

Country Report on Employability and Mobility of Bachelor Graduates in Germany

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1. The Study Structure in Germany

The higher education system in the Federal Republic of Germany was characterized from the 1970s to the 1990s by a two-type structure. Most study programmes at universities required 4-5 years of study and led to “Magister”, “Diplom” or “Staatsexamen” degrees all considered equivalent to a Master. The study programmes at Fachhochschulen (translated into English as universities of applied sciences) were named three-years programmes with

additional internships and possibly examination periods until the 1980s and four-years programmes including internships and possibly examination periods in the 1990s leading to a “Diplom” degree; this tended to be considered internationally as “Bachelor+” and also was counted in UNESCO statistics as ISCED 5A. About one tenth of graduates from Fachhochschulen continued study at universities. In 1998, 11 per cent of the corresponding age group were awarded a university and 6 per cent a Fachhochschule degree. Graduates from both types were about 28 years old on average at the time of graduation.

There was not any concept of “tertiary education” in Germany, but an institution with less than one per cent of the age group existed in that domain: The Berufsakademien offering a three-years programmes with somewhat more than half of the time spent for study and almost half in an enterprise. The actually more than 10 per cent of the age group completing successfully ISCED 5B education were technicians, associate professionals in the medical area, kindergarten teachers etc. who were trained in advanced vocational training schemes.

The introduction of a Bachelor-Master system started in Germany already in 1998, but progressed slowly. In 2008, Bachelor graduates comprised xx per cent, Master graduates yy per cent, graduates of the old university programmes zz per cent and graduates of the old Fachhochschule programmes aa per cent of the corresponding age group. Both, universities and Fachhochschulen are entitled to offer Bachelor and Master programmes.

No formal distinction are made between Bachelor programmes; most of them comprise three years (180 ECTS credits), but some three and a half or four years. Master programmes comprise two years in most cases but in some cases one and a half or one years, and Bachelor and Master programmes altogether should last “not more than five years”. Masters are labelled differently: (a) “theory-oriented” (more often but not exclusively at universities) vs. “application-oriented” (more often but not exclusively at Fachhochschulen), (b) “consecutive” (in the same field as the bachelor) vs. “non-consecutive”, and (c) “continuing” (students are not admitted immediately upon the award of a Bachelor) vs. “not continuing”.

It remained controversial, and divergent regulations were implemented as regards the transition from a Bachelor degree to a Master programme: In some cases, all Bachelor graduates applying are accepted while often additional selection criteria are put in place. Actually more than 70 per cent of the Bachelors transfer to Master programmes according to information available for 2007. Moves to upgrade ISCED 5B vocational training to “Bachelor (professional)” programmes led to controversial debates and were not implemented hitherto.

2. Data base - the KOAB graduate survey

In the following report the results of graduate surveys from the years 2009 and 2010, which were conducted by 52 universities in Germany in cooperation with INCHER-Kassel are presented. In the surveys, a total of nearly 70,000 graduates who have graduated in the years 2007 and 2008, participated (response rate 50%). The surveys took place during the winter semesters of the respective years, or about 1.5 years after graduation. In most higher

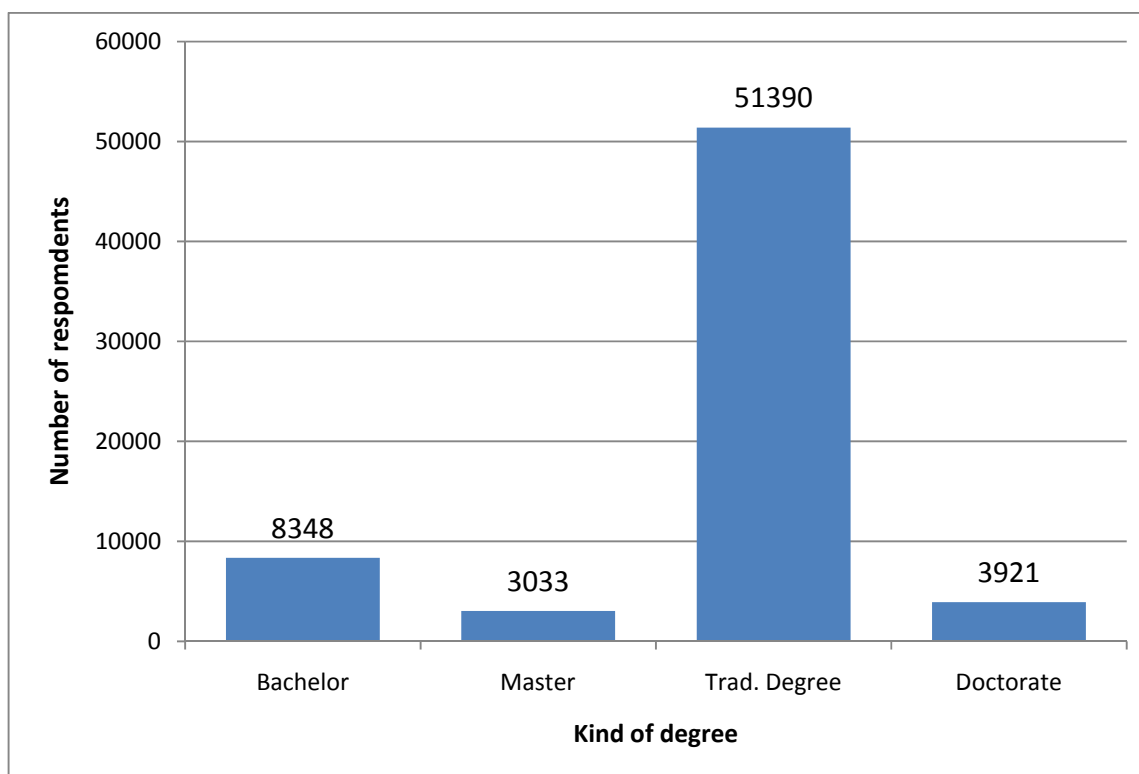
education institutions all graduates of the respective graduation cohorts were part of the survey, including Bachelor's and Master's degrees as well as PhDs. A cohort includes the timeframe of October till September of the following year, corresponding to the semester times. In some universities, the academic year begins already in September.

