Real estate teaching and research in times of COVID-19 - The faculty's view

Gunther Maier, Sabine Sedlacek

Introduction

- COVID-19 pandemic led to disruption of many established procedures
- At universities:
  - Traditional face-to-face teaching was largely stopped
  - Move to online teaching
  - Online meetings
  - Conferences cancelled and moved to virtual
  - Some disciplines (virology, epidemiology, systems analysis) were in high demand suddenly
  - Other disciplines were marginalized

Introduction

- Boost for some latent transitions
  - Digitalization
  - Internationalization
- ERES held two education seminars about the impacts of the pandemic
  - Different results over the two years
  - Demonstrated the benefits of online events

Literature

- Fast growing literature
- Spread over many disciplines
- Some case studies
  - Of universities, of countries
- Some conceptual papers
  - How universities can use electronic media
  - How universities should react to the pandemic
- Until now, only few surveys

Our survey

- Online survey

- Three groups of questions
  - Personal, professional, demographics
  - Teaching
  - Research

- Dimensions
  - Changes due to the pandemic
  - Experience during pandemic
  - Expectations about the future

- Mostly 4-point Likert scales (plus "do not know")

Our survey respondents

- 422 contacted, 1 reminder
- 82 usable responses (19.43% response rate)
- 70 employed as teacher and research (85.4%)
- 11 graduate students (13.4%)
- 52.44% female
- Main discipline: real estate (81.7%)
- Many responses from GBR (15.8%), DEU and POL (14.6% each) – some country bias

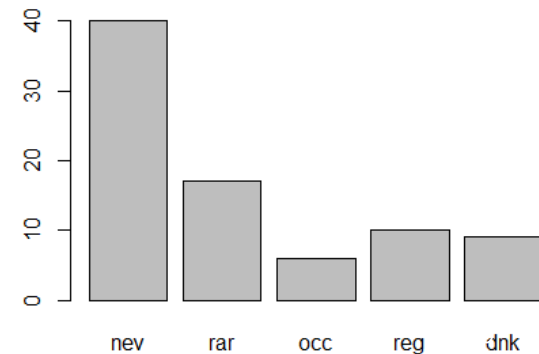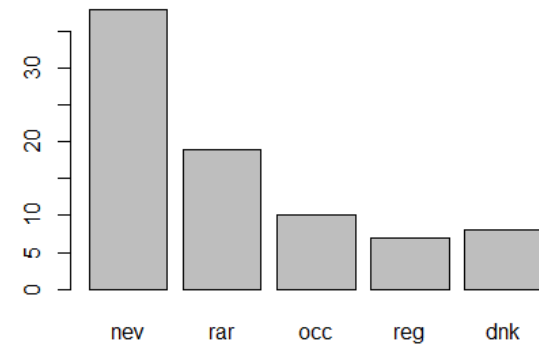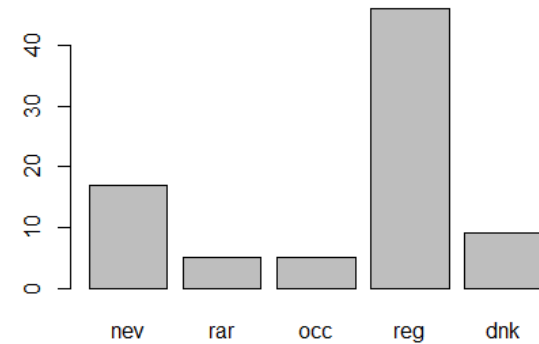# Share of time spent on …
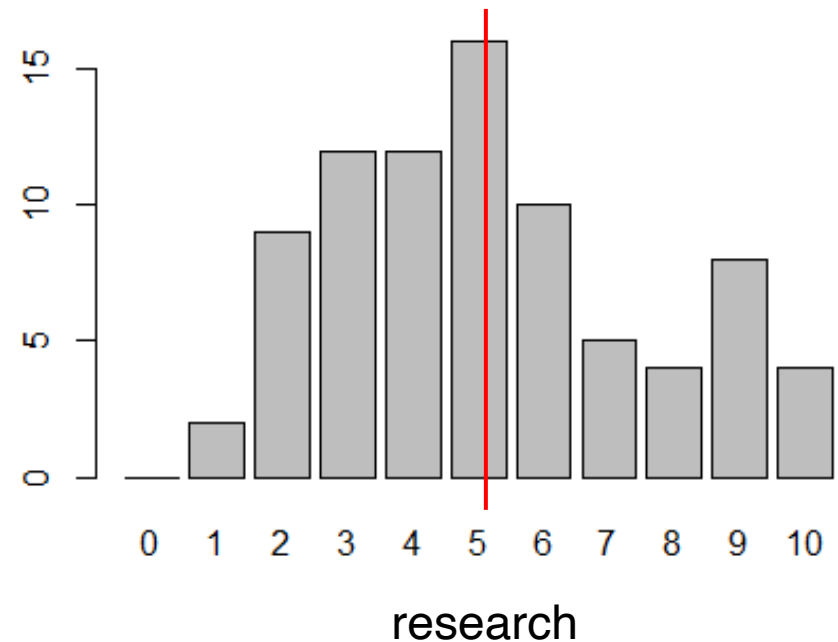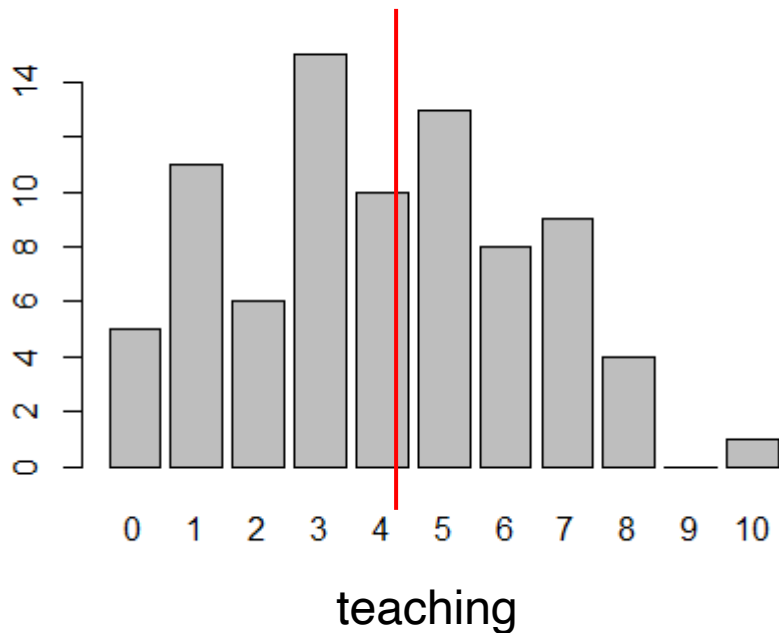
teaching

