



Results of the Central Graduate Survey for the 2017 Graduation Year
Starting a Career · Employment Situation · Competence-building

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In the period 1st June to 31st August 2018 the University of Göttingen surveyed its graduates from the Class of 2017.

The Class of 2017 comprises all graduates who sat a final exam in the period 1st October 2016 to 30th September 2017 at the University of Göttingen and did not re-register for a further degree or a doctorate.

For the Class of 2017 this yielded a basic population of 3,602 graduates, of which 1,320 graduates took part in the survey. After deducting all the graduates who were not reached or declined to take part, this equals a net response rate of 39.5 per cent.

Compared to preceding years, this is once again a stable and representative response rate and enables a broad analysis and use of the survey results.

This analytical report will offer insights into the results of the survey of the Class of 2017 and set them in the context of the results of the previous surveys.

Key topics of the survey were:

- ➔ What professions and occupations have the graduates entered?
- ➔ What was their experience moving from studying to work?
- ➔ What skills are required of them in their roles?
- ➔ How do they rate their studies in retrospect?

Retrospective assessment of degree programmes and the information provided about starting working life and career progress helps the university to develop the courses on offer and provides potential future students with better information about the available offerings.

The results and analyses of the survey are also provided to the faculties in the form of reports and their own data-sets, enabling the faculties to undertake their own independent analyses.

The Central Career Service, the Key Competencies Department, the Central Student Advisory Service and the International Office also receive special analyses of the survey of the Class of 2017.

More detailed analyses and themed analyses can be found on the [Graduate Survey Homepage](#) of the University of Göttingen.

1. Survey design and response rate from the Class of 2017

A very successful survey of the Class of 2017

In the period 1st October 2016 to 30th September 2017, a total of 5,186 students received an academic degree at the University of Göttingen.

The Graduate Survey of the Class of 2017 elected to survey only those graduates who completed a Bachelor's or Master's degree, a State Examination, an Ecclesiastical Examination or a doctorate in the given period, and did not re-register for a subsequent semester at the University of Göttingen. On this basis, 3,602 graduates were invited to take part in the Graduate Survey.

In total 1,320 graduates from the Class of 2017 took part in the survey, which equals a net response rate of 39.5 per cent and a slight rise in the response rate in comparison to the previous year.

Unfortunately 260 graduates of the 2,282 graduates who did not take part in the graduate survey did not do so either because no current contact details were available or because they actively refused to take part. That equals a share of 7.22 per cent.

In comparison to the Class of 2014, participation using mobile devices, such as tablets and smartphones, has increased by 14.6 per cent and now makes up a share of 28.7 per cent. Twelve per cent of the survey participants answered the questionnaire in English.

With regard to the representative nature of the survey data, considering its relevance to the entire Class of 2017, there were no apparent significant biases in the distribution of biological genders compared to their share of the basic graduate population.

The share of international graduates in the Class of 2017 totalled 14.5 per cent; the share of international students that took part in the survey was 15.8 per cent. Here there is likewise no significant difference, therefore we can include the responses of this survey group in the subsequent analyses.

It was also clear that the survey participants did not differ significantly from the basic population with regard to country of birth and nationality.

Furthermore, considering aspects of relevance to the studies (type of degree, faculty, standard course length, study semesters), there is no significant difference to the basic population.

There were only slight biases in relation to the number of semesters and the examination grades. It appears that the graduates who took part in the survey tended to have completed their studies faster and graduated with a better examination grade than the basic population. Therefore generalisation concerning these variables should be avoided.

2. Starting a career

The success of our graduates in starting a career and how their professional lives develop are important indicators of the quality of studies for the University of Göttingen.

