

From Number 1 in Mainland Europe to the Top 10 Worldwide

We have already done it once: we made a huge step from a strong economics department in the German-speaking world to the leading department in mainland Europe and to the top 20 departments worldwide. Now the time is ripe for the next big leap: reaching the top 10 worldwide.



The Department of Economics at the University of Zurich has already proven its ability to achieve ambitious goals: In a short time, it has evolved from an established Swiss department to a leading European department, positioning itself among the top 20 economics departments worldwide. Now it has set sail to be among the top 10 worldwide.

As a leading European research center and a global leader in behavioral economics, neuroeconomics and development economics, the De-

partment has attracted several internationally recognized researchers from prestigious universities such as Harvard, MIT, and Stanford in the last 10 years. It provides excellent training to several hundred students each year, and research conducted by its members regularly appears in leading research publications.

What started with Prof. Ernst Fehr's vision to create a leading economics department in Zurich, has evolved into a shared mission of excellent economists who want to join the

top 10 in the world. Their motivation is to set an enriching counterpart to the dominant top American universities. After all, scientific findings that influence public dialogue and political decisions should represent not just one, but as many world regions as possible.

Why Is It Important to Have a World-Leading Department in Zurich?

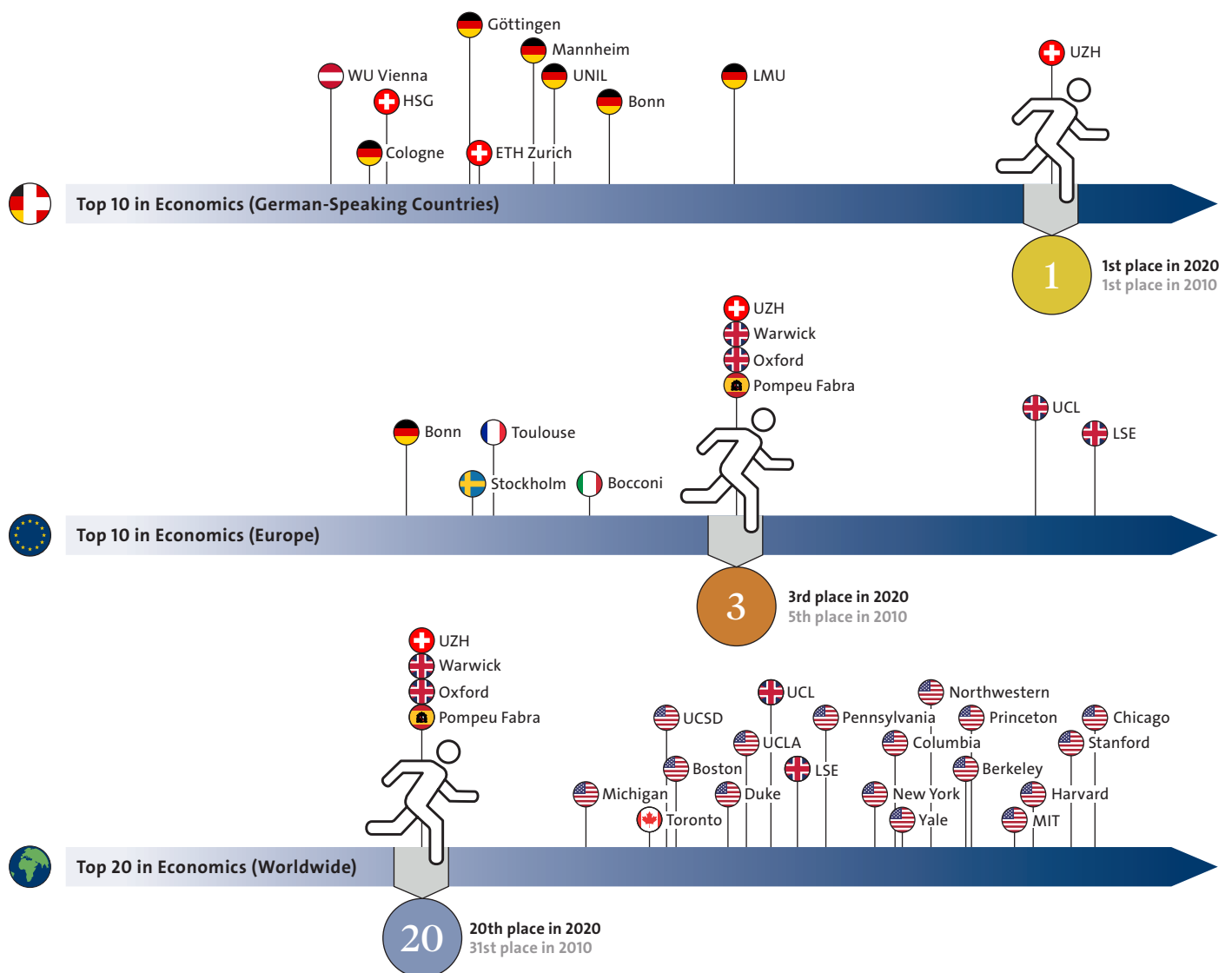
The major global challenges do not stop at national borders and cannot be left to the American intellectual elite alone. Europe and other regions of the world must become more involved in the global discourse in order to find integrating solutions.

Competing with the World's Front-Runners in Economics

Evaluating research institutions is not an exact science. Nevertheless, there are various indicators that allow a comparison between institutions. The most established are research-based rankings that measure research output. In such rankings,

the Department regularly performs very well, has occupied top positions in the German-speaking region for years, and is number 1 on the European mainland, beaten only by the UK departments. Internationally, the strong dominance of Anglo-Saxon

universities is evident. Thanks to the great efforts of the members of the Department and its partners, Zurich was able to break into the top 20 worldwide. This position is now to be successively expanded.