research

- Median for research is higher than median for teaching
- Some respondents with no teaching
- No respondents with no research

Teaching

Teaching before the pandemic

- 56.1% regularly used a LMS, 20.3% never

- 69.5% never or rarely used video conferencing

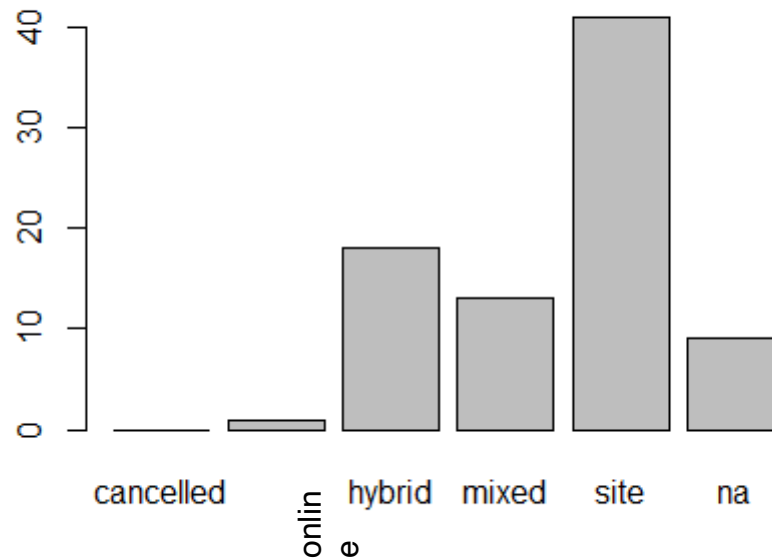- 69.5% never or rarely had online meetings with students

Teaching before the pandemic

- 63.4% never or rarely used instructional videos
- 53.6 never or rarely used presentation videos (eg. TED-Talk)
- 70.7% never or rarely used foreign faculty as guests
- 20.7% regularly had practitioners as guests