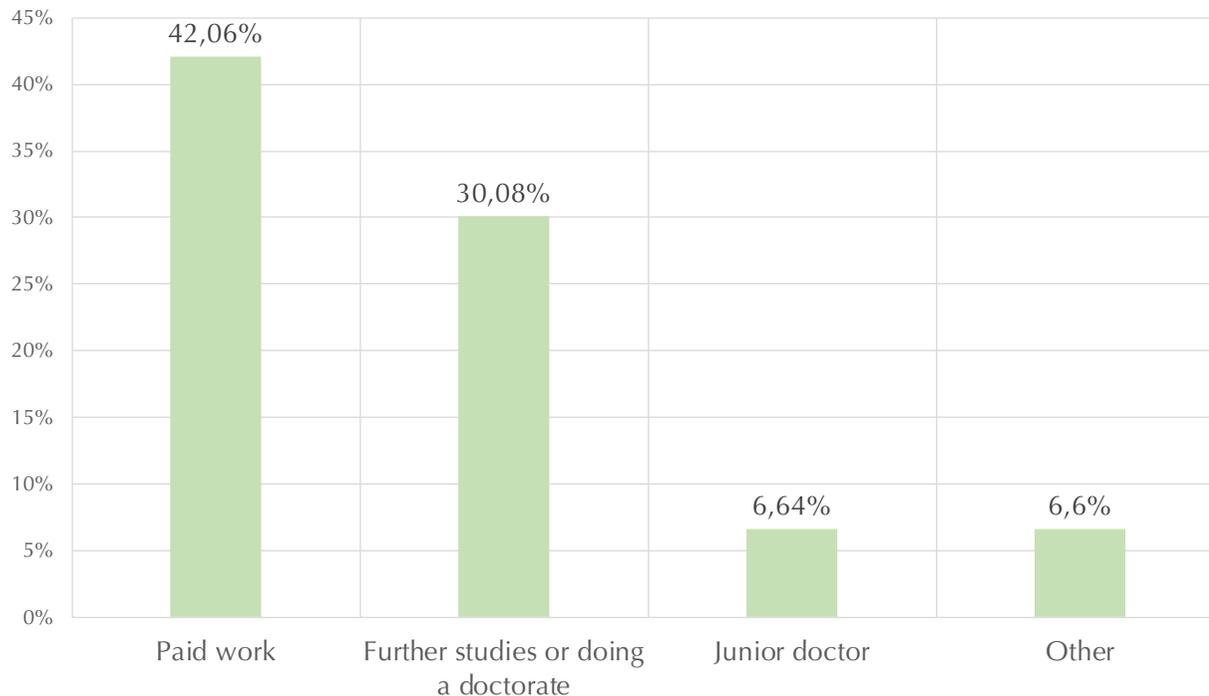
We use this information to evaluate the extent to which the skills that are taught qualify them for working life and how demand is developing for the specialists we educate. It also provides an important insight into how demands are changing in the business world and how faculties and university institutions can support students during their studies to manage the transition into professional life.

In the following we offer a brief outline of the performance indicators for the start of Göttingen graduates' careers.



2.1. After graduation

Illustration 1: Current employment situation at the time of the survey



Question: Which of the following correctly describe your current situation?