This graduate survey (referred to as KOAB graduate survey in the following text) constitutes the most comprehensive data set on the further education and career paths of graduates of a bachelor's or master's course of studies in Germany. It is a cooperative project of INCHER-Kassel and the 52 participating universities. The survey was coordinated by INCHER-Kassel in such a way that a standard core questionnaire was used in all cases, although supplementary questions by the individual universities were possible. The universities financed their studies themselves, the coordination on the part of INCHER-Kassel was supported financially by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

Table 1 Design and Conduction of the KOAB-Surveys 2008-2010

	Pilot 2008	Survey 2009	Survey 2010
Cohort of graduates (year of graduation)	2006	2007	2008
Field phase	Dec. 2007 – March 2008	Oct. 2008 - Jan. 2009	Oct. 2009 - Jan. 2010
Number of participating institutions of higher education	9	48	46
Used addresses	15.200	86.800	76.000
Valid addresses	12.800	75.000	70.000
Responses	6.300	37.500	33.000
Response rate	49%	50%	50%

Figure 1 Number of responding graduates in the KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010, by kind of degree (number)



Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010 (survey of the academic cohorts of 2007 and 2008 around 1.5 years after graduation)

For the statistical analyses the answers of 62,000 graduates could be considered. PhD holders were not included here, since the comparison between the new and the traditional degrees of the Bachelor-Master level was in the focus.

3. Socio-biographical information and study course of study

The graduates study has examined several characteristics of the individual study requirements, which were expected to be important factors in explaining the educational and professional careers. These include:

- the gender,
- the age,
- the type of the university entrance qualification,
- vocational training before the study,
- country of acquisition of the university entrance qualification,
- nationality,
- migration background,
- the age at graduation.

These characteristics of the graduates are presented here in overview by type of degree.

High proportion of women

The majority of respondents are women (52 percent). Noticable is the relatively high proportion of women (63 percent) among the university Bachelor graduates. Also in the universities of applied sciences, the proportion of women among bachelor's graduates (51%) is higher than the one among the traditional degrees (44%).

Table 2 **Socio-biographic information by type of HE and kind of degree(per cent; mean)**

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
Gender							
Female graduates (%)	51	44	34	63	57	50	52
Kind of entry qualification for HE							
Not "abitur" (%)	37	42	37	4	4	19	20
Vocational training before HE							
(%)	51	54	52	16	19	24	32
Parents with higher education degree							
Father of mother with higher education degree (%)	53	43	52	58	60	60	55
Citizenship							
Foreign graduates (% no German citizenship)	4	4	21	4	4	23	5
Country of entry qualification							
Not in Germany (%)	3	2	19	3	4	22	4
Migration background							
Father of mother born abroad (%)	17	20	33	17	17	32	19
Study duration for that degree (years)							
Arithmetic mean	3.3	4.7	2.9	3.3	5.6	3.2	5.0
Median	3.0	4.5	2.5	3.0	5.5	2.5	5.0
Total study duration (years)							
Arithmetic mean	3.9	5.2	5.5	3.8	6.2	5.1	5.6
Median	3.5	4.5	5.5	3.5	6.0	5.0	5.5
Age at time of graduation (years)							
Arithmetic mean	26.7	28.4	31.8	24.8	28.0	28.4	28.0
Median	25.0	27.0	30.0	24.0	27.0	27.0	27.0
Total	1280	8613	530	7068	42409	2503	62403

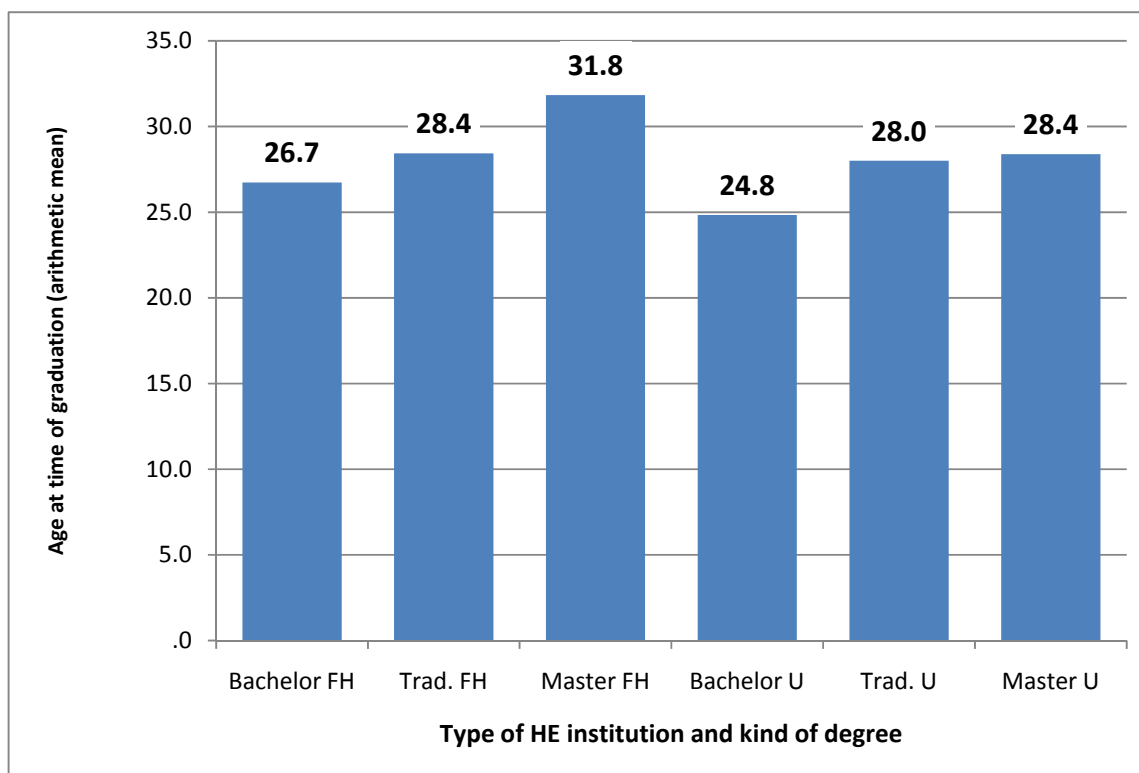
Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010 (survey of the academic cohorts of 2007 and 2008 around 1.5 years after graduation)

Age at graduation

On average, the surveyed graduates are 28 years old (arithmetic mean) at the point of graduation. The median age of 27 is somewhat lower. Noticable is the relatively young age of the university Bachelor graduates. With an age of 25 years university Bachelor graduates are on average three years younger than the graduates of the traditional degrees.