Foreign faculty

Practitioners
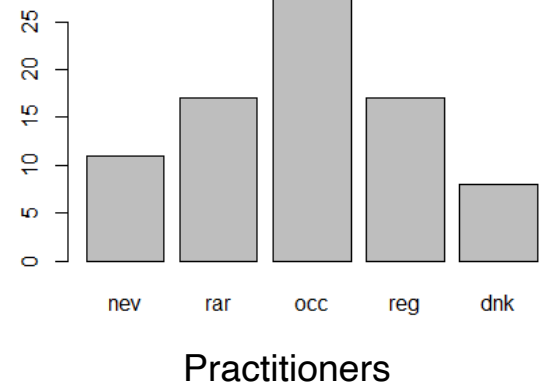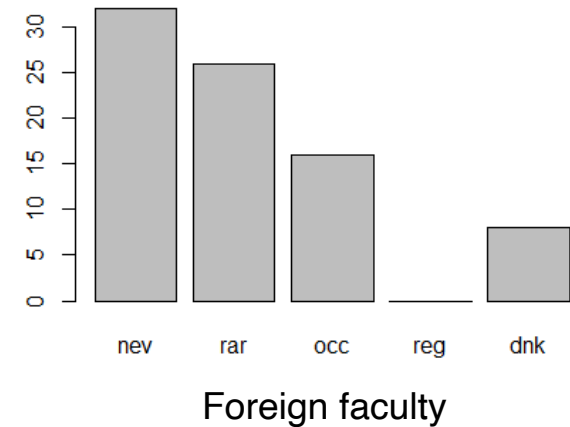
Teaching during the pandemic

2022 Fall

- Very few cancelled
- Beginning: online
- Later hybrid
- Expected: on-site

Teaching during the pandemic

- 77.5% felt well supported by their institution
- 81% felt that the support improved substantially
- 65.4% felt they had to spend a lot of time and effort to learn the tools they needed for pandemic mode teaching
- 67.5% agreed they had to adjust the content of their teaching
- 92.5% agreed they had to adjust the style of their teaching

Teaching during the pandemic

- When the pandemic will be over, I will largely return to the way I taught before the pandemic
  - Majority (36.7%) mainly disagrees
  - But, 50.6% fully or mainly agrees
- **Also in the future, direct face-to-face contact will be essential for good teaching**
 - 87.3% agree; 62% fully, 25.3% mainly
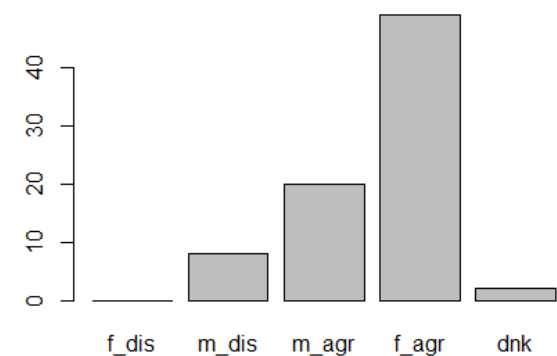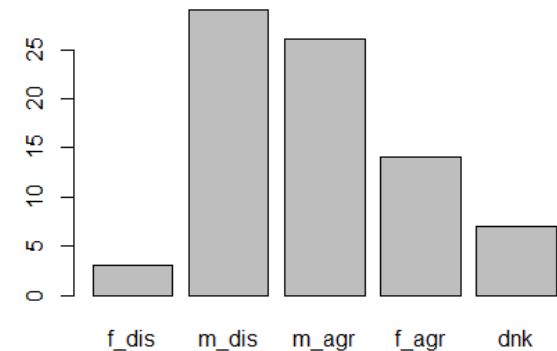
Expectations for future teaching

- Will include more practitioners (60.25% agree)
- Will include more external faculty – almost evenly distributed (incl. do_not_know) - task for ERES!

	Freq	%	% Cum.
fully_disagree	9	11.39	11.39
mainly_disagree	17	21.52	32.91
mainly_agree	19	24.05	56.96
fully_agree	17	21.52	78.48
do_not_know	17	21.52	100.00
Total	79	100.00	100.00

