PhD in Sociology

Post Title:	PhD Researcher in Sociology
Post Status:	Fixed-term Contract – Full-time (48 months)
Research Group / Department / School:	Department of Sociology, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin
Location:	Department of Sociology, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, College Green, Dublin 2, Ireland
Reports to:	Associate Professor Camilla Devitt
Stipend:	Maintenance stipend €18,500 per annum plus full tuition fees (EU/non-EU). In addition, the Department offers a teaching assistantship as non-stipend pay.
Closing Date:	23:00 (GMT), 07 April 2026

NOTE: Applicants must have been resident in an EU member state for 3 out of the last 5 years to be eligible for EU fees

Post Summary

The candidate will join the PhD programme at the Department of Sociology of Trinity College Dublin, Ireland's leading university which is located on a historic campus in the heart of Dublin. The Department will provide all logistic, academic and intellectual support and integrate the successful candidate into a vibrant doctoral programme at TCD, while offering additional economic supports to cover fees and basic expenses related to the PhD programme. PhD students at the department are embedded in the interdisciplinary context of the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy which also includes economics, political science, and philosophy.

PhD students in Sociology enjoy a wide range of training opportunities. For example, students participate in a research training programme in the department and have the opportunity to join masters level courses (including courses on research methods). Moreover, our PhD students are supported to attend high-quality international workshops and summer schools.

PhD students are expected to collaborate closely with their supervisors and will produce a PhD based on four papers of a publishable standard. PhD students also acquire teaching experience by providing teaching support in our undergraduate programme (4 hours per week during term times).

The Department of Sociology at Trinity College is offering a stipend for an outstanding doctoral student to join the PhD in Sociology degree programme for a period of 48 months. The person appointed will conduct an innovative PhD project on a) social attitudes to taxation and social spending or b) migration and employment. We are seeking applicants who are motivated to work on one of the following two streams of research, funded by the department of Sociology at Trinity College Dublin:

Stream 1: Social Attitudes to Taxation and Social Spending
The person appointment will conduct a PhD project on social attitudes to taxation and social spending in Ireland, with potential for a cross-national comparison. The project builds on existing research in the inter-disciplinary field of fiscal sociology, as well as sociological

research on welfare attitudes. The study will investigate how institutional arrangements, cultures, values, beliefs, interests and knowledge influence the attitudes of different social groups. It uses a multi-method qualitative case-study design to gather data from social groups, with potential for the integration of mixed methods research. Questions to be examined include but are not limited to: How does political orientation interact with income and education in shaping tax attitudes? How do beliefs about the direction and efficiency of social spending impact tax attitudes? How do attitudes to immigration and taxation relate?

The successful candidate will be integrated into a PhD project that will provide an innovative approach to the study of taxation and social spending attitudes in Ireland. The project will give the student an opportunity to carry out theoretically informed and policy relevant empirical research that will generate new knowledge. The successful applicant will gain skills in project management, research communication and policy-oriented research practice.

Applicants to Stream 1 are asked to submit a **research statement** that demonstrates how their research background and skills match with the project.

Stream 2: Open project on migration and employment

In this stream, applicants may propose their own research proposal, which connects to one of the following broad thematic fields in research on migration and employment:

- Determinants of labour migration to specific destinations in Europe.
- Migratory pathways into European labour markets from visa/permit applications to interactions with recruiters.
- Employer formal and informal hiring strategies.

The successful applicant will gain skills in project management, research communication and policy-oriented research practice. Applicants to Stream2 are asked to submit a **research proposal** that specifies a research objective and question, background and relevance, theoretical framework and methods of analysis.

Major research activities conducted by the PhD candidate in both streams will involve:

1) Reviewing the relevant literature;

2) Designing a range of research instruments including, for example, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, creative participatory methods and surveys;

3) Engaging in summarising and interpreting results for social science audiences with policy implications;

4) Presenting work in front of different audiences at a local, national and international level in conferences or networks; and

5) Publishing four journal articles arising from the study with the Supervisor.

Standard Duties and Responsibilities of the Post

- Critical, systematic and analytical review of relevant literature for the project

- Writing academic pieces (articles/dissertation chapters) in English

- Conducting empirical research using qualitative or mixed methods techniques

- Actively writing and submitting research papers for publication and contributing to joint projects or related submissions with the PhD supervisor(s)

- Organising and attending meetings, workshops and conferences

- Disseminating academic work to specialised and general audiences

- Approximately 4 hours of teaching a work during the statutory term (facilitating undergraduate sociology tutorials)

Funding Information

Department of Sociology

Person Specification

Qualifications

- MA, MSc or MPhil in Sociology, Social Policy or in any cognate fields (thesis should be either defended or submitted)

Essential Research Skills

- Advanced qualitative skills

- Basic (preferably solid) knowledge in the field of sociology of welfare or other related field

- Good knowledge in case-study research designs

Other Essential Knowledge and Skills
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English
- Willingness to contribute proactively to the development of the project
- Strong motivation to publish in academic journals
- Good organisational skills and ability to meet deadlines
- Ability to work effectively in a team

Application Procedure

Informal enquiries are welcome and can be made directly to Associate Professor Camilla Devitt Department of Sociology at Trinity College Dublin; devittca@tcd.ie).