Graduates of universities of applied sciences with traditional degrees have approximately the same average age as the graduates with traditional degrees of the universities. The Master graduates from universities of applied sciences have a relatively high age (32 years). Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences are on average 2 years older than Bachelor graduates from universities.

Figure 2 Age at time of graduation by type of higher education institution and type of degree (arithmetic mean)



Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010 (survey of the academic cohorts of 2007 and 2008 around 1.5 years after graduation)

Type of the university entrance qualification

When starting their studies, four out of five respondents to the general university possessed the general qualification for university entrance. There are very large differences in access to both types of institutions: About 30 percent of respondents with a Bachelor's degree or a diploma degree from universities of applied sciences began their studies being eligible only to universities of applied sciences.

Graduates with a university Bachelor's degree possessed the general qualification for university entrance at the beginning of their studies in equal measure as those with a traditional degree.

Country of acquisition of the university entrance qualification

Overall, 4 percent of respondents have not acquired the university entrance in Germany.

Vocational training before the study

About every third graduate has completed vocational training prior to the study. Among the graduates from universities of applied sciences the percentage is higher than 50 percent,

compared to about 20 percent among university graduates. Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences as well as the ones from universities often have completed vocational training less often than the graduates with traditional degrees.

Duration of studies

As Figure 3 shows, the Bachelor's graduates at universities of applied sciences and universities (both 3.3 years) have, as expected, studied much shorter than their peers in traditional courses (diploma of universities of applied sciences: 4.7 years; traditional university degrees: 5.6 years).

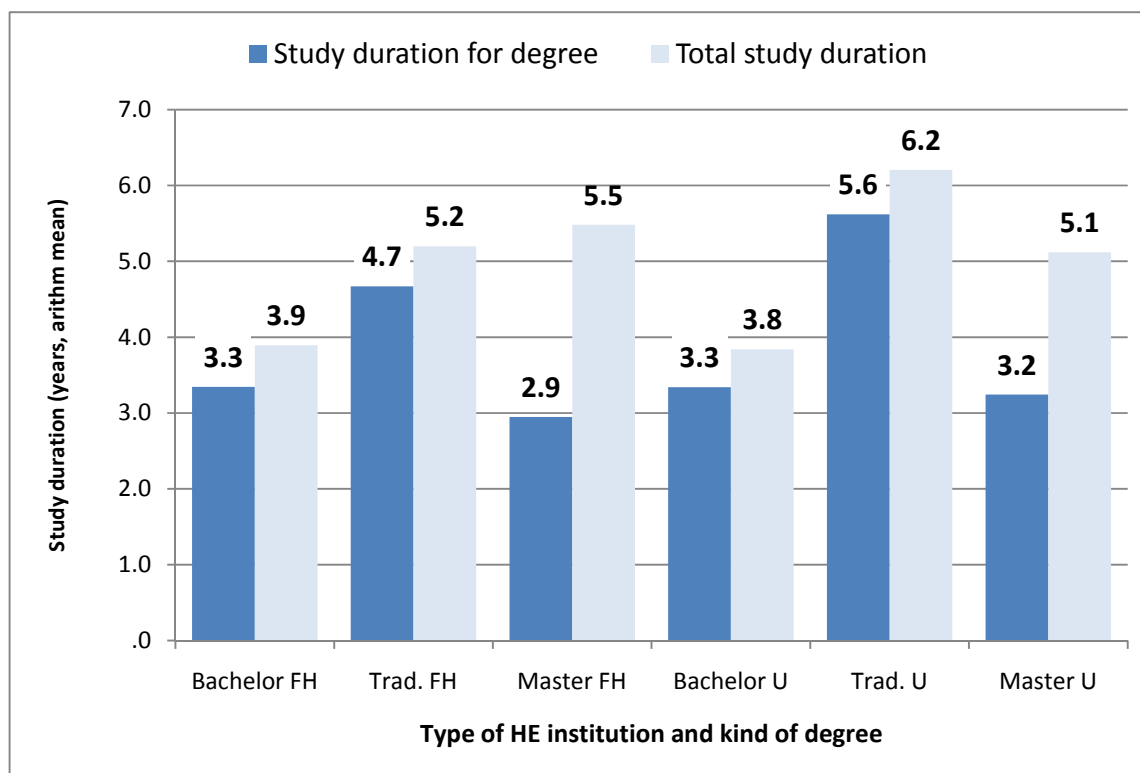
Therefore, the percentages of the graduates of the new degrees, who indicate in the questionnaire having completed their studies within the standard period of study are correspondingly higher:

- 73 percent of the Bachelor's graduates from universities of applied sciences;
- 57 percent of the Master's graduates from universities of applied sciences;
- 66 percent of the Bachelor's graduates from universities;
- 59 percent of the Master's graduates from universities.

In contrast, less than half of graduates with the following traditional degrees indicate in the questionnaire having completed their studies within the standard period of study:

- 41 percent of diploma graduates students from universities of applied sciences
- 37 percent of the graduates with traditional degrees from universities.

