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## **Political Science Communities Challenged by Internationalisation. The Case of France.**

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## **Abstract**

The internationalisation of political science is an uneven process. Existing studies have shown that it is characterised by centre-periphery relationships, with dominant Western countries setting the international standards of the discipline and scholars from the East and the Global South struggling to adapt to these standards. Fewer studies, however, have been devoted to the tensions that internationalisation creates within the Western world of political science. Through a study of the case of France, this article argues that some of the countries that enjoy a rather dominant position globally may still be internally divided by the changes brought about by internationalisation. The article portrays French political science as divided between institutions and scholars that are strongly connected to international venues, and others that are not. It concludes that the internationalisation of political science is best portrayed as a conflicted process and a point of contention, rather than a smooth process of gradual convergence.

**Keywords** France• History of political science• Internationalisation• Multiple correspondence analysis• Sociology of the social sciences

## **Introduction**

The fact that the internationalisation of the social sciences, and of political science in particular, is an uneven process has been well documented. The dominant argument is that this process is characterised by centre-periphery relationships, with dominant Western countries setting the international standards of the discipline and scholars from the East and the Global South

struggling to adapt to these standards, often at the price of tensions with national intellectual traditions (Keim et al., 2014, Heilbron et al., 2018).

Fewer studies, however, have been devoted to the tensions that internationalisation creates *within* the Western world of political science. This article studies the fact that some of the countries that enjoy a rather dominant position globally – sustained by a critical mass of scholars, a historically dominant language, and distinctive intellectual traditions that circulate beyond national boundaries – may still be internally divided by the changes brought about by internationalisation. What shapes do these divisions take? How does internationalisation change national configurations?

This article answers these questions by studying the case of France. As a rather large Western country that is traditionally seen as relatively closed off to the rest of the world and reluctant to internationalise itself (Daguerre, 2004, Billordo, 2005), France is analysed as an extreme case which renders visible processes that are at work in other national political science communities.

The article starts from the observation that the very term of “internationalisation” is controversial within the discipline. Defined by some as the fact of publishing and speaking in Anglophone journals and congresses, it is understood by others in a much broader sense, notably at the linguistic level. Like other studies in this symposium (see Tronconi and Engeli), this article does not intend to solve this issue by proposing a theoretical definition of internationalisation. Rather, it focuses on the way in which internationalisation is understood and practiced. The article starts by studying the different ways in which the term is understood in institutional discourses. It then studies the way in which internationalisation is indeed

practised by French political scientists through an analysis of three non-exclusive dimensions: citations, publications, and recruitments.

Methodologically, the article relies on qualitative and quantitative data collected in the framework of a collective report produced at the request of the French Political Science Association (AFSP), and concerning chiefly the 2013-2017 period (Boncourt et al., 2018). Discourses were studied via an analysis of official guidelines and reports produced by some of the institutions responsible for evaluating political scientists (CNU and CNRS – see below), and via expert interviews with relevant members of the discipline (conducted with members of CNU and CNRS, with scholars with a strong international experience, and with scholars involved in representing French political science internally, for example in the framework of the International Political Science Association). Practices were studied through an analysis of the citations in the dominant national journal of political science (*Revue française de science politique*); the profile of recently hired political scientists (via a thorough analysis of their online CVs); and the productions of research centres in political science (via an online survey, in which a couple of subjective questions were also included – the survey was sent to twenty-one centres, eight of which replied). While the data does not cover all potential aspects of internationalisation, it is sufficient to bring to light the existence of divisions within French political science with respect to this process.

Thus, the article portrays French political science as broadly internationalised but internally divided between institutions and scholars that are strongly connected to international venues, and others that are not. It concludes that the internationalisation of political science is best portrayed as a conflictual process and a point of contention, rather than a smooth process of gradual convergence.

## **Professional discourses: the flexible character of the term “internationalisation”**

French political scientists have contrasting representations of internationalisation. The assessment they make of the internationalisation of their discipline, and of the means likely to make it evolve, are strongly determined by the way in which they define the notion.

Internationalisation is generally perceived as a positive phenomenon and a resource, which must be sought both at individual and institutional levels (MESR, 2012). This appears quite clearly in institutional discourses. In a 2017 document presenting the criteria for evaluating researchers in political science, the National Centre for Scientific Research’s (CNRS) Section 40 (which is responsible for recruiting and overseeing the careers of researchers whose work deal with the topics of “Politics, Power and organisation”)<sup>1</sup> considers internationalisation as one of the “general principles” that should guide their evaluation, alongside research activities, publications and professional environment. Internationalisation is described as a “needed dimension of researchers’ activity”, even if its evaluation should be “modulated” according to seniority (CoNRS Section 40, 2017). For the recruitment of junior Research Fellows, the applicants’ ability to take part in international debates is appreciated, through their integration into international research networks or cooperations. For the recruitment as Research Director, Section 40 places an even greater emphasis on the international recognition of works carried out by the candidates. This partially overlaps with criteria mentioned by annual reports of the National Universities Council (CNU) – a representative body in charge of organising the careers of university teachers-researchers and