To apply, candidates should submit the following via email to Camilla Devitt, Associate Professor (devittca@tcd.ie):

1. A **motivation letter** clearly indicating motivation and background (max. 1 page), importantly the letter must specify the **desired stream** (1 or 2 see above);

2. A **full curriculum vitae**

3. A concise **research statement** (Stream 1) or **research proposal** (Stream 2) no longer than 1500 words excluding references (see explanation below);

4. The names and contact details of **two referees** (with email addresses included);

5. At least **one example of your written work** (in English and including some data analysis) that shows your analytical and writing skills in a social science discipline.

Applications must indicate exactly *"PhD Application in Sociology, Stream X"* in the subject line (replace X with the Stream number).

Research statement (Stream 1)

Applications will be considered based on a candidate's academic record and a **short research statement** to be submitted alongside the usual application documents (motivation, CV, references, writing sample, see below). The research statement demonstrates a candidate's

research experience and skills in research as well as a brief outline of their research interests in relation to the project. The statement should be **no longer than 1500 words** (excluding references).

Research proposal (Stream 2)

Applications will be considered based on a candidate's academic record and, if applying to stream 2, a **short research proposal** to be submitted alongside the usual application documents (motivation, CV, references, writing sample, see below). The aim of the research proposal is to delineate a potential PhD research project that connects to some of the mentioned broader fields. The proposal should be **no longer than 1500 words** (excluding references).

Further Information for Applicants

URL Link to Area	www.tcd.ie
URL Link to Human Resources	https://www.tcd.ie/hr/

Institutional Background Information
The Department of Sociology

Sociology is a member of the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy, one of 24 Schools within Trinity College. The Department's principal research clusters are: Migration, Identities and Diversity; Comparative Inequalities, Education and Families; Power, Conflict and Resistance; Digitalisation and Social Networks.

Department staff are highly international and our research combines advanced quantitative methods applied to real-world data with the use of sophisticated and diverse qualitative methodologies. Our research links to several College priority research themes: 'International Integration' centred within Trinity Research in Social Science (TRISS), 'Identities in Transformation' and 'Inclusive Society' within the Trinity Long Room Hub (TLRH) and 'Ageing' within the Longitudinal Study of Ageing (TILDA). The Department has a long-standing collaboration with Ireland's premier research institute, the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and has strong links with other disciplines such as Medicine, Psychology, Immunology and Neuroscience.

The Department has an active postgraduate programme. It is home to an MSc in Comparative Social Change delivered jointly with University College Dublin, as well as an MPhil in Race, Ethnicity, Conflict. It has a structured PhD programme combining advanced methodological training with transferable skills workshops. There are around 15 PhD students and our doctoral graduates have positions in academic institutions, non-governmental organisations and the private sector.

Further information on the Department of Sociology is available at: www.tcd.ie/sociology

School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

The School of Social Sciences and Philosophy was formed in 2005 and comprises the Departments of Economics, Philosophy, Political Science and Sociology, together with the Policy Institute. With over 45 full-time academic staff, the School has an international reputation in research and is committed to the dissemination of its knowledge and expertise to the benefit of the wider community, with the Policy Institute providing an important channel for policy analysis and evaluation. The School is home to the unique undergraduate degree in PPES (Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology). It also contributes to undergraduate degrees in Business, Economic and Social Studies (this includes Political Science and Sociology), Philosophy, History and Political Science, Philosophy and Political Science, Law and Political Science, Geography and Political Science, Sociology and Social Policy, and European Studies. Over 100 graduate students are conducting research across the four disciplines.

Further information on the School is available at: www.tcd.ie/ssp

Trinity College Dublin

Founded in 1592, Trinity College is at the nexus of tradition and innovation, offering undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across 24 schools and three faculties: arts, humanities, and social sciences; engineering, maths and science; and health sciences. Spread across 47 acres in Dublin's city centre, Trinity's more than 20,000 strong student body comes from all 32 counties of Ireland, and 16% of students come from outside the country. Of those, 40% are from outside the European Union, making Trinity's campus cosmopolitan and bustling, with a focus on diversity.

As Ireland's leading university, the pursuit of academic excellence through research and scholarship is at the heart of the Trinity education. Trinity is known for intellectual rigour, excellence, interdisciplinary approach, and research-led teaching. Home to Nobel prize-winners such as scientist Ernest Walton and writer Samuel Beckett, Trinity draws visitors from across the world to its historic campus each year, including to the Book of Kells and Science Gallery which capture the university's connection to both old and new. Trinity accounts for one-fifth of all spin-out companies from Irish higher education institutions, helping to turn

Ireland into an innovation-intensive, high-productivity economy. That culture of innovation and entrepreneurship is a defining characteristic of our campus as we help shape the next generation of job creators.