Figure 3 Study duration by type of higher education institution and kind of degree (arithm. mean)



Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010 (survey of the academic cohorts of 2007 and 2008 around 1.5 years after graduation)

4. International mobility

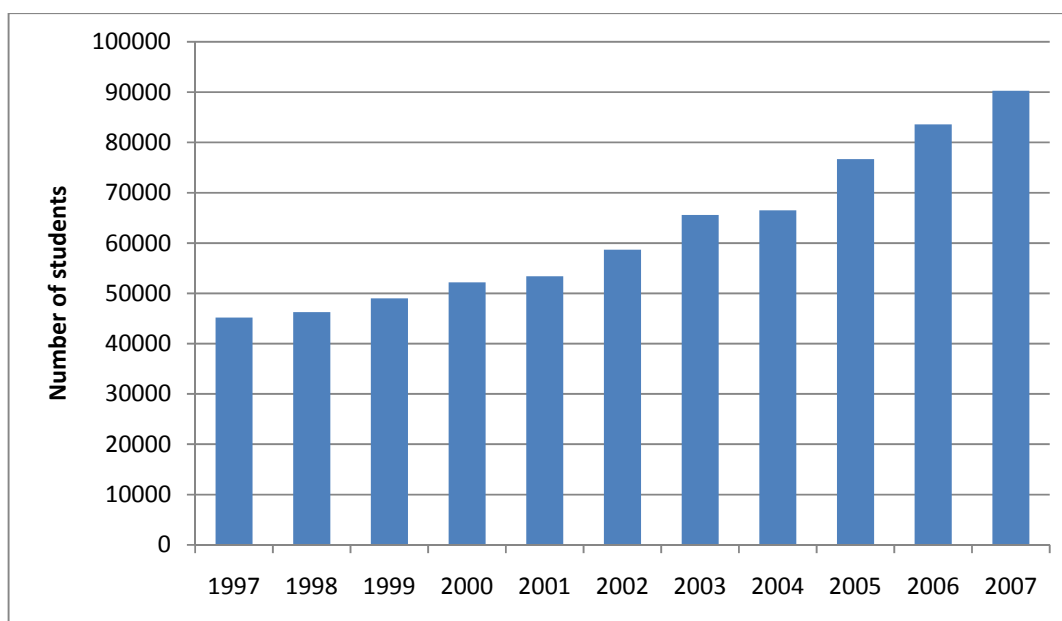
The promotion of international student mobility is a central concern of the Bologna Process. In the Leuven Communiqué the European ministers responsible for higher education have stated:

"We believe that mobility of students, early stage researchers and staff enhances the quality of programmes and excellence in research; it strengthens the academic and cultural internationalization of European higher education. Mobility is important for personal development and employability, it fosters respect for diversity and a capacity to deal with other cultures. It encourages linguistic pluralism, thus underpinning the multilingual tradition of the European Higher Education Area and it increases cooperation and competition between higher education institutions. Therefore, mobility shall be the hallmark of the European Higher Education Area. We call upon each country to increase mobility, to ensure its high quality and to diversify its types and scope. In 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad."

For the first time a quantitative objective formulation is made at a European level (the 20% target). In addition, the measurement of achievement is specified in a certain respect: it is about the accounting of foreign experience in the course of the entire study (accounting for events and not an inspection of conditions at a given time). The types of experiences abroad are not very precisely defined in the Leuven Communiqué: merely a 'stay for study or internship' is mentioned.

Graduate surveys can contribute to the measurement of quantitative achievements, as they allow for retrospectively collecting data about experiences abroad during the entire course of study. However, it is not possible for graduate surveys to include a subset of mobile students: the ones who complete a full study abroad (= "degree mobility"). According to the Federal Statistical Office ("German Students Abroad"), in 2007 a total of 90,300 German "exchange students" were registered. It can be assumed that this group makes up about 5% of all German students. The number of German students abroad has increased dramatically in recent years: since the late nineties, the number of "exchange students" has doubled.

Figure 4 German students abroad 1997-2007 (number)



Source: Federal Statistical Office, German students abroad

In the following, we essentially refer to the "temporary international mobility" - not to the "degree mobility".

With the help of the KOAB graduate surveys, three phases of the international mobility can be distinguished:

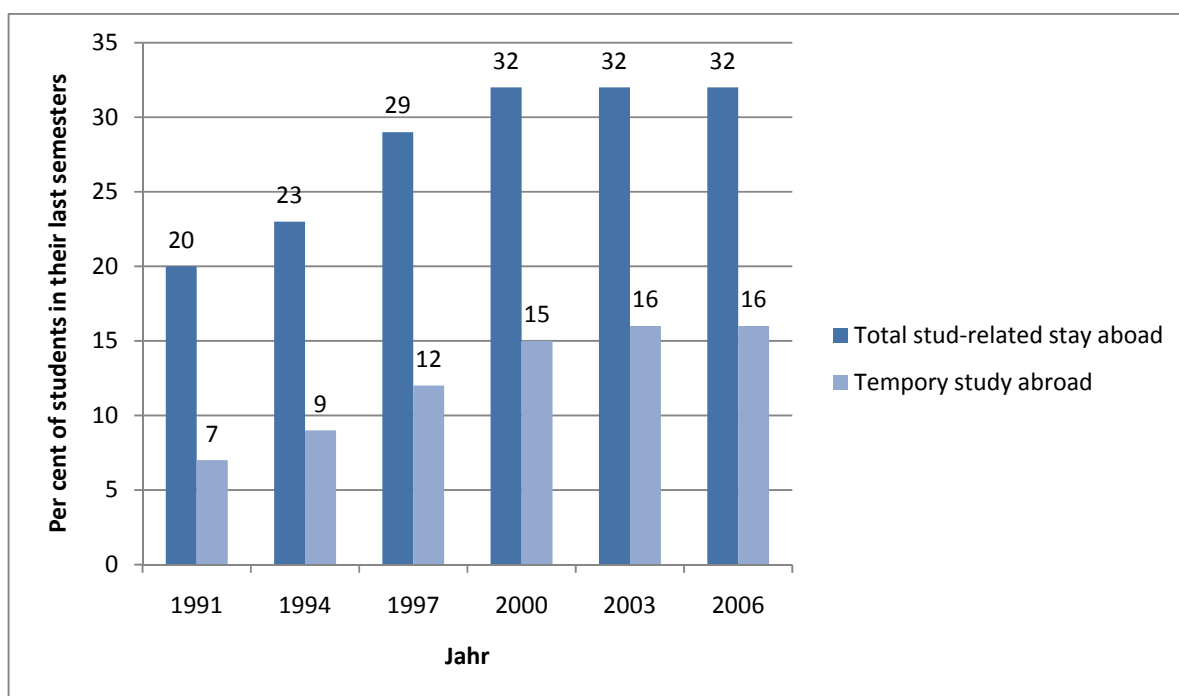
- During the study (e.g. a semester abroad or internship),
- Prior to the study (e.g. study entrance qualification acquired abroad),
- After to the study (study or internship abroad, working abroad).