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<sup>1</sup> The French system has a dual structure: CNRS is responsible for hiring full-time researchers, while universities hire “teachers-researchers”.

of granting candidates the right to apply (“qualification”) to assistant professor and professor positions. Internationalisation can be an asset, but it is not a major criterion for being “qualified” for assistant professor positions. However, it is a much clearer criteria for being qualified for full professorships, and for the allowance of various types of gratifications and career advancements. The directors of French research centres also put forward a positive vision of internationalisation. In the survey we conducted among research centres, all eight respondents except one presented internationalisation as desirable. The majority of interviewees also responded positively to the question of whether their researchers were sufficiently internationalised, and there was a consensus on encouraging internationalisation and supporting it, especially for young researchers.

Despite this generally positive view of internationalisation, doubts and reservations also arose from time to time. In the same survey of research centres, some answers evoked the risk of "imposing standards". In its 2014 annual report, the CNRS Section 40 also displayed a very nuanced approach of internationalisation. Internationalisation was presented as being "encouraged", but the report also highlighted the risk of "hasty pressures" that could "lead to the standardisation and impoverishment of academic knowledge and devices" (CoCNRS Section 40, 2014: 16). One of the perceived risks was that of reducing internationalisation to one of its dimensions – most notably publishing in English.

As pointed out elsewhere in this symposium (see Kostova et al.), these reservations are linked to the uncertainty that weighs on this notion, and to the diversity of criteria that are put forward to evaluate internationalisation. Both in the responses to the survey of research centres and in the institutional speeches, there is no generic definition of internationalisation, and the “indicators” used to specify the notion are defined in various ways. The CNRS section 40

mentions “research stays abroad, cooperation with research teams, animation of scientific networks, organisation of panels or symposia, participation in conferences, expertise for international institutions, publications, etc...”. Likewise, CNU annual activity reports do not explicitly define internationalisation, which only appears as one of the criteria being used for evaluating applicants’ CVs. At the assistant professor qualification level, internationalisation is defined between the lines as the “participation in international networks and international congresses such as APSA, ISA, IPSA...”. These elements are more detailed for full professor qualification since “internationalisation” is considered of greater importance at this level. In addition to the participation in international networks, partnerships and congresses, additional criteria are mentioned: publications “in English”, expertise for international research organisations, peer reviewing in international journals and invited lectures in foreign universities.

Beyond this diversity, internationalisation seems to be implicitly defined by all these institutional bodies as the ability to engage with international scientific controversies. But this general definition encompasses three concrete dimensions: the international dissemination of works produced in French research institutions; the reception and appropriation of foreign works; and the co-production of political science on a transnational stage. Depending on the institutional discourse under study, these three dimensions are alternatively applied to the individual and institutional level (research centres and universities in particular). The most frequently used criteria are: publishing in a foreign language (most often English), involvement in transnational networks, and the hosting of foreign researchers. Table 1 summarises these different dimensions.



*Table 1. internationalisation: a confusing landscape.*

<b>Internationalisation at...</b>	<b>Reception and use of international studies</b>	<b>Diffusion of work by French scholars internationally</b>	<b>Involvement in transnational research production</b>
<i><b>Individual level</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilisation and citation of international literature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication in foreign languages</li> <li>• Participation to international events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement in transnational networks</li> <li>• Designing international projects</li> </ul>
<i><b>Institutional level</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invitation of foreign scholars</li> <li>• Employment of scholars trained abroad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Editing bilingual journals</li> <li>• Offering courses in foreign languages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting exchange schemes with foreign institutions</li> </ul>

These different definitions of internationalisation also influence the professional discourses about the factors that impede internationalisation, and the way in which it may be improved. The issue of language proficiency (beyond English) has come up repeatedly in our study of such discourses. In the questionnaires and interviews, the progress achieved by teachers and researchers was mentioned, particularly with regard to oral proficiency in the English language, notably among the younger generations. Relatedly, participation in international symposia was described as quite common. However, publishing in English (or another foreign language) was described as often posing much greater challenges than oral communication as it implied, in addition to mastering the language, knowing the journals and publication spaces, opening up to other scientific issues and debates, adopting other methods of presenting evidence, and writing. French political scientists based abroad or foreign Assistant Professors recruited at Sciences Po with whom we spoke mentioned the discrepancy that may exist between scientific debates as they are reflected by international journals (mainly in English) and debates taking place in

France or in the French-speaking world: for example, while political theory is strongly represented internationally, it is hardly represented in panels and activities of French Association of Political Science congresses, Universities or the CNRS. Likewise, objects of study trivialised at the world level, such as political psychology, subaltern studies or studies on peace, remain relatively marginal in the French scientific space where other themes are prominent (the social history of ideas, multilateralism, international organisations, etc.). In addition, the relatively rare use of quantitative methods compared to what is practiced elsewhere was mentioned. But contrary to what one might expect, this gap is not perceived as a major obstacle for all researchers. Interviewees readily pointed out that this insertion into "international" issues already existed for certain researchers and certain sub-disciplines: comparative politics, international relations, political theory and European studies which were perceived as vectors of internationalisation. In addition, even if certain sub-fields were identified as less open internationally, exchanges were seen as still possible. It was emphasised that the fact that international political science is not monolithic allowed French political scientists to defend their own specific differences. As a result, several interviewees insisted on the need to have a flexible approach to internationalisation, which takes into account the peculiarities of the social sciences as they are practiced in France. Some also insisted that it is possible to debate with other related disciplines internationally, such as sociology, anthropology, history, etc.

