



Survey of higher education graduates (EHA)

Description

The survey of higher education graduates (EHA) is aimed at people who graduated from a university, a university of applied sciences or a university of teacher educations. The survey has been conducted by the FSO every two years since 2001. Its main objective is to determine the labour market situation and the career development of higher education graduates one and five years after graduation.

Published results:

Unemployment rate as defined by the ILO, rate of entry into employment, match between job and educational level, occupational position, fixed-term contracts, occupation rate, reasons for part-time work, under/over-employment, income from employment, etc. Cross-tabulated with type of higher education institution, level of study, group of fields of study, gender, age group, place of education, higher education institution, major regions.

Methodology

Panel design full population survey of graduates with a Bachelor's degree, diploma, licentiate, Master's degree and PhD. The first wave of the survey (one year after graduation) is aimed at all new graduates from a Swiss institution of higher education recognised by the Confederation. Only graduates who participated in the first wave are asked to take part in the second wave of the survey (five years after graduation). Bachelor's graduates who have started a Master's programme are excluded from the second survey. Online questionnaires. Content and questions are adapted for each degree. Participation is voluntary.

Available since:

1977: First survey of graduates doctoral/research universities by the Swiss Association for Career and Academic Consulting (AGAB/ASOU)
1993: Graduates of universities of applied sciences and higher technical colleges included in the survey
1998: Federal Statistical Office assumes project management
2001: The Federal Statistical Office assumes responsibility for collecting the data
2002: First panel survey ("second-wave survey") of graduates who took part in the first-wave survey in 1999

Changes in the survey method since 2005: in addition to the paper version of the questionnaire, it is also possible to complete the questionnaire online. Since 2009, the survey has been conducted exclusively online. Since 2007, following the Bologna reform, graduates with Bachelor's and Master's degrees have also been surveyed.

Number of interviews conducted for the first survey :

- until 2007: about 15'000
- 2009-2011: about 21'000
- 2013-2017: about 30'000
- since 2019: about 33'000

Number of interviews conducted for the second survey :

- until 2017: about 11'000
- since 2019: about 14'000

Variables used:

- General information on completed study course
- Transition from higher education to labour market
- Professional situation one/five years after graduation
- Employment history since graduation
- Further education and training
- Self-evaluation of current professional situation and career to date
- Personal data and current living situation

From 2021, each questionnaire contains a module that can be modified and adjusted to specific topics.

Survey date:

Every two years: second quarter (survey five years after graduation) and fourth quarter (survey one year after graduation).

Periodicity of publication:

Every two years

Degree of regionalisation:

Switzerland/abroad and major regions

Data linkages used:

Swiss Higher Education Information System's student and graduate database (SHIS), Population and Households Statistics (STATPOP), Register of the Central Compensation Office (CCO), Business and Enterprise Register (BER), Survey for Longitudinal Statistics in the field of education (LABB)

Statistical quality of the data:

The confidence interval provides information on the quality of the estimate of relative frequencies (%). For the ILO unemployment rate, the 95% confidence interval is between +/- 0.2 and +/- 0.9 around the estimated value, depending on the type of higher education institution and study level (results of the first wave of the survey in 2021).

Policy on revisions

Methodological revisions :

Methodological revisions carried out as necessary (e.g. revision of the sources).

Legal bases

Ordinance of 30 April 2025 on Federal Statistics (SR 431.011)

Organization

Federal Statistical Office (FSO) in collaboration with market and social research institutes

Information:

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