



Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe:

United Kingdom

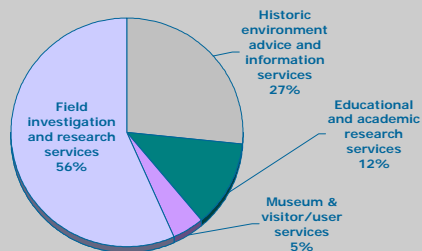
Institute of Field Archaeologists



Summary

Over 6,800 people work as archaeologists in the United Kingdom.

Archaeological practice in this country is largely commercialised, with most archaeological research being undertaken through the spatial planning system ahead of development, and over 50% of all archaeologists work for private sector companies.



Number of archaeologists = 6,865

41% of UK archaeologists are female, 59% male, and the average age is 38.

93% of archaeologists working in the UK are from this country and 5% originate from elsewhere in the European Union.

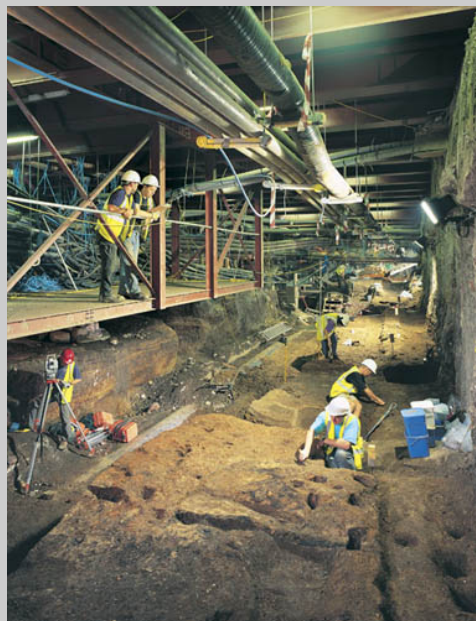
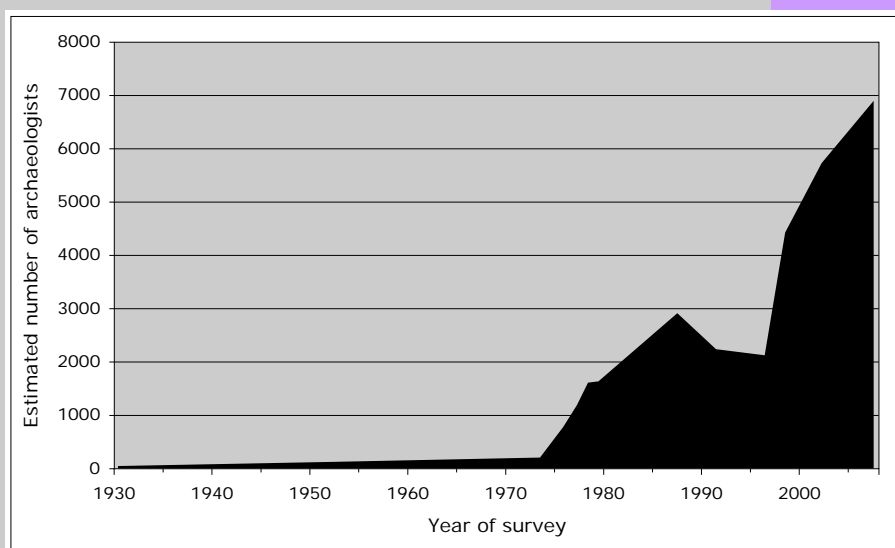
91% of all archaeologists are graduates, and more than 99% of professional archaeologists under the age of 30 hold degrees.

Growth

The archaeological profession in the United Kingdom has grown rapidly and steadily over the past fifteen years, with the number of people earning their living from archaeology growing by about 5% per year.

This has been primarily driven by a requirement that has been on developers since 1990 to take account of archaeological remains in order to receive permission for their construction works. This requirement has led to the expansion of a substantial archaeological private sector undertaking fieldwork and providing advice.

The largest of these companies each employ hundreds of archaeologists.



Borough High Street, Southwark, London. Photo: MoLAS.

Responsibilities

Most archaeologists working in the UK undertake field investigation or research, with the second largest functional sector being that of providing advice. Those archaeologists that work to provide advice or manage information typically work for local government, but private sector advice-giving consultancy is the fastest growing area within UK archaeology.

In terms of relative proportions, the numbers of archaeologists working for national state agencies is falling, as are the numbers of archaeologists working in museums.

Rewards

On average, archaeologists in the UK earned €34,392 (£23,310) in 2007-08. This compares poorly with the UK national average for all workers of €44,261 (£29,999).

Mobility

The UK archaeological labour market is relatively receptive to people coming in from other countries. 7% of archaeologists working in the UK did not originate from that country, and 9% of archaeologists working in the UK gained their highest qualifications in another country.

Qualifications

Although 'archaeologist' is not a legally protected title in the UK, requiring specific qualifications, almost all of the people who work as archaeologists in the UK are graduates. Over 10% hold doctorates.

Younger archaeologists are even more likely to be graduates, showing that to hold a degree has become a *de facto* entry requirement to the profession.



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