The way in which internationalisation is taken into account in the framework of recruitment or career advancement is one of the points on which there was no broad consensus. In our survey, a majority of research centre directors considered that the way in which recruitments were carried out in universities or at CNRS constituted an obstacle to internationalisation. As noted by French-speaking researchers based abroad or by members of

institutions such as CNU, the French university market appears to be relatively closed off: at assistant professor level, the CNU qualification rate of doctors who defended their thesis in a foreign language tends to be lower than that of other applicants, even if it has increased over time (see below). Even though CNRS is perceived as more open to internationalisation than universities, the dominant idea remains that investment in internationalisation is insufficiently taken into account at the institutional and recruitment level. By contrast, some of the members of CNU and CNRS that we interviewed emphasised their reluctance to give more weight to internationalisation in recruitment or promotion, given that the possibilities of internationalisation are unequally distributed according to research objects, teaching load, access to resources, and gender.

### **Professional practices: internationalisation on its way**

Discourses reveal tensions about the meaning and legitimate uses of “internationalisation” in French political science. The remainder of this article studies the way in which internationalisation is actually practiced and valued. As studying all the different dimensions highlighted in Table 1 is beyond the scope of this article, we only focus on publication practices (section 2) and the way in which they are appreciated in professional recruitments (section 3). Our study of publication practices relies on two types of data: data about the main national professional review, the *Revue française de science politique*; and about the publications of French political science laboratories.

### ***Revue Française de Science Politique***

One of the ways to evaluate the internationalisation of a discipline is to look at its journals and the articles they publish. We focus here on the main political science journal in France, the *Revue française de science politique* (RFSP), launched in 1951 in the wake of the creation of the French Political Science Association (1949). After contextualising the international visibility of the journal in relation to the main citation indexes, we turn to a study of the authors who publish in RFSP, on the basis of a content analysis of all articles published between 2014 and 2017 with the exception of book reviews and review essays.

### ***Visibility***

English is the main language for scientific exchanges, affecting the share of non-English journals and articles in the main citation indexes databases. To answer this challenge CNRS has been funding the translation of several social sciences journal, including RFSP, available in English on Cairn International since 2010<sup>2</sup>. RFSP is now also accessible on J-Store. However, boosting an English-tongue audience is not only a question of language, but of culture. If one restricts oneself to the French Google Scholars Metrics, the RFSP comes in thirty-sixth position out of the hundred top publications, with an h5-index<sup>3</sup> of 10. It puts it at the same level as another French political science journal, *Politix*, and a little behind the sociological journals, three of which rank higher. *Revue française de sociologie* is second, *Sociologie du travail* twentieth and *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* twenty-fourth (respective h5-indexes of 14, 13, and 11)<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.cairn-int.info/journal-revue-francaise-de-science-politique.htm?contenu=english-full-text-articles>.

<sup>3</sup> The h-index is defined as the highest number of publications of a scholar that received h or more citations each. The h5-index is the h-index for articles published in the last 5 complete years.

<sup>4</sup> [https://scholar.google.fr/citations?view\\_op=top\\_venues&hl=en&vq=fr](https://scholar.google.fr/citations?view_op=top_venues&hl=en&vq=fr).

However, the ranking of RFSP is clearly lower in a broader international perspective. In the 2018 Scopus / Elsevier Index<sup>5</sup>, RFSP ranked 220th out of 545 with a Cite Score of 0.61. It displayed a higher score than other French journals of the discipline such as *Critique internationale* or *Raisons politiques* (0.20 and 0.32), but lower than several other national political science journals in Europe, such as the *Swiss Political Science Review* (2.1) and the *Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica* (0.96), and lower than the central journal in sociology (*Revue française de sociologie*, 0.76). Among the 525 political science journals of the 2019 Scimago index base<sup>6</sup>, the RFSP ranked 179<sup>th</sup>, with an SJR of 0.381 (versus 0.31 the year before) and an h-index of 24 (versus 23). A ranking way behind the star American journals (the *American Journal of Political Science* had a SJR of 7.131 and a h-index 161, the *American Political Science Review* of respectively 5.872 and 167), as well as the *British Journal of Political Science* (3.820 and 91), and the Italian and Swiss political science reviews (0.959/26 and 0.597/10).