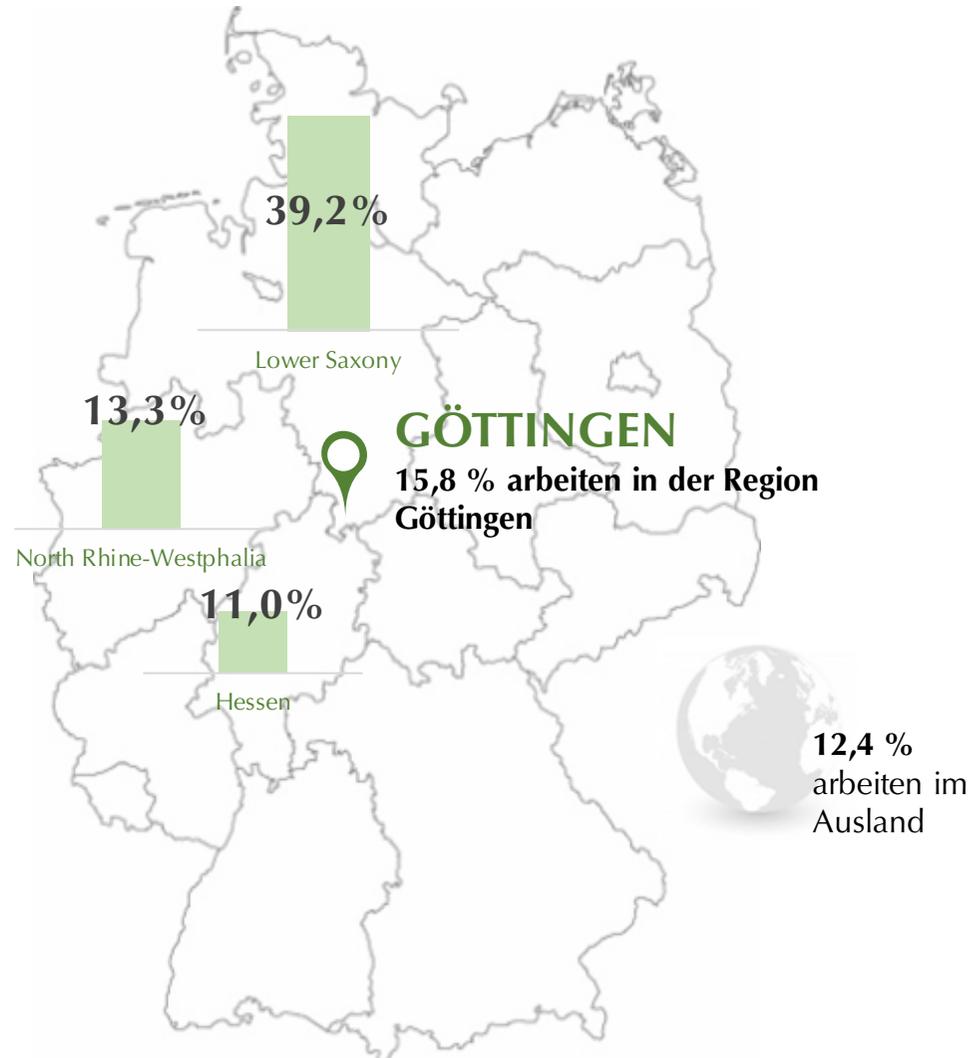
In total 42 per cent of graduates are in paid employment nine to twenty months after graduation or gaining a doctorate from the University of Göttingen. The employment rate from all categories surveyed was 62.7 per cent, while 34.5 per cent are taking a further degree, a doctorate, or a post-doctoral qualification for professorship, and 7.1 per cent are unemployed or at home on parental leave.

The highest percentage shares of employed graduates came from the Faculty of Business and Economics (61.2%), the Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science (61.8%) and the Faculty of Chemistry (60%). In the Faculty of Forest Sciences and Forest Ecology barely 19 per cent were pursuing vocational and/or academic training. At the time of the survey, 63.3 per cent of Faculty of Law graduates were taking a legal internship. The highest proportion of graduates taking a further degree and/or a doctorate at the time of the survey came from the Faculty of Geoscience and Geography with 48.8 per cent.

The details of this employment is analysed in the following.

2.2. Region of employment

Illustration 2: Work region



Question: In which region are you working?