Mobility during studies

Nearly one in three graduates surveyed (31 percent) has been abroad for a while during their studies. This includes graduates, who have spent a semester abroad or have done an internship related to their study abroad, as well as shorter stays, such as language courses, study projects, etc. The question was "Have you spent some time abroad during your studies?". In the question, the time period was not restricted. In further questions the type of the stay abroad, the duration and the financial support were addressed.

This proportion of 31% is similar to the values that have been determined in the DSW / HIS social surveys for students in higher semesters. The Figure 5 shows the strong increase in international mobility in the nineties and stagnation since the year 2000. Furthermore, a comparison with previous graduate surveys shows that the outward mobility in Germany has increased significantly. So in the CHEERS survey in 1999 for the graduate cohort 1994/95 only a percentage of 21% internationally mobile students was determined (universities: 26% and universities of applied sciences: 11%).

Figure 5 Study-related stays abroad 1991 - 2006 (per cent)



Source: DSW/HIS, 18th social survey

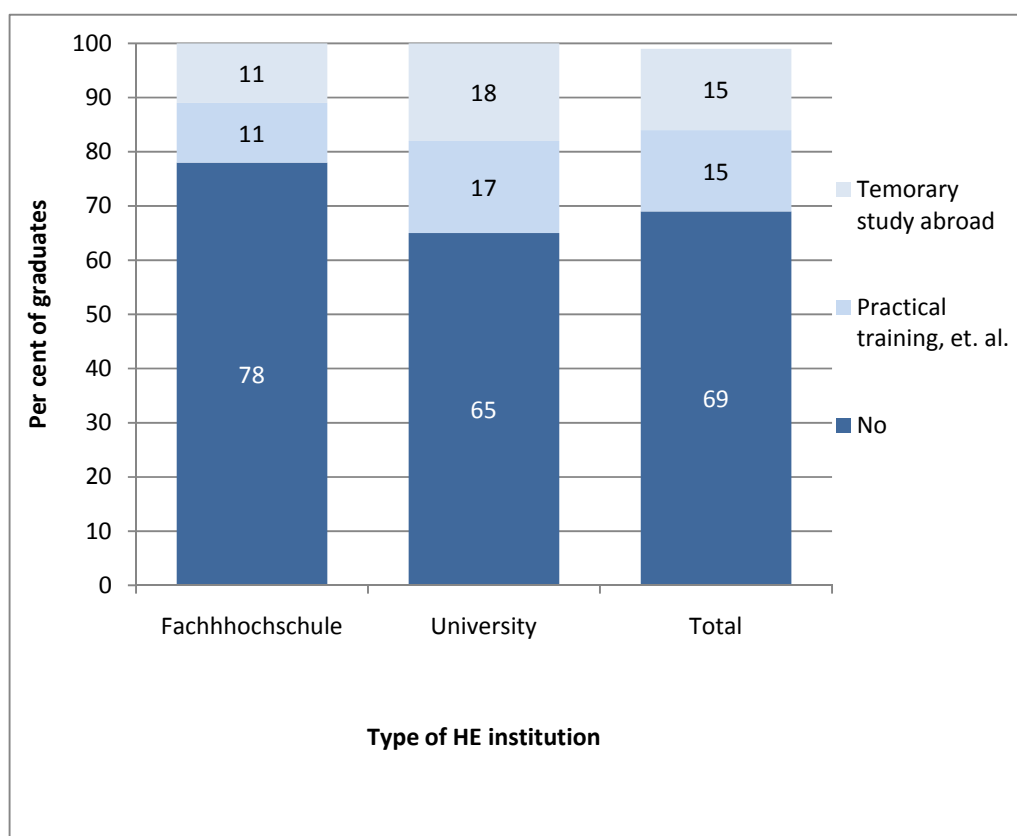
Differences by type of degree

From universities of applied sciences, the Bachelor graduates reported being significantly more often abroad (27 percent) than those with a diploma degree (20 percent), while the Bachelor graduates (28 percent) from universities were abroad less frequently than their peers with a diploma (37 percent).

Differences by type of higher education institution

Still, the differences between the types of institutions in the international mobility of students are impressive: only 22 percent of graduates having a degree from universities of applied sciences reported a stay abroad during their studies, compared to 35 percent of those with a university degree.

Figure 6 Study-related stays abroad by type of higher education institution (per cent)



Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010 (survey of the academic cohorts of 2007 and 2008 around 1.5 years after graduation)

International mobility before and after the studies

Not only during their studies do students acquire experience abroad. Four percent of them have already brought experiences abroad into the study, as they have acquired the university entrance qualification abroad. This is especially common in the master study courses. Every tenth student has temporarily studied abroad after graduation or has completed an internship abroad. Here it is especially the Bachelor graduates from universities, who are studying or doing an internship abroad after obtaining the Bachelor's degree (24 percent).

Table 3 International mobility before, during the studies and after graduation by type of higher education institution and degree (percent)

	University of applied sciences			University Trad. degree			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
A. Before studies							
Foreign graduates (% no German citizenship)	4	4	21	4	4	23	5
Entry qualification earned abroad	3	2	19	3	4	22	4
Foreign graduates, who got their entry qualification abroad	2	2	18	3	3	20	3
B. During study							
Study-related activities abroad	27	20	22	28	37	35	31
... Study abroad	14	9	9	16	19	17	15
... Practical training abroad	15	10	8	12	15	15	13
... Study abroad or practical training abroad	12	5	8	24	8	11	9
C. After study							
Study abroad	7	2	5	15	4	6	4
... Practical training abroad	7	4	5	13	6	7	6
Temporary employed abroad or at present employed abroad	13	12	23	6	12	20	12
Temporary employed abroad	13	12	21	6	11	16	11
At present employed abroad	8	4	8	7	5	11	5
D. International mobility before, during or after study							
Total mobility (%)	36	29	45	42	43	55	39

Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010 (survey of the academic cohorts of 2007 and 2008 around 1.5 years after graduation)

12 percent of graduates were, at least temporarily, employed abroad, even after their studies,. Another 9 percent were abroad to study or for an internship, within the first 1.5 years after graduating.

