



Alumni perspectives - Career prospects for graduates at the Department of Political Science

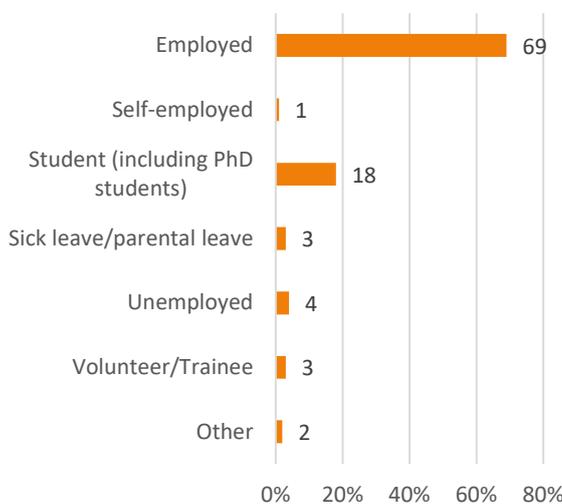
The purpose of this alumni survey is to gather information about our alumni’s development in terms of employment, career and mobility. The survey comprises 510 alumni from the Bachelor’s programme in European Studies (Europaprogrammet), Bachelor’s programme in Political Science (Statsvetarprogrammet), Master’s programme in European Studies (MAES), Master’s programme in International Administration and Global Governance (IAGG) and Master’s programme in Political Science (MAPS). The response rate was 52%.¹

Internship, exchange studies and previous studies

A total of 66 percent of respondents did an internship, and 24 percent studied abroad during their studies. Something that stands out is that 76 percent of the female respondents did an internship during their studies, but only 51 percent of male respondents. A slightly larger share of women (25 percent) than men (20 percent) did exchange studies.

The alumni of all three master’s programmes were also asked an additional question about where they had acquired their bachelor’s degree. The majority of respondents had a bachelor’s degree from a Swedish university (54 percent). 34 percent had a bachelor’s degree from another European university and 12 percent from a university outside of Europe.

Main occupation



Employment

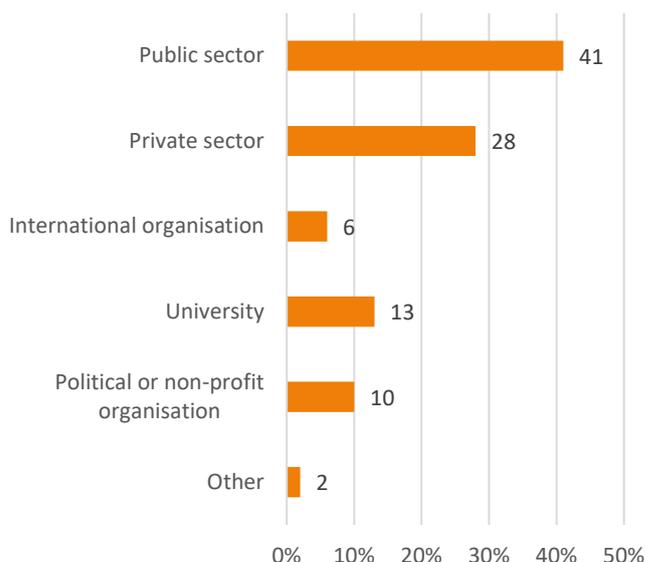
The majority of respondents is employed (69 percent), while 18 percent continue their studies. 4 percent of the respondents are currently unemployed. Almost half of the respondents (47 percent) have a permanent employment. The other half are either in fixed-term employment or in other employment situations. Out of all employed respondents, 41 percent work in the public sector. Out of these, 18 percent work on the national level, 6 percent on the regional level and 17 percent on the municipality level. 28 percent of the employed respondents work in the private sector.

¹ For more information about the survey and/or the questions included, please contact Karin Andersson, karin.andersson@pol.gu.se (Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg)

The most common occupations among the respondents are administrative and coordinating jobs such as case officers, and project managers. Among the most common occupations are also investigator/analyst, jobs within communication and media, consultants, and district committee secretary.

The largest employer among the respondents is the City of Gothenburg (13 respondents), followed by the University of Gothenburg (10 respondents) and the Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket (7 respondents).

Type of organisation



Examples of the most common job titles	
Administrator	EU Policy Officer
Analyst	Journalist
Business Developer	Municipal Secretary
Case Officer	PhD Student
Communications Officer	Political Adviser
Consultant	Policy Expert
Governmental Desk Officer	Project Manager
Data Analyst	Public Service Officer
District Committee Secretary	Quality Manager
Embassy Secretary	Researcher
	Strategist

Comment: The question was ‘What kind of organisation do you work in?’. Only currently employed respondents were included in the percentage base. The response alternative “public sector” was divided into the sub-categories “national”, “regional” and “municipality”-level public sector.

Location of work

Almost half of the respondents stayed in the Gothenburg region after finishing their studies (47 percent). 24 percent of the respondents work outside of Sweden. The most common work places within Sweden are the Gothenburg region, followed by Stockholm region and Västra Götaland region (without Gothenburg). 38 percent of alumni from the master’s programmes work in another European country, as compared to only 6 percent of alumni from the bachelor’s programmes. The single most named workplace outside of Sweden is Brussels, Belgium.

Time from studies to first employment

Results show that 80 percent of alumni start their first employment within a half year after finishing their studies. Those who have completed internships during their studies started their first employment sooner than those who did not. 71 percent of alumni who had done an internship found their first employment within three months from graduation, compared to 55 percent of those who did not do an internship. 10 percent of respondents state that they have not started a first employment after their studies yet. This does not mean that all of them are

unemployed, since we know that many of the respondents continue their studies (bachelor's students continue studying on the master's level).

The way to a first employment

The respondents were asked what aspects they thought were crucial when securing a first employment after their studies. 25% of the respondents indicated that an internship that they did during their studies was crucial for finding employment. Other important study-related factors are exchange studies, thesis work and the quality and content of the programme. Many respondents also indicated that factors outside of the university setting were important, such as previous working experience (during or before the studies), their personal network, and being active in different organizations and associations.

Skills and abilities

Skills and abilities acquired during the studies that our alumni use in their current work assignments

- Complete assignments within set time frames
- Work independently
- Solve problems
- Critically reflect, value and discuss
- Communicate in English
- Work in a team

The skills that most respondents state to use to a great extent in their current employment are to work independently, to complete assignments within set time frames, and to solve problems independently. Furthermore, many respondents indicate that they need to be able to critically reflect value and discuss, and to communicate in English in their current work. Overall, this indicates that the alumni make use of the generic skills that they acquire during their studies, which is in line with the aim of the education.

Concluding remarks

The main findings of this survey indicate that the employability of the alumni from the Department of Political Science is high. Another insight is that many of the respondents start their first employment already before technically graduating from their studies (34 percent). The results also indicate that the unemployment rate among respondents remains at low levels even in the years after graduation (less than 4 percent).

Overall, the majority of respondents work within the public sector (universities included). 28 percent of respondents work in the private sector. Most of the respondents stay in Sweden after finishing their studies, with a focus on the Gothenburg region and Stockholm region. Alumni from the master's programmes who have a bachelor's degree from another European country, tend to move on or back to employment outside of Sweden.

The self-assessment of the skills and abilities used in work indicates that the respondents are versatile all-rounders rather than highly specialized employees, which further highlights the employability of the alumni.