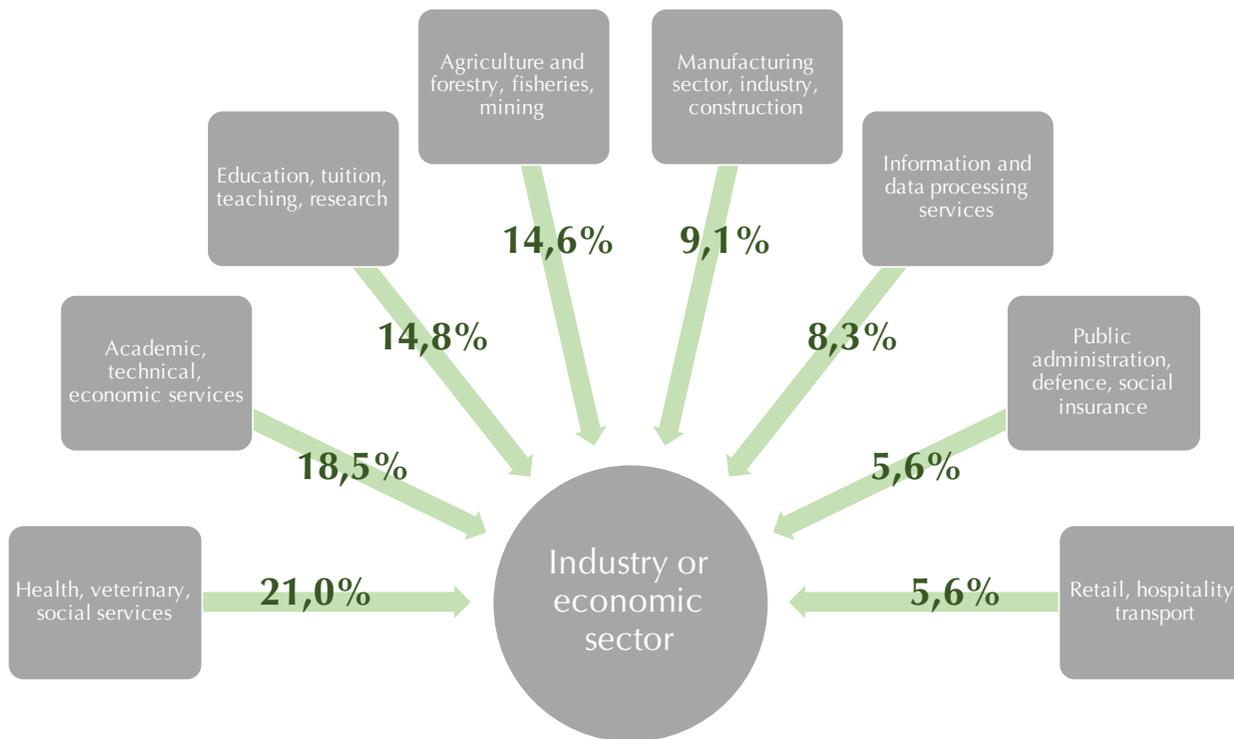
In total 39.2 per cent of graduates pursue their careers in Lower Saxony and 15.8 per cent in the city and region of Göttingen. Furthermore, 13.3 per cent work in North Rhine-Westphalia and eleven per cent in Hessen.

These percentage shares were also reflected in the previous years and are therefore a stable indicator of employment in the area.

A share of 12.4 per cent of graduates is employed abroad. This proportion has not changed much in comparison to the Class of 2016, remaining slightly over twelve per cent. This is made up 54.2 per cent of EU graduates and 57 per cent of non-EU international graduates.

2.3. Sector

Illustration 3: Employment sector



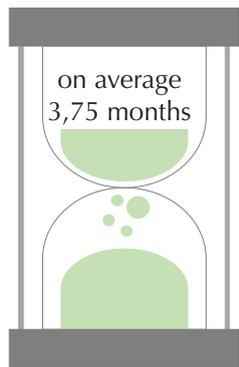
Question: Which industry or economic sector are you in?

Graduates in paid employment work in the health, veterinary and social sectors (21 per cent), followed by the academic, technical and economic services sector. Looking at the employers in the city and region of Göttingen, these are above all the University of Göttingen, the University Medical Centre, the University's IT competence centre (Gesellschaft für wissenschaftliche Datenverarbeitung Göttingen, GWDG), the Max Planck Institute, the City of Göttingen, Satorius, Sycor, Ottobock and the Federal State Lower Saxony.