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin

Trinity is Ireland's leading university and is ranked 75th in the world (QS World University Rankings 2026). Founded in 1592, the University is steeped in history with a reputation for excellence in education, research and innovation.

Located on an iconic campus in the heart of Dublin's city centre, Trinity has 18,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students across our three faculties – Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences; Engineering, Mathematics and Science; and Health Sciences.

Trinity is ranked as the 17th most international university in the world (Times Higher Education Rankings 2020) and has students and staff from over 120 countries.

The pursuit of excellence through research and scholarship is at the heart of a Trinity education, and our researchers have an outstanding publication record and strong record of grant success. Trinity has developed 19 broad-based multidisciplinary research themes that cut across disciplines and facilitate world-leading research and collaboration within the University and with colleagues around the world. Trinity is also home to 5 leading flagship research institutes:
   - Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute (TBSI)
   - Trinity College Institute of Neuroscience (TCIN)
   - Trinity Translational Medical Institute (TTMI)
   - Trinity Long Room Hub Arts and Humanities Research Institute (TLRH)
   - Centre for Research on Adaptive Nanostructures and Nanodevices (CRANN)

Trinity is 1st in Europe for Producing Entrepreneurs for the 7th year in a row and Europe's only representative in the world's top-50 universities

(Pitchbook 2021-2022).

Trinity is home to the famous Old Library and to the historic Book of Kells as well as other internationally significant holdings in manuscripts, maps and early printed material. The Trinity Library is a legal deposit library, granting the University the right to claim a copy of every book published in Ireland and the UK. At present, the Library's holdings span approximately 6.5 million printed items, 400,000 e-books and 150,000 e-journals.

With over 120,000 alumni, Trinity's tradition of independent intellectual inquiry has produced some of the world's finest, most original minds including the writers Oscar Wilde and Samuel Beckett (Nobel laureates), the mathematician William Rowan Hamilton and the physicist Ernest Walton (Nobel laureate), the political thinker Edmund Burke, and the former President of Ireland Mary Robinson. This tradition finds expression today in a campus culture of scholarship, innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship and dedication to societal reform.

Rankings

Trinity College Dublin is the top ranked university in Ireland. Using the QS methodology we are ranked 75th in the world and using the Times Higher Education World University Ranking methodology we are 146th in the World.

- Trinity College Dublin is Ireland's No.1 University
  (QS World University Ranking 2023, Times Higher Education Rankings 2022)
- Trinity is ranked 98th in the World
  (QS World University Ranking 2023)
- Trinity is ranked No.1 in Europe for Producing Entrepreneurs for the 7th year in a row
  Pitchbook 2021-2022

  Full details are available at: www.tcd.ie/research/about/rankings.

The Selection Process in Trinity

The Selection Committee (Interview Panel) may include members of the Academic and Administrative community together with External Assessor(s) who are expert in the area. Applications will be acknowledged by email. If you do not receive confirmation of receipt

within 1 day of submitting your application online, please contact the named hiring lead on the job specification immediately and prior to the closing date/time.

Given the degree of co-ordination and planning to have a Selection Committee available on the specified date, the University regrets that it may not be in a position to offer alternate selection dates. Where candidates are unavailable, reserves may be drawn from a shortlist. Outcomes of interviews are notified in writing to candidates and are issued no later than 5 working days following the selection day.

In some instances the Selection Committee may avail of telephone or video conferencing. The University's selection methods may consist of any or all of the following: Interviews, Presentations, Psychometric Testing, References and Situational Exercises.

It is the policy of the University to conduct pre-employment medical screening/full pre-employment medicals. Information supplied by candidates in their application (Cover Letter and CV) will be used to shortlist for interview.

Applications from non-EEA citizens are welcomed. However, eligibility is determined by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and further information on the Highly Skills Eligible Occupations List is set out in Schedule 3 of the Regulations https://dbei.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/Workplace-and-Skills/Employment-Permits/Employment-Permit-Eligibility/Highly-Skilled-Eligible-Occupations-List/ and the Ineligible Categories of Employment are set out in Schedule 4 of the Regulations https://dbei.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/Workplace-and-Skills/Employment-Permits/Employment-Permit-Eligibility/Ineligible-Categories-of-Employment/ . Non-EEA candidates should note that the onus is on them to secure a visa to travel to Ireland prior to interview. Non-EEA candidates should also be aware that even if successful at interview, an appointment to the post is contingent on the securing of an employment permit.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Trinity is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to employment policies, procedures and practices which do not discriminate on grounds such as gender, civil status, family status, age, disability, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or membership of the travelling community. On that basis we encourage and welcome talented people from all backgrounds to join our staff community. Trinity's Diversity Statement can be viewed in full at https://www.tcd.ie/diversity-inclusion/diversity-statement.