If we consider the various aspects of international mobility together, 39 percent of the graduates were internationally mobile (see Table 3).

On the other hand, international mobility of graduates of the traditional degrees from universities of applied sciences is significantly lower (29%). The Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences and from universities, are significantly more mobile, in comparison.

Conclusion: High international mobility also of the Bachelors

The values determined in this graduate survey on the extent of temporary international mobility of Bachelor graduates are significantly higher than those reported in surveys of active students. For example, in the HIS survey on international mobility during the study, conducted in February 2009 reported that only 13 percent of the Bachelor graduates from

universities of applied sciences and 15 percent of university graduates stated study-related stays abroad.¹

In contrast, the values determined by the KOAB graduate survey are much higher. Studying abroad during the study was stated by:

- 27 percent of the Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences;
- 28 percent of the Bachelor graduates from universities.

University Bachelor graduates are often abroad after completing their degree for the purpose of studying abroad or doing an internship.

5. Whereabouts of the Bachelors

To what extent Bachelor graduates continue their studies or begin a job with the acquired degree, is certainly a core issue of the current debate in Germany about the impacts of the introduction of the new study courses. There are very different ideas about the vocational relevance of the Bachelor's degree. The only certain thing is that the Bachelor's degree is supposed to be a "professionally qualifying" standard degree at universities of applied sciences. This raises the question, to which extent Bachelor graduates continue their studies or begin a job after graduation.

Rate of Bachelor graduates who continue their studies

In calculating the rate of graduates who continue their studies all forms of further education were taken into account. These include the Master's or a doctoral degree, as well as other study degrees and vocational trainings such as the two-year "preparatory service" (legal clerkship/teacher training) that concludes with a second state exam.

One and a half years after the end of the study the following percentages of Bachelor graduates are at universities (see Table 4):

- 51 percent exclusively studying (not employed),
- 24 percent both in work and studying,
- 3 percent in vocational training (including legal clerkship/teacher training).

The rate of graduates who continue their studies is therefore 78% for the Bachelor graduates from universities (including the 3 per cent of graduates in vocational training). Without consideration of vocational training, the rate is 75% for Bachelor graduates from universities.

About 1.5 years after graduation, two thirds of all Bachelor graduates from universities are doing a master's program.

Of the Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences 1.5 years after graduation:

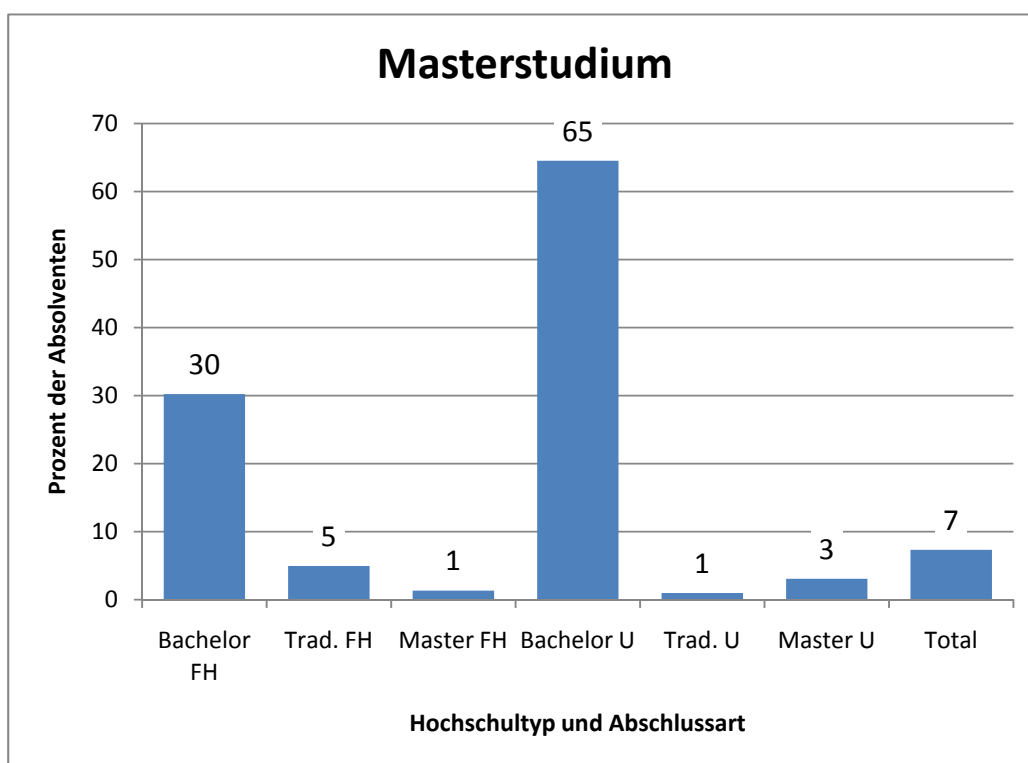
¹ HIS-Studie: Internationale Mobilität im Studium 2009. Wiederholungsuntersuchung zu studienbezogenen Aufenthalten deutscher Studierender in anderen Ländern. DAAD/BMBF, Berlin 2009 (Kurzfassung)

- 24 percent are exclusively studying (not employed),
- 17 percent both in work and studying,
- 2 percent in vocational training.

The continuing rate of Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences is significantly lower than of those from universities and is 43% including the graduates in vocational training and 41% excluding the last group.

About 1.5 years after graduation, about a third of all Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences (30%) are doing a master's program.