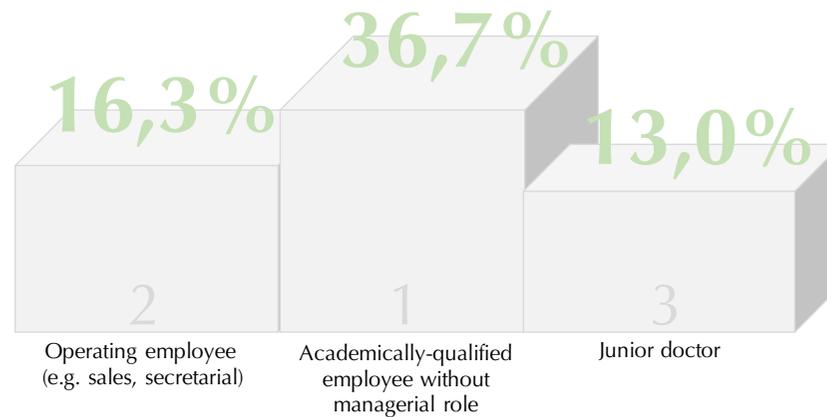
The shape of the actual job profiles is examined in the following analyses.

2.4. Time taken to find a job, professional position and work hours

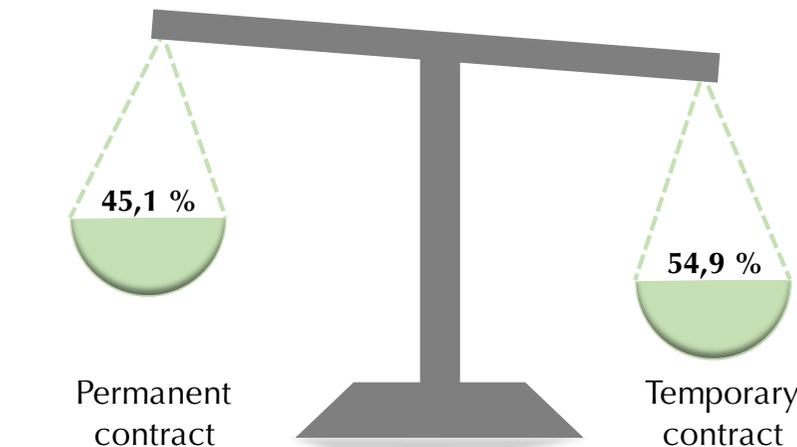
Illustration 4 to 6: Time taken to find a job, professional position and work hours per week



Question: How many months did your search for this work take in total?



Question: What is your occupational status?



Question: Is your contract permanent or temporary?

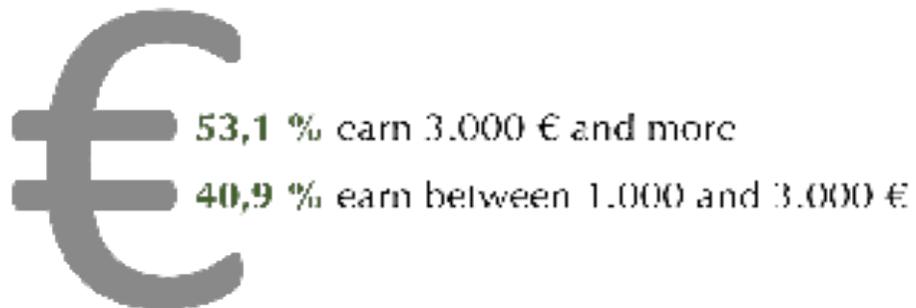
On average the search for employment took about 3.7 months. This is a slight increase in the length of time taken in comparison to previous years, however it is still less than the average length of search for the Class of 2013 of 4.41 months. The most successful strategy was to apply for an advertised post (53.4 %).

The largest share of graduates from the Class of 2017 is currently employed as scientifically qualified individuals, followed by the professional position of a qualified employee.

