk & Ledić, 2015a; Turk & Ledić, 2016a, 2016b) indicate that:
  - academics are mostly interested in both components of the basic academic activities – research and teaching, with a slightly stronger inclination towards research;



- academics show a tendency towards the unity of teaching and research, emphasizing the importance of valuable research results which could be then transferred to students through teaching;
- identification primarily as teachers is not a matter of choice, but necessity, that is, of given circumstances in which academics work.



APROFRAME (2014-2017)

***Academic Profession Competencies Profile: Between  
new Requirements and Possibilities***

Project leader: Professor Jasminka Ledić



## QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Examine the attitudes of Croatian academics on the importance and mastery of academic profession competencies for successful accomplishment of academic tasks at the beginning of their senior academic career



- ▶ Research results (Turk & Ledić, 2015b, Turk & Ledić, 2016a, 2016b) have shown:
- academics from humanities, social sciences and arts assign higher importance and higher level of mastery to teaching competencies in comparison with the academics from natural, technical and biotechnical sciences and biomedicine;
  - women from the academic community assign higher importance to teaching competencies in comparison with men; but men assign higher level of mastery in comparison with women



- junior academics assign lower importance but higher level of mastery to teaching competencies in comparison with the senior academics;
- research participants with less working experience assign lower importance but higher level of mastery to teaching competencies in comparison with the senior ones.



## QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Understand how implicit and explicit elements of academic profession are acquired through professional socialization





## QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Disciplinary  
differences

Junior  
researchers

Sex differences

Professional socialization of junior researchers  
with the emphasis on the disciplinary differences  
regarding their attitudes towards teaching.



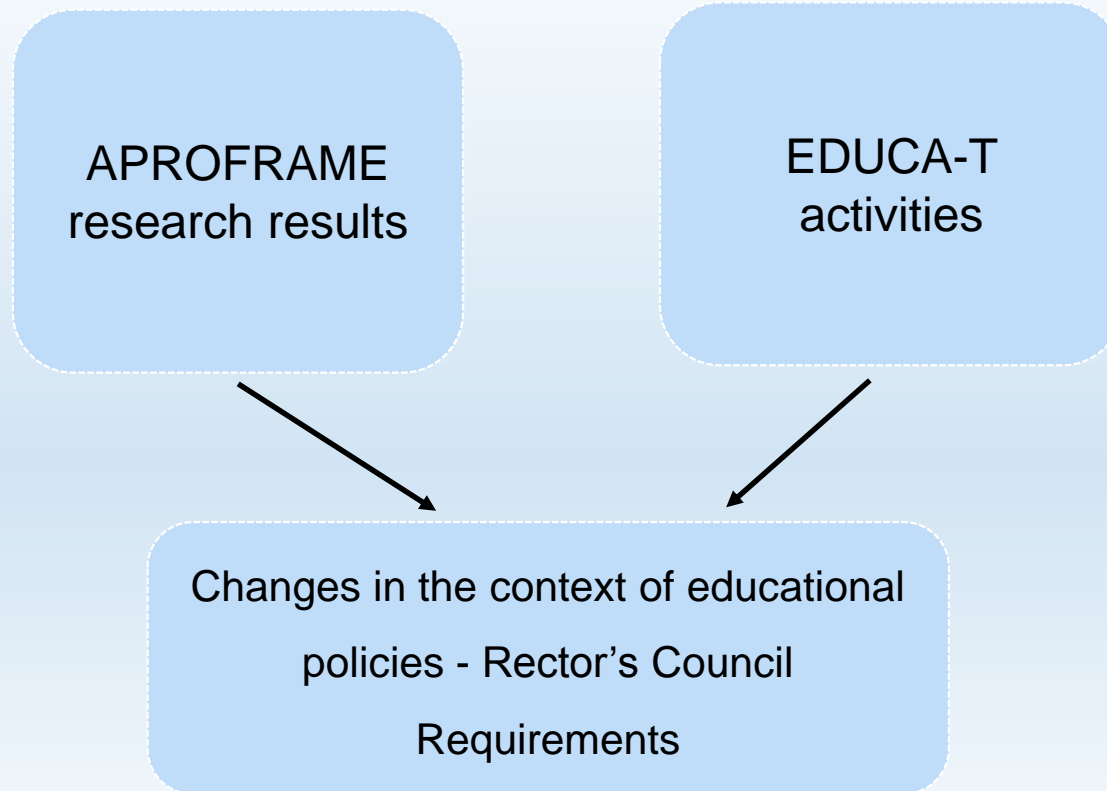
- ▶ Recent research on academic teaching in Croatia (Ledić, 2016; Rončević, Turk & Vignjević, 2016) has shown:
- a lack of support for the junior academics in the process of acquiring and developing teaching competencies on various levels (institutional, mentorial and collegial);
  - teaching is not properly evaluated and there is no formal education.



- ▶ The results raised a new question:
  - why do the junior academics perceive to possess a high level of teaching competencies despite the fact that there is a considerable lack of education and support in acquiring and developing teaching competencies?



## 20 The future perspectives



**Thank you for your attention**

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ANY  
QUESTIONS  
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