A serious handicap though is the fact that the RFSP is not yet included<sup>7</sup> in the reputed Reuters-Thomson *Social Sciences Citation Index (SCCI)*, while *Politix* is, as well as many national political science reviews (Brazilian, Canadian, Chilean, Italian, Spanish etc.) and the *Revue française de sociologie*. It is not included either in the new index 'ERIH Plus' (*European Reference Index for the Humanities*). Started by the European Science Foundation (ESF) and

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.scopus.com/sources.uri> .

CiteScore is the number of citations received by a journal in one year to documents published in the three previous years, divided by the number of documents indexed in Scopus published in those same three years.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php?area=3300&type=j&category=3320> . The Scimago Journal Rank indicator (SJR) is the average number of weighted citations received in the year considered by the documents published in the journal for the 3 previous years.

<sup>7</sup> The procedure is on its way, involving the verification of criteria such as regularity of publication, peer-reviewing etc.

its Standing Committee for the Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA), now transferred to the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), this index takes into account social science journals since 2014 and its aim is precisely to make more visible high quality European scientific publications<sup>8</sup>.

### ***Publications***

To evaluate the degree of internationalisation of what RFSP publishes, we look both at book reviews (are these books French or foreign?)<sup>9</sup> and regular research articles. We take into account the countries where article authors are based and the location of their fieldwork (France, other European countries, rest of the world, supranational). We also classify the bibliographic references, whether they are only French or include some in English or another foreign language. This is put in the context of the disciplinary subfield of the article (political sociology, international relations, public policies, methodology, political theory) and the methods it uses (qualitative or quantitative). Mapping subfields and methods allows us to compare French publications with dominant international trends.

Since 2010, when RFSP reconsidered its book-review policy, 230 books are reviewed every year on average, thirty-five per cent of which are published by foreign editors, mostly in English. As for the hundred articles published over the four years we processed (table 2), they were written by 120 authors, three quarters of whom were French, and mostly in the subfield of political sociology, a specific tropism of French political science. The fieldworks reflect a large opening on the rest of the world, only thirty-one per cent of the articles dealing exclusively

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<sup>8</sup> <http://corist-shs.cnrs.fr/ErihPlus> 2014 .

<sup>9</sup> Data provided by the RFSP's publication director Yves Déloye.

with France and nineteen being comparative in scope. Their methodology is essentially, and increasingly, qualitative, putting the journal at odds with some of the mainstream international political science journals that mostly focus on quantitative research. Only eleven per cent of the RFSP articles processed rely on quantitative methods. Libia Billordo's (2005) study of RFSP over the period 1970-2004, found that thirty-four per cent of the total of articles published were based on a quantitative methodology and a quarter if she excluded non-empirical articles (i.e. political theory)<sup>10</sup>. She noted that, during the same period, their share of the articles published by the *American Political Science Review* oscillated between sixty and eighty per cent.

As for the bibliographic references of the articles (5631, 2940 of which in 2014-15 and 2691 in 2016-17), they show a marked international scope. Forty-eight per cent on average are in English, six per cent in another language, less than half in French (forty-six per cent). In special issues devoted to the cases of Italy ("Florence (1200-1530): Reinventing the Political", 2014) and America ("The American State", 2014), the proportion of references to foreign literature was even higher, up to fifty-one per cent of references in English and sixty per cent in another language than French or English.

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<sup>10</sup> However, her criteria raise some problems of comparability with our own study and other analyses come to a smaller proportion of articles based on quantitative data during the same period (Boncourt, 2008).

Table 2. Articles published in RFSP 2014-2017.

	2014-15	2016-17	Total
<b>Number of articles</b>	52	48	100
<b>Number of authors</b>	72	48	120
<b>Proportion of French authors</b>	69%	87,5%	77%
<b>Articles by subdiscipline</b>			
<i>Political sociology</i>	48%	67%	57%
<i>Public policy</i>	36,5%	21%	29%
<i>Political theory</i>	11,5%	8%	10%
<i>International relations</i>	2%	6%	4%
<b>Methods and fieldwork</b>			
<i>French fieldwork only</i>	29%	33%	31%
<i>Quantitative methods</i>	13%	8%	11%
<i>Comparative methods</i>	21%	17%	19%
<b>Citations</b>			
<i>Number</i>	2940	2691	5631
<i>In French</i>	40%	52%	46%
<i>In English</i>	51%	46%	48%
<i>In another language</i>	9%	2%	6%

### *What research centres produce*

Another way to look at publication practices is to adopt a “bottom up” approach, by gathering data from scholars themselves. We therefore surveyed the productions of political science research laboratories (Table 3). Among the twenty-one political science research centres



identified as such by the French Political Science Association, eight responded to the survey. While they cannot be taken as purely representative of the discipline, they are diverse in terms of their geographical location (three in Paris, five in the rest of France) and institutional settings (five in Institutes of political studies, three in faculties of law and political science)<sup>11</sup>.