Figure 7 Transition to Master study by type of HE and kind of degree(per cent)



Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010 (survey of the academic cohorts of 2007 and 2008 around 1.5 years after graduation)

Table 4: Further academic qualification and employment situation (about 1.5 years after graduation) by type of degree (per cent)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
1 Regular work	52	82	81	18	43	53	55
2 Vocational training	2	3	2	3	25	9	15
3 Study and work	17	7	11	24	23	25	18
4 Only study	24	4	2	51	5	8	8
5 Search for job (without employment)	4	3	3	2	2	3	2
6 Other (family, etc.)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

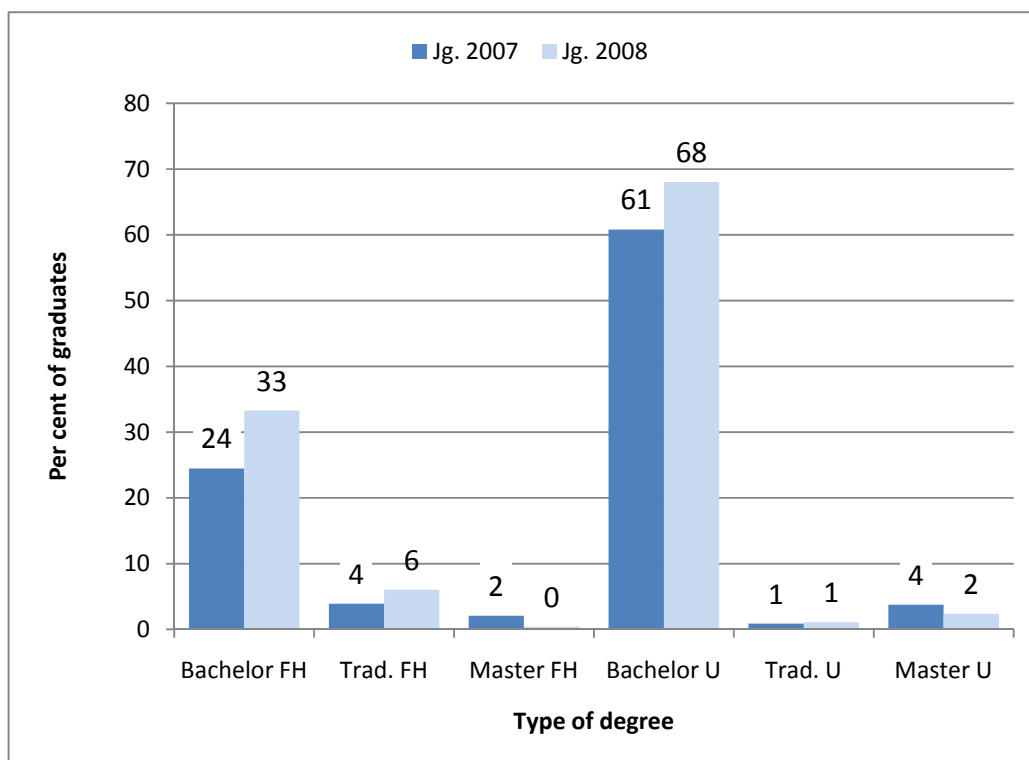
Question H1: Are you currently employed? Multiple answers possible. Question H2: What applies to your current situation? Multiple answers possible.

Quelle: INCHER-Kassel; KOAB Absolventenbefragung 2009 und 2010 (Befragung der Jahrgänge 2007 und 2008 ca. 1,5 Jahre nach Studienabschluss).

Predominantly, the further study was a Master's program. This is for the Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences almost exclusively a Master's degree at a university of applied sciences. A change to a university does not occur. For the Bachelor graduates from universities the transition to a master's program at a university dominates, but there are also other degrees of pursued.

Comparing the results of the surveys from the years 2009 and 2010, then an increase of the transition to a Master's program is evident: of the Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences in the graduation cohort of 2007, about 1.5 years after graduation, about 24% were studying in a Master's program, compared to 33% in the cohort of 2008. Among the Bachelor graduates from universities the transition to a Master's program has increased from 61% in the cohort of 2007 to 68% in the cohort of 2008.

Figure 8 Transition to Master level study of graduates of the year 2007 and 2008, by type of HE institution and kind of degree (per cent)



Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010 (survey of the academic cohorts of 2007 and 2008 around 1.5 years after graduation)

Previous graduate surveys of the Hochschul-Informationen-System (HIS) (Minks und Briedis 2005b, Briedis 2007) found similar rates of continuing studies (78 %). On the other hand, for universities of applied sciences a much higher rate of 59% was identified (graduation cohort of 2002/2003; Minks und Briedis 2005b). A later HIS graduate survey (Briedis 2007), reported slightly lower values for the universities of applied sciences and equally high values for the university sector (without further specification). The graduate survey at the University of Konstanz (Auspurg et al 2009) states similar results as the KOAB graduate survey (72%). A survey of the Federal Statistical Office (Sharp 2009), which calculates transition rates to a Master's program by combining individual data of student and graduation statistics, states much lower rates (33%). However, the continuing rates, which were determined in the graduate surveys, are more comprehensive and include not only the Master's degree, but also other studies (for example, additional, post-graduate, doctoral studies). Apart from that they are not limited to studies in Germany but also include studies abroad.

The rates determined in the KOAB graduate survey cannot be seen as final results for the graduation cohorts in question. On one hand it is not certain how many of those who are simultaneously studying and working are striving for a degree and use the job for financing

the studies, or how many are primarily working and consider the studies more of an open option. On the other hand it is not certain how many Bachelor graduates are first working in order to obtain the prerequisites for the entrance to Master programs. There may also be other reasons for later going for a Master's degree. Graduate surveys which are conducted with a larger temporal distance to graduation, can give a more valid picture.

Rate of Bachelor graduates, who continue their studies by field of study groups

The rate of continuing studies for Bachelor graduates (excluding students and people who are simultaneously studying and working) varies remarkably by field of study groups.

In the case of universities, it is 65% in the field of economics, 74% in cultural and social sciences, 71% in engineering, 75% in computer science, 89% in mathematics and natural sciences and 86% in agricultural, food and forestry sciences.

In the case of universities of applied sciences, it is 31% in cultural and social sciences, 32% in the field of economics, 48% in agricultural, food and forestry sciences, 48% in computer science and 60% in engineering.