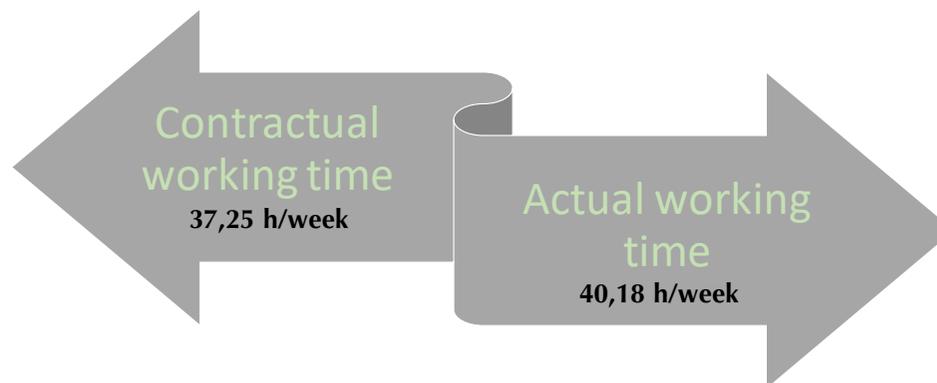
For 54.9 per cent of graduates, the contract of employment is temporary. So the share of temporary contracts of employment has fallen for the first time in three years, by ten per cent. Looking at the work hours of the graduates in paid employment, it can be seen that almost 40 per cent benefit from flexible work hours, 33 per cent from flexitime, and 20.4 per cent work partially or entirely from home.

2.5. Contracted work hours and income

Illustration 7 and 8: Gross monthly income and working-time models



Question: How high is your gross monthly income (before deduction of taxes and social insurance costs) including regular monthly bonuses?



Question: How many hours a week do you work on average?

The average gross monthly income can be described as follows: 5.9 per cent of graduates earn less than 1,000 euros, 40.9 per cent earn between 1,000 and 3,000 euros and a share of 7.6 per cent earn more than 5,000 euros per month.

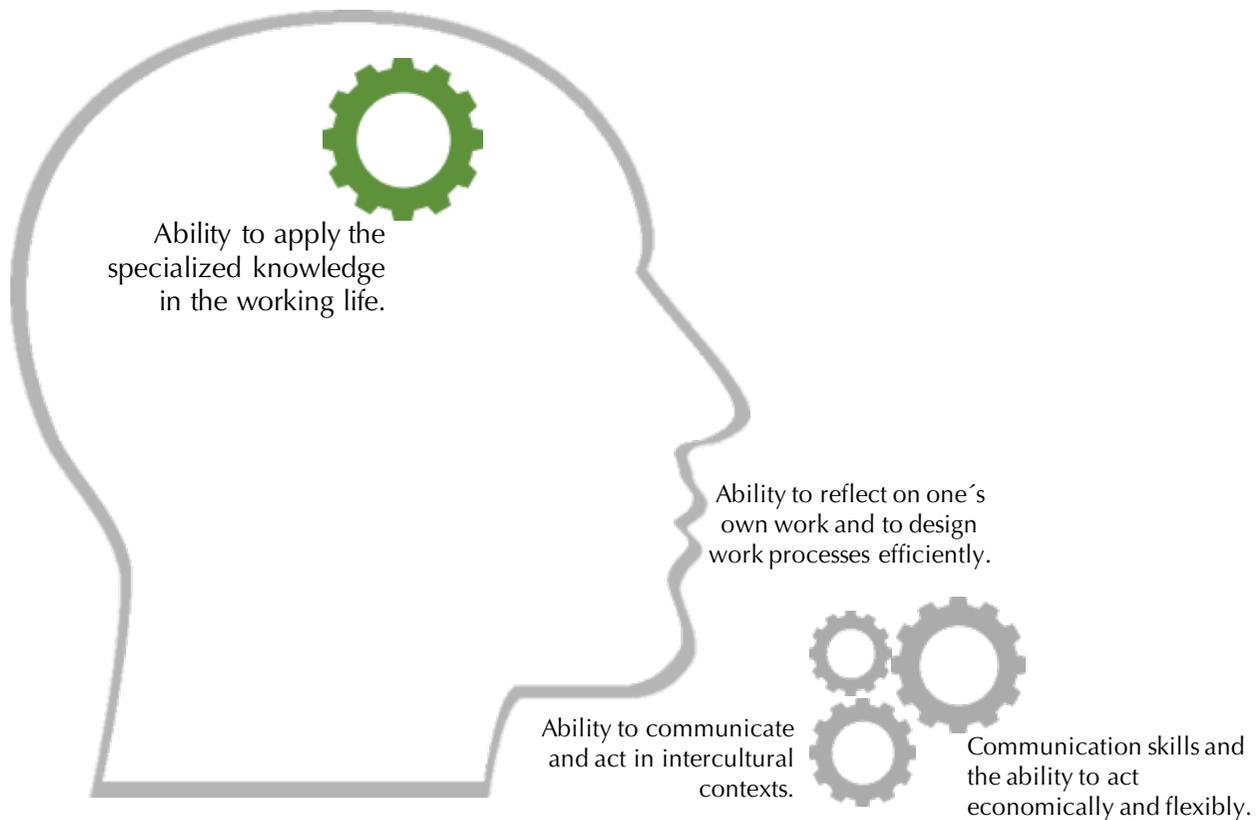
These jobs call for on average 37.25 contractually-agreed work hours per week and average overtime of three hours per week.