With regard to the publication of articles in peer-reviewed journals in English or other non-French languages, there is a relatively homogeneous situation between the laboratories. The average proportion of publications in a foreign language varies between twenty-five and thirty per cent for the majority of the laboratories studied. Two laboratories stand out. One with results much higher than these figures, and one for which this proportion is much lower. Roughly, similar proportions are found with regard to oral communications in a foreign language, whether or not accompanied by written text.

These figures confirm that the national arena remains the privileged place of communication - written or oral - for French political scientists, but also that participation in symposia or foreign journals, essentially English-speaking ones, is a fairly common and uniformly distributed practice.

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<sup>11</sup> Political science is represented in the Institute of Political Studies (IEP, also called Sciences Po), which are part of the “Grandes écoles” system and focus on the multidisciplinary training of future public and private sector elites, and in faculties of law and political science in the regular university system.

Table 3. Proportion of scientific productions in foreign languages, calculated on the basis of the productions declared in the latest evaluation report of HCERES (per laboratory, noted L).

Source: authors' survey.

	L. 1	L. 2	L. 3	L. 4	L. 5	L. 6	L. 7	L. 8
<b>Articles in Peer reviewed Journal published in non-</b>								
<b>French language</b>	29	77,7	23,9	11,4	51,7	21,5	30,5	31,9
<b><i>In English (%)</i></b>	29	75,9	21,3	7	47	18,6	26,9	25
<b><i>In other foreign language (%)</i></b>	(0)	(1,8)	(2,6)	(4,4)	(4,7)	(2,9)	(3,6)	(6,9)
<b>Monographs</b>								
<b><i>In English (%)</i></b>	10	44,4	6,4	2,3	24,7	15	6,1	5
<b><i>In other foreign language (%)</i></b>	(0)	(22,2)	(3,2)	(9,5)	(7,6)	(7,5)	(12,2)	(15)
<b>Chapters in edited books</b>								
<b><i>In English (%)</i></b>	35,4	59	16,5	8,3	32,7	17,9	22,5	17,8
<b><i>In other foreign language (%)</i></b>	(2,5)	(1,6)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(4,8)	(5,5)	(6,1)	(3,1)
<b>Edited books or journal special issues</b>								
<b><i>In English (%)</i></b>	23,9	54,5	8,9	2	27,6	19,8	25,7	13,3
<b><i>In other foreign language (%)</i></b>	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(6,7)	(6,3)	(1,4)	(0)
<b>Communications</b>								
<b><i>In English (%)</i></b>	41,5	67,2	29,7	12,5	48,9	25,1	30,4	32,1
<b><i>In other foreign languages (%)</i></b>	(1,8)	(5)	(0)	(0,4)	(5,9)	(3,5)	(1,4)	(4,5)

<b>Publication index<sup>12</sup></b>	NA *	2,07	3,53	4,33	4,80	5,27	6,03	4,5
<b>Institutional affiliation (university or institute of political studies – IEP)</b>	Univ.	IEP	IEP	Univ.	IEP	IEP	IEP	Univ.
<b>Location (Paris or rest of France)</b>	Paris	Paris	France	France	Paris	France	France	France

\* In this case the report specifies that the list of publications is not exhaustive. As a result, it does not warrant the calculation of a publication index.

This internationalisation decreases for publications of works requiring more structured exchange or dissemination practices. For each laboratory except one (L1), the proportion of contributions to edited books in a foreign language or of edited books or journal special issues is lower, or even much lower than it is for articles in peer reviewed journals or communications in conferences. This can be explained by a strategy of French political scientists who tend to downplay the importance of this type of support to develop their internationalisation. But it shows also, more surely, a lack of integration in the international research networks which underlie the realisation of this type of product.

Internationalisation appears even less developed for the publication of monographs in foreign languages, particularly in English. French scholars mostly tend to publish monographs in French. This can be explained by the difficulty of getting manuscripts accepted by foreign

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<sup>12</sup> This index is based on the number of articles published in peer-reviewed journals per researcher.

publishers - whatever the reasons - or by the cost of writing in a language other than one's own a manuscript whose fate would be particularly uncertain.

Furthermore, these data reveal differences depending on the geographic or institutional location of the laboratories. The two laboratories located in Sciences Po Paris have internationalisation rates significantly higher than the others: articles in peer reviewed journals in English represent more than three quarters of its productions for one (seventy-six per cent), close than half (forty-seven per cent) for the other. For non-Paris IEPs, the difference with Law and Political Science Faculties is less clear, although the limited size of our sample prevents conclusions from being drawn. We can also note a correlation between the level of internationalisation of publications and the "productivity" of laboratories: the laboratory which is distinguished by a particularly strong degree of internationalisation (L2) is also the one with the lowest publication index per researcher (2,07) while one of those with the lowest internationalisation rate (L6) is also the one whose productivity is one of the highest (5,27).

### **The different value of internationalisation in professional practices**

Such differences between institutions in terms of their internationalisation practices are also tangible at the level of recruitment. This section looks at the extent to which newly hired teacher-researchers invest in international or national endeavours, and assesses whether different institutions have different recruitment strategies when it comes to the international profile of their new staff.