Expectations for future teaching

- **In my future teaching, I will use video-conferencing tools to include external partners**
  - Strong agreement (33.8% fully, 45.5% mainly agree)
- **In my future teaching, I will use more TED, YouTube and similar videos**
  - Exactly 50% agree (23.7% fully)
 - But, 21.1% do not know
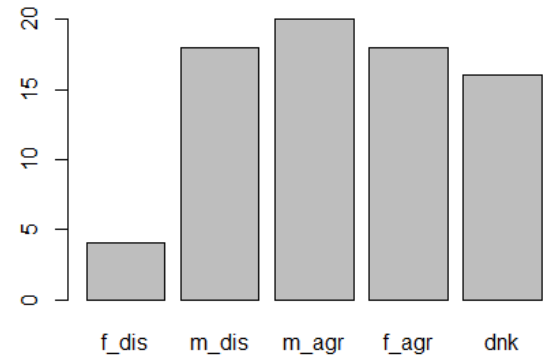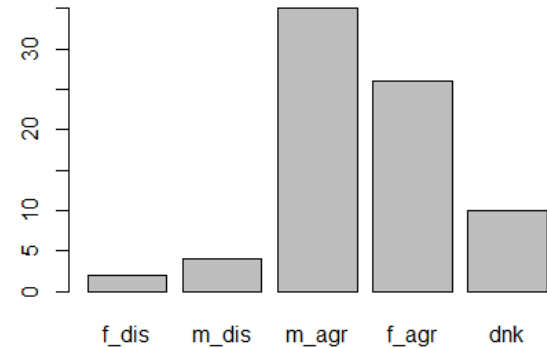
Research

Changes as compared to before the pandemic

- Increase and decrease similar
    - Writing articles and reports
    - Writing research proposals for funding

- Maintaining existing research networks
    - Decrease: 31.7%, increase: 15.9%, same: 47.6%

- Developing new research networks
    - Decrease: 31.7%, increase: 35.4%, same: 28.1%

Changes as compared to before the pandemic

- Presenting research to colleagues
  - Decrease: 51.2%
  - Increase: 14.6%
- Presenting research to the public
  - Decrease: 57.3%
  - Increase: 20.7%
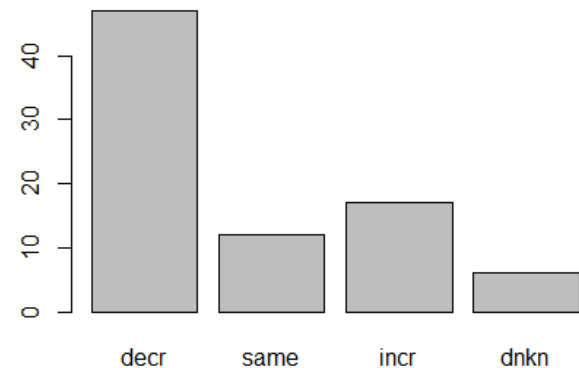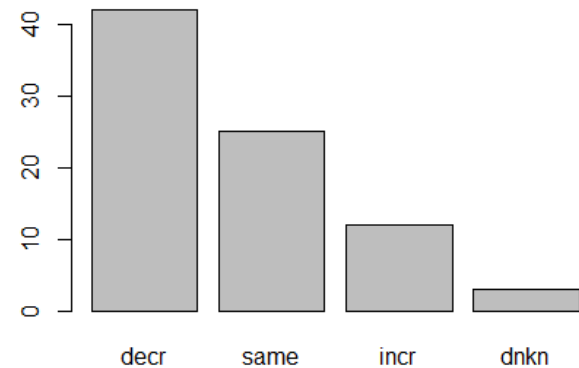
# Research during the pandemic

- Doing research was difficult during the pandemic
  - 2/3 agreed (1/3 fully, 1/3 mainly)
- Reputation of research increased in public perception
  - 53.2% agree (19% fully), 16.5% fully disagree
- 60.5% did adjust the focus of their research
- But, only 41.3% reached new audiences for their research results

The future of research

- Virtual elements are here to stay
- **In the future, project meetings will mainly be held virtually**
  - 60.5% agree (17.3% fully)
  - Only 34.6% disagree
- **In the future, it will be more difficult to fund meetings and conference participation from research funds**
 - 47.6% agree, 28.1% disagree, 24.4% do not know

The future of research

- **Storing research results in online repositories will be more important in the future**
  - 84% agree (48.2% fully)

- **Presenting research results in social media will be more important in the future**
  - 80.3% agree (45.7% fully)

- Surprisingly strong!
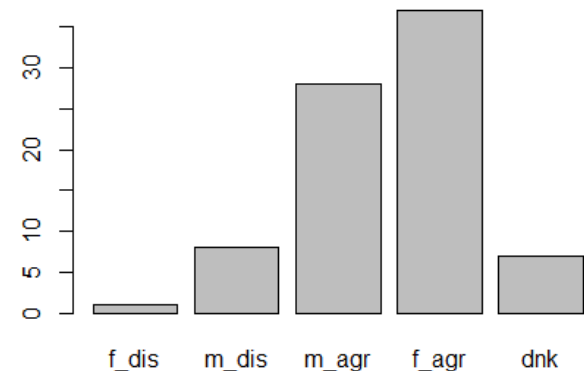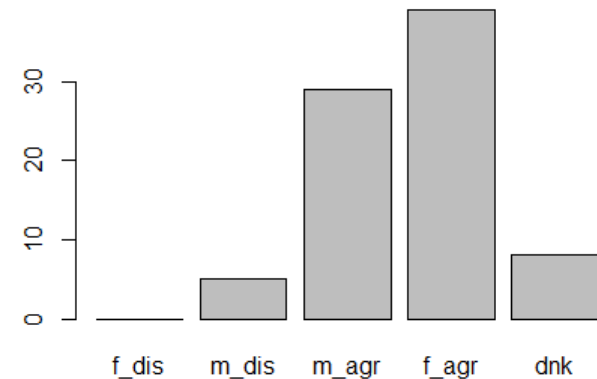
Virtual conferences