A Clear Upward Trend

Building on the leading position in the German-speaking area, the Department took on the challenge to become a world-class economics department in 2011 with the establishment of the Excellence Foundation Zurich. Just one year later, sev-

eral partners were on board, and the first major funding milestone was reached: UBS donated 100 million Swiss francs, which enabled the creation of numerous new professorships. Later, additional endowed professorships and scholarships for

doctoral students were created. As a result, the Department was able to attract many established and aspiring researchers to Zurich, which led to a leap into the top 20 worldwide in 2020.



"I have long been impressed by the extraordinary quality of the Department. You have been able to build a world-class economics department in Zurich, which provides a great public service not just for Switzerland – it is incredibly important for world economics."

Nobel Laureate Sir Angus Deaton, Princeton University

Leading Voices in the Global Discourse

Being able to attract and retain the best talents is a key driver for success – this also applies to research institutions. Each researcher and student contributes to the department's research output, increases the number of publications and projects, and strengthens the research community.

This benefits not only Switzerland as a research center, but also as a business location, for example in the form of innovations or through excellent trained specialists. Deci-

sion-makers benefit from the latest research findings and from dialogue with scientists. And finally, society as a whole benefits, through participation in the dialogue and in the form of getting answers to the most pressing questions of our time.

Already, the Department has several leading voices shaping the global discourse on current issues. The people shown here are examples of the many experts at the Department.



Prof. Ernst Fehr, leading behavioral economist and neuroeconomist and one of the world's most cited economic researchers in his field, former Global Distinguished Professor at New York University, recipient of numerous prizes and distinctions



Prof. Ralph Ossa, WTO Chief Economist, Director of the Kühne Center for Sustainable Trade and Logistics at UZH, joined the University of Zurich from the University of Chicago



Prof. Christian Ruff, Leader of the Neuroeconomics and Decision Neuroscience Group and member of the SNS lab at UZH, left the University College London to join the Department of Economics in Zurich



Prof. Dina Pomeranz, opinion leader on development economics issues, public finance and tax expert, joined the University of Zurich from Harvard Business School



Prof. Ana Costa-Ramón, aspiring expert in the field of health, labor, and gender economics, joined the University of Zurich from the University Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona



Prof. David Dorn, Director of the University Research Priority Program "Equality of Opportunity" at UZH, leading labor market and globalization expert, invited by the world's central bank leaders to speak at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, in 2017, joined the University of Zurich from CEMFI Madrid



Prof. David Yanagizawa-Drott, development economist and political economy expert with a current focus on the drivers of culture and norms in shaping labor markets for men and women, left Harvard University to join the Department of Economics in Zurich

Growing Stronger through Benefiting Partnerships

A key feature that has been instrumental in the growth and success of the Department over the past decade is its strong partnerships. These include renowned organizations and foundations from various fields, such as UNICEF Switzerland, NOMIS

Foundation, UBS or ZKB. Thanks to the support of our partners, especially the generous donations, many great talents could be brought to Zurich in a short time. Such partnerships will also be instrumental in achieving the Department's future

goals. After all, it will take a big leap to make it into the top 10 worldwide.

Our Mission to Enter the World's Top 10

It is not enough to be successful in just one area. To enter the league of the best universities, you need to be at the highest level in all areas. It takes the best researchers and young talent, excellent research infrastructure and training conditions, and a strong and committed network of partners and supporters. To achieve our goal, we have developed 3 strategic priorities, which we explain below.

Substantial Growth



The Department aims at significantly improving its position in international rankings. This can be achieved by increasing the faculty to a size comparable to the Department's peers – i.e., an additional 10 professors – and by holding constant the faculty productivity. The Department also needs to increase its faculty productivity to a level comparable to the Department's new hires today. At the

same time, it must be ensured that the professors are retained, since it is precisely the successful ones who receive offers from other universities.

The Department currently has over 90 students pursuing a PhD in Economics as part of the Zurich Graduate School of Economics and 10 students pursuing a PhD in Neuroeconomics as part of the Marlene

Porsche Graduate School of Neuroeconomics. Both graduate schools must be further expanded and strengthened so that more young talents find their way to Zurich.

Intensify the Public Dialogue



The strong positioning of Zurich economists in the German-speaking world must be strengthened and further developed. This requires intensified public relations and media work, especially with international media.

At the same time, the visibility of the Department can be promoted through event formats that appeal to the widest possible audience. In

terms of content, this succeeds with topics that affect us all, which is well covered by the 5 global challenges. To reach as many people as possible, events can be broadcast live and online audiences can be integrated through participation tools from anywhere in the world.

Another measure is the continuous exchange with decision-makers from

politics and business. At this interface, solution strategies for current problems emerge, which holds a high innovation potential. It is also at this interface that science can provide the greatest added value for society.

Secure Funding



We cannot achieve our ambitious goals without the support of our partners. The last 10 years have impressively shown how important partners and donors are for the success of the Department. We are proud of our impressive network of loyal partners and advisors that

we have been able to build up so far. The continued support of ZKB as a founding partner of the Excellence Foundation and that of UBS, which in 2020 extended its commitment by 10 years, are two impressive examples. As different as our partners are, they all have something in common:

they share the Department's vision and are convinced that a leap into the global top 10 is important for Zurich and can succeed as a joint effort.

Support Us in Our Mission to Bring European Values and Views into the Global Dialogue

Become part of our partner network through a donation and accompany us on our way to becoming a world leader. By doing so, you will enable Switzerland to play a more prominent role as a research and business location in the global dialogue on the most pressing issues of our time.

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