We collected data on the 123 early career scholars who were hired in permanent positions of *maître de conférence* (MCF, i.e. assistant/associate professor) and *chargé de recherche* (CR, i.e. full time researcher) in France, over a five year time period (2013-2017). By analysing their online CVs, we collected data on their individual properties (gender, age, nationality), career to date (past doctoral and postdoctoral institutions), their publications (the number of languages of publications at the time of hiring), and their research areas.

At first glance, the job market appears to be relatively closed off: the vast majority of our respondents are French and defended their PhD dissertation in France and in French, with only seven dissertations carried out in the framework of a joint international supervision, and seven fully carried out abroad. However, there are signs of internationalisation in that the majority of the theses under study have an international outlook (while forty-five focus on France, seventy-two compare France with another country, study another country altogether, or focus on transnational or international objects), a third of our sample has held a postdoctoral position abroad, and the mean number of publications in foreign languages is three – with substantial differences however, as a third of our sample has only published in French.

In order to better compare the profiles of the individuals under study, we used a multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) based on the following variables. Active variables (Figure 1) included having worked as a postdoc in France (dichotomous), elsewhere in Europe (dichotomous), in North America (dichotomous), or elsewhere in the world (dichotomous); the number of publications (between two and four, between five and ten, between eleven and twenty, more than twenty); the proportion of publications in foreign languages (0 %, 4-9 %, 10-25 %, 26-50 %, 51-75 %, 76-100 %); the fact of having published in English (dichotomous) or in another non-French language (dichotomous). Supplementary variables (Figure 2) included

gender, place of thesis defence, year of recruitment, time lapse between defence and recruitment, discipline and sub-discipline, and cases studied in the course of Ph.D. theses.

The MCA's first dimension (horizontal axis) accounts for 13.7 per cent of the total inertia. It is strongly associated with the share of publications in foreign languages – this share is highest for individuals located on the right side of the graph. This dimension is also associated with postdocs abroad – those with such a postdoc are located on the right side of the graph. Thus, this first axis locates individuals according to the degree of internationalisation of their professional practices (publications in foreign languages and professional mobility). The second dimension (vertical axis), which accounts for 10.9 per cent of the total inertia, is linked to the number of publications. It locates those who have published the most at the top of the graph, and those who have published the least at the bottom.

Figure 1. MCA – Active variables.