The highest average difference between contractually-agreed and actual work hours was recorded by Faculty of Theology graduates, with on average over nine hours overtime hours per week compared to the contractually-agreed work hours of 39.5 hours per week.

All in all, 65.1 per cent of graduates describe their work as satisfying. This is based primarily on their satisfaction with their professional situation, the potential for development, and their tasks. The graduates are less satisfied with their income and the workload.

2.6. Building and using competencies

Abbildung 9: Building and using competencies



In order to offer suitable skills training at the University of Göttingen, it is also interesting to consider the graduates' acquisition and use of specific abilities and competencies.

Using a series of 23 questions on specific abilities and skills it is possible to specify to what extent graduates acquired them during their studies and require them in their current job. According to a summary of the 23 items which cover four areas of competency, it is apparent that the ability to apply the specialist knowledge they have acquired in day-to-day working life in particular is rated highly by all graduates.

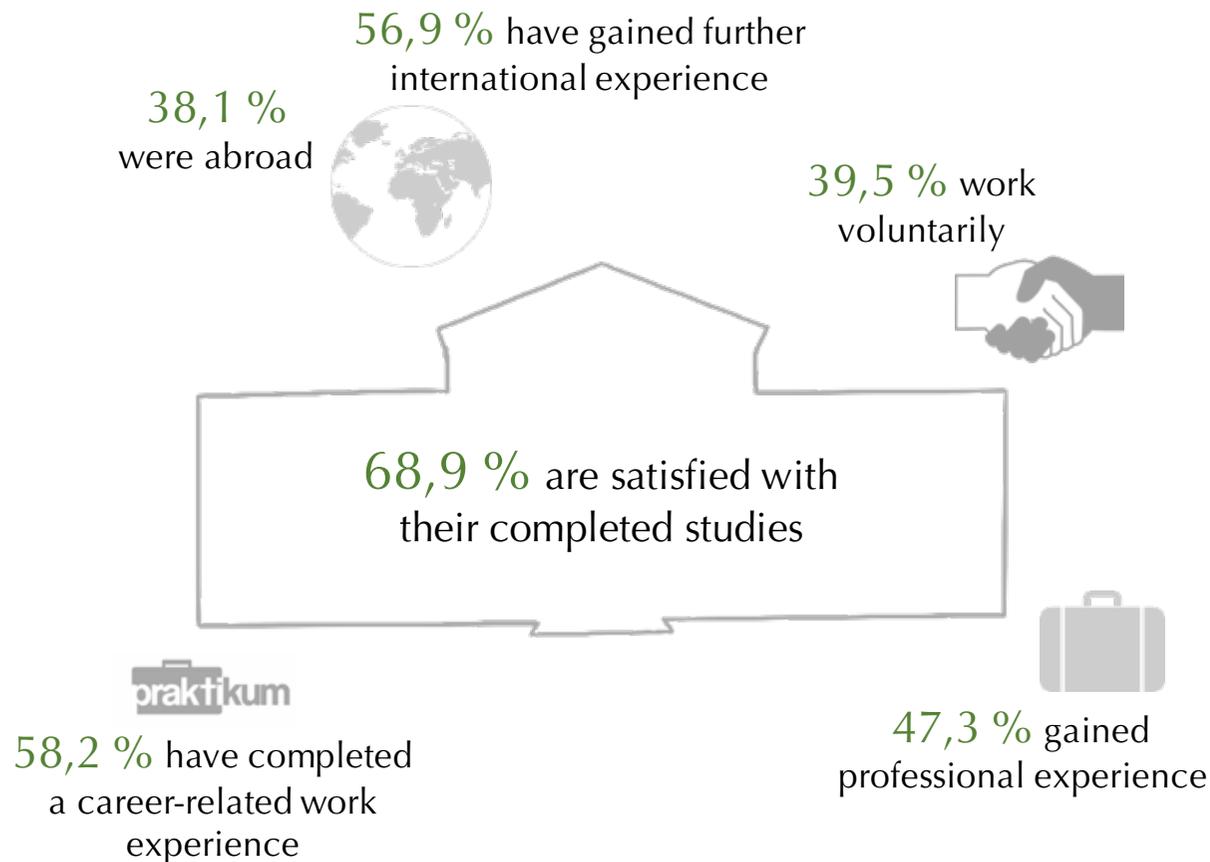
From this it appears that there is great demand at work for communication skills and the ability to act efficiently and flexibly, the ability to communicate and act in intercultural contexts, and the ability to reflect on one's own work and plan work processes efficiently, but these skills were insufficiently acquired during degree studies.

However, this analysis varies widely at faculty level, therefore the faculty reports give a more precise overview here and offer leeway for adjustments to be made at faculty level.

Question: To what extent were the following abilities/skills required in your current (main) gainful employment/learned during your studies at the University of Goettingen?

3. Studying at the University of Göttingen

Abbildung 10: Satisfaction with studies and working whilst at the university