Rate of Master graduates, who continue their studies/Transition to doctorate.

Master graduates decide relatively often to continue their studies, most of the time in a doctorate program.

Of the Master graduates from universities, 43% continue vocational training or studies. This value is slightly lower than among the university graduates of the old system (50%), many of which are in teacher training.

The rate among Master graduates and diploma graduates from universities of applied sciences is 14%.

The percentage of Master graduates at universities, who, about 1.5 years after graduation are doing a doctorate, is 25% and is therefore higher than the corresponding percentage among the traditional university degrees (17%).

Transition rate of Bachelor graduates to work

First, it can be stated that study and work are often combined. Therefore, it is useful to distinguish between three types of employment rates:

(a) Graduates are classified as regular employees if the work is their sole activity. For them, employment is not combined with vocational training or study. The rate of regular employees in this sense is:

- 18 percent of Bachelor graduates from universities and
- 52 percent of Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences.

(b) The rate of exclusively working graduates and those who are doing vocational training is:

- 21 percent of Bachelor graduates from universities and

- 54 percent of Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences.

(c) The rate of working graduates and those in vocational training (including those who are simultaneously working and studying) is:

- 44 percent of Bachelor graduates from universities (cohort of 2007: 44%; cohort of 2008: 45%),
- 71 percent of Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences (cohort of 2007: 71%; cohort of 2008: 70%).

On the level of employment there barely exist any differences between the cohorts, but the regular employment has declined in the Bachelor's graduates in the cohort of 2008 (Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences cohort of 2007: 58%, cohort of 2008: 48%) (Bachelor graduates from universities cohort of 2007: 20%, cohort of 2008: 16%), while further studies are often combined with an employment.

Unemployment and job search

Overall, only few respondents, at the time of the survey, about 1.5 years after graduation, are looking for a job and are unemployed (two percent). Of the surveyed Bachelor graduates from universities two percent are looking for a job ("unemployed"). Another two percent said they pursue other activities such as family responsibilities. The surveyed Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences are slightly more likely to look for a job (four percent) and also a further two per cent are not employed, because they pursue other activities, such as family responsibilities.

Duration of job search

The search phase is for most graduates, even in the humanities and social sciences - fields which in the past were more prone to difficulties with the transition to work - in most cases very compact: within a few months graduates seem to put considerable energy into their search efforts. Only few graduates state a long search time.

On average (arithmetic mean), higher education graduates searched for three months, until they decided for an employment. In total, the following percentages of the graduates were searching:

- 72 percent three months at most,
- 18 percent more than three months up to half a year,
- 8 percent more than half a year up to one year and
- 2 percent more than one year.

The average search durations according to fields of studies vary not as much as in the mid-nineties (e.g. humanities and social sciences on average 3.4 months; Engineering 2.4 months).

Individuals with a Bachelor's degree report no longer search durations than graduates of traditional programs (Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences: 2.8 months

compared to diploma: 2.8 months, and Bachelor graduates from universities: 3.0 months compared to traditional degrees: 2.9 months).

A comparison of the two graduation cohorts of 2007 and 2008 shows slightly shorter search times for the cohort of 2008 (cohort of 2007: 3.0 months, cohort of 2008: 2.8 months).

Table 5: Duration of search for job by type of higher education institution and type of degree (means; only graduates who have searched for and found a job)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
Duration of employment search							
Arithmetic mean	2.8	2.8	3.4	3.0	2.9	3.4	2.9
Median	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0

Question F7: How many months did you search for a job (that you do not regard as temporary study-unrelated work) in total? Please exclude temporary non study related jobbing.

Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010 (survey of the academic cohorts of 2007 and 2008 around 1.5 years after graduation)

Duration from graduation until first employment

In addition to the duration of the search for a job that can begin even before the end of the study, it is also interesting to see how fast graduates start a first employment. This duration until the start of a first employment is slightly longer than the search time. On average (arithmetic mean), it takes nearly four months until the first employment (median 2 months). The comparison of median values shows no differences between the Bachelor's graduates and graduates with traditional degrees.

However, the longer average transition time for Bachelor graduates as measured by the arithmetic mean, indicates that some graduates had quite long transition periods.

Table 6: Duration of the transition to a first employment by type of higher education institution and type of degree (means; only graduates who started a job)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
Duration till first employment in months							
Arithmetic mean	3.9	3.2	2.9	5.3	4.0	3.7	3.7
Median	2.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	2.0

Question G5: When did you start your first job immediately after graduation?

Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate surveys 2009 and 2010 (survey of the academic cohorts of 2007 and 2008 around 1.5 years after graduation)

6. Facets of professional success

The following table 7 shows the results of the graduate survey on six indicators of career success:

1. *Work scale; the percentage of full-time employees is shown, full-time employment was defined by at least 35 hours per week.*
2. *Employment contract form, the proportion of unlimited term employees is shown.*
3. *Income, shown is the gross annual income, in the survey, the gross monthly income was classified, which was converted to calculate the means, the gross monthly income was multiplied by 12 to calculate the gross annual income. The question in the questionnaire was (question H8): What is your gross monthly earning in your current job? (incl. special payments and overtime)*
4. *Adequate level of employment: The question in the questionnaire was (question H17): "In your opinion, which academic degree is best suited for your current job? The answers "A higher academic degree" and " My academic degree" were considered an "adequate level of employment."*
5. *High use of qualification: The question in the questionnaire was (question H15) "To what extent are the knowledge and skills you acquired during study utilized in our current job?" Answers 1 and 2 on a response scale from 1 = 'To a very high extent' to 5 = 'Not at all ', were considered "adequate use"*
6. *Job satisfaction: The question in the questionnaire was (question K3): "How satisfied are you with your current job situation?" Response scale from 1 = 'very satisfied' to 5 = 'very dissatisfied'. Here are the answers 1 and 2 "high job satisfaction" were considered "high job satisfaction".*

The analyses on job success always refer to regular employment. Graduates who are in a vocational training (e.g. legal clerkship/teacher training) or are employed and studying or doing a doctorate at the same time, were not