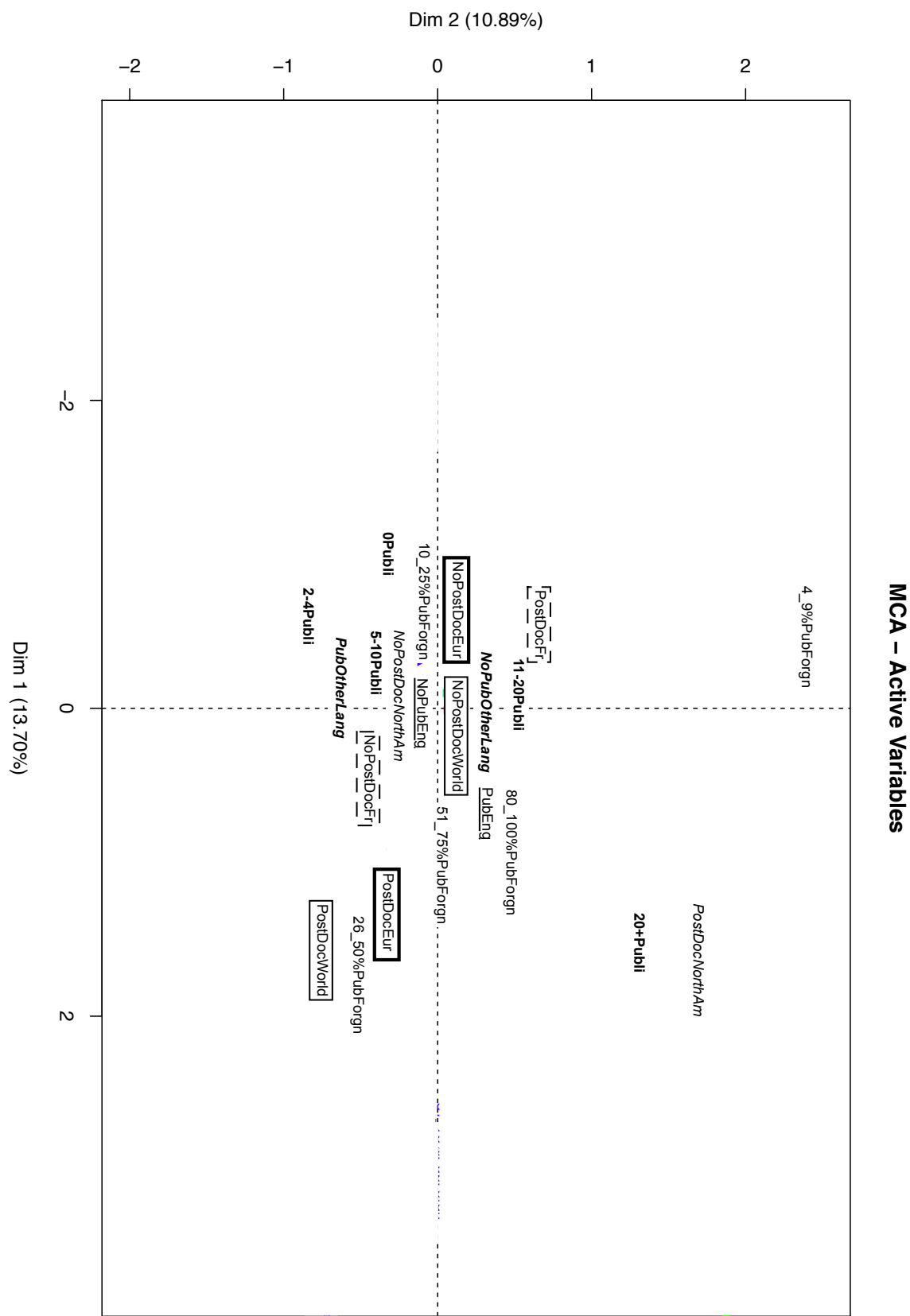
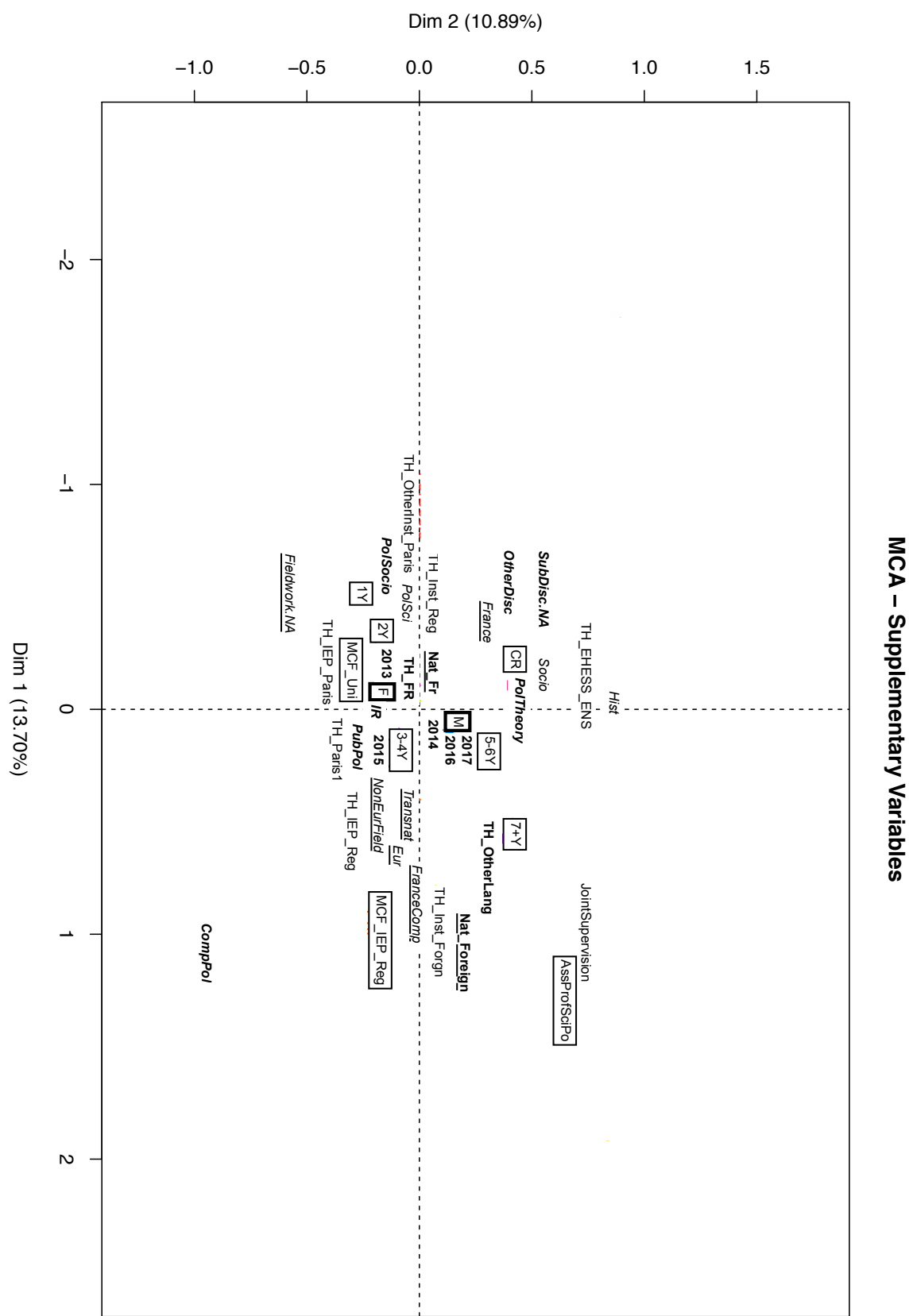


Figure 2. MCA – Supplementary variables.