Looking at the participating graduates' assessment of the degree studies they completed, it is clear that 68.9 per cent are satisfied with them. In comparison to the previous year there is however a decline in satisfaction of ten percentage points.

It is still possible to discern a high degree of both mobility and commitment in the Class of 2017 during their studies.

For instance, 38.1 per cent of graduates spent time abroad during their studies, and 22.7 per cent had that time credited towards their degree. Also, 56.9 per cent gathered other international experiences while at university, e.g. international team work or foreign language courses.

While at university, 39.5 per cent of the graduates volunteered in some capacity, however only 10.3 per cent had this work credited towards their degree.

One or more internships were taken by 58.2 per cent of the graduates during their studies.

4. Summary of results

At the time of the survey, more than half of the graduates from the Class of 2017 were in employment. The length of time spent searching for employment lasted on average about 3.7 months and therefore only slightly longer than that taken by the Class of 2016. So the length of time spent searching for employment remains constant.

The majority of the appointments is as a scientifically qualified employee without a managerial role, a large proportion of the contracts is temporary and the average work hours amount to over 37 hours per week, which represents a high proportion of full-time employment.

Job satisfaction is high, only the workload and the income are rated as less satisfactory by a higher share of the graduates.

Satisfaction with studying at the University of Göttingen is high. Nevertheless, we should make further improvements in the services and study structures. Mobility and commitment whilst studying are consistently high, and Göttingen graduates make use of them during their degree studies.

Are you starting to miss student life in Göttingen?

Why not contribute to the development of our university or simply enjoy the benefits by joining the Alumni Göttingen e.V.'s "Georgia Augusta" network. You can find detailed information on our website: www.alumni-uni-goettingen.de.

Thank you.

Much obliged.



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