- **Virtual conferences are a good alternative to traditional on-site conferences**
  - 64.6% agree (26.8% fully)

- **When the pandemic will be over, virtual and hybrid conferences will disappear quickly**
  - 76.5% disagree

- Surprisingly strong
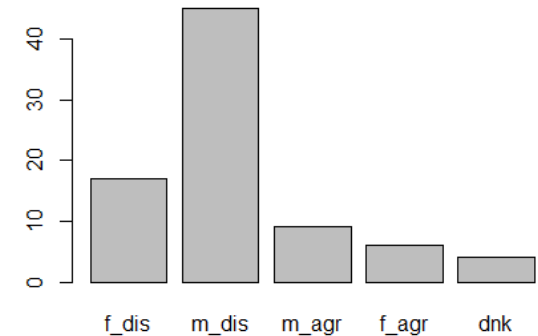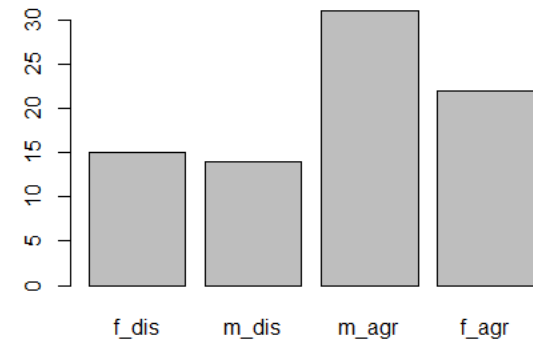
Virtual conferences

- **In the future, most conferences will offer opportunities for virtual attendance**
  - 74.4% agree, 31.7% fully
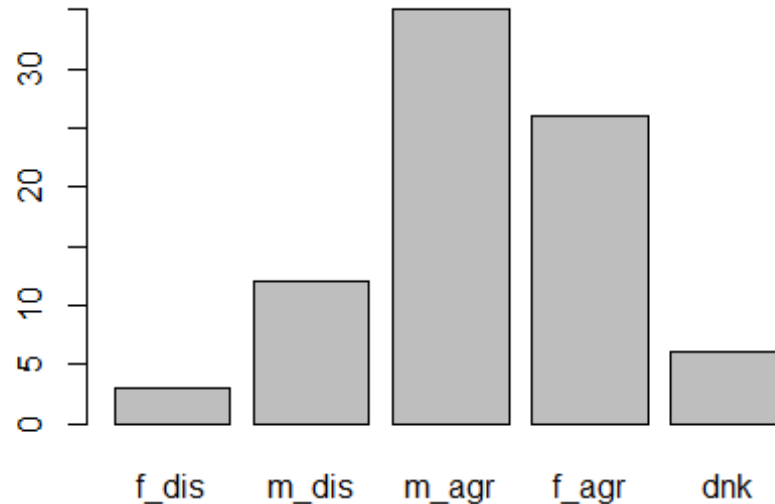
Relationships and groups

- Generally difficult to identify
  - Too few observations for reliable tests
  - Many groups (age, country, status) become too small
- Respondents who found teaching difficult also tended to find research difficult during the pandemic
- Differentiation between
  1. Full + associate professors
  2. Assistant professors + students + others

Relationships and groups

- Some differences, but only few statistically significant (Chi-square-test)
- Group 1 uses LMS much more than group 2
  - Regularly: 81.8% group 1; 38.8% group 2
  - In part due to "do not know": 0% group 1; 18.4% group2
- Group 1 supports virtual elements as strongly as group 2
- With more observations we hope to get more significant results

Conclusions

- Some expected, some surprising results
    - Expected: problems of teaching and research during the pandemic; adjustment over time; teaching: some back to previous normal
    - Surprising: Strong expectation for virtual conferences and virtual attendance options; high importance of online repositories and social media

- For ERES
    - provide online participation to conferences; offer online repository; encourage cooperation in teaching (use of the network)