Through the projection of supplementary variables onto the graph (Figure 2), four groups of newly hired political scientists are identified.

Those hired as assistant professors at Sciences Po Paris are located at the upper right of the graph. The MCA also locates in this same region of the graph as foreign researchers, those with a Ph.D. thesis carried out abroad, and those with the longest gaps between their Ph.D. and the time of hiring. Descriptive statistics also indicate that Sciences Po's newly hired assistant professors publish mostly and, in some cases, only in English, and that they have almost all held a postdoctoral position abroad.

The MCA locates at the bottom / bottom right of the graph scholars hired as *maîtres de conférence* in the non-Parisian Sciences Po. These scholars are slightly more junior and less internationalised (in terms of postdocs and publications) than their Paris colleagues, but they often have studied foreign countries in the course of their work.

The MCA locates at the top / top left at the graph scholars hired as CNRS *chargés de recherche*. This region of the graph also features long gaps between the Ph.D. and the time of hiring, theses carried out in neighbouring disciplines (history, sociology, etc.), and case studies centred on France. Thus, these scholars appear to be relatively experienced and productive, though less internationalised than those hired by Sciences Po Paris – similar, in that respect, to those hired by the other Sciences Po.

The MCA locates at the bottom left of the graph scholars hired as *maîtres de conférence* in universities. These scholars are more junior, less internationalised, and have often done their Ph.D. in French universities.

These observations indicate that different institutions follow different criteria when hiring new staff, notably with respect to internationalisation. While the latter is key to Sciences Po Paris hirings and, to a lesser extent, in other Sciences Po and CNRS, it is less valued in the rest of the universities. This conclusion fuels the idea that internationalisation is not practiced in the same way and to the same degree in different institutions. Internationalisation appears to be not universally accepted as an evaluation criterion, and may even be a point of contention between institutions of different status and prestige. While this means French political science is relatively inclusive – different (non-)internationalisation strategies may pave the way to obtaining a permanent academic position – it also makes for relatively blurry evaluation criteria – meaning it makes it harder to know which boxes one should tick in order to stand a chance on the academic job market.

The data also allows us to draw several observations about the shape internationalisation tends to take in the French context. Firstly, the internationalisation of newly hired scholars is mostly directed towards Europe, notably in terms of postdoctoral fellowships abroad. Sciences Po Paris assistant professors are the only ones to lean more towards North America.

Secondly, foreign country case studies and international comparisons tend to be associated with a stronger professional internationalisation. In terms of subdisciplines, comparative politics and, to a lesser extent, public policy analysis are associated with a higher degree of internationalisation than, in this order, international relations, political theory, and political sociology.

Thirdly, scholars recruited right after their Ph.D. tend to be less internationalised than the others – which is logical in the sense that being relatively junior means that they are less likely to have had the time to hold a postdoctoral position abroad.

Fourthly, women tend to be less internationalised than men at the time of hiring. While they publish in foreign languages as much as men, they are less likely to have held a postdoctoral position abroad. Though this is again related to seniority at the time of hiring, as the time between thesis completion and hiring is slightly lower for women than men (3.6 and 4 years respectively), other dynamics likely are at play, as previous studies have shown that men are more represented than women in international academic mobility (Walters 2018).

Lastly, scholars hired in the most recent years are located on the right of the graph: the more recent cohorts tend to be more internationalised than the elder ones. Thus, even though the period of time studied here is limited, the MCA hints at potential changes over time, characterised by an increasing value of internationalisation for recruitments.

These observations show that the degree of internationalisation varies not only according to the hiring academic institutions, but also according to the social properties of scholars. In other words, researchers are unequal when it comes to internationalisation opportunities.

## **Conclusion**

This study portrays French political science as internally divided by internationalisation. The term appears to be loosely defined by both researchers and evaluation agencies, and practicing

internationalisation appears to be unequally important in different parts of the French academic field. Efforts to become more internationalised are unlikely to register equally on the scale of judgement in different institutions.

More broadly, this study suggests that the international landscape of political science is not only divided between a “centre” mostly made up of Global North countries and a “periphery” mostly consisting of Global South countries. Rather, the Global North is itself internally divided, not only between countries but within them as well. Depending on their socialisation, their professional positions, and the way in which they relate to more or less clear evaluation schemes, researchers value internationalisation to very varying extents. When they do “internationalise” themselves, they do it in diverse ways, as “internationalisation” is itself made up of practices that are considered valuable to varying degrees. This study therefore suggests that the study of internationalisation should be made more subtle by taking into account the complex way in which this plural process relates to individual career trajectories.

By focusing on France, a case ever considered as atypical, this study runs the risk of overemphasising the contested character of internationalisation. We believe, however, that the French case simply sheds more visible light on processes occurring elsewhere – those by which what is considered “valuable”, “prestigious”, and “high quality” in the scientific field is the object of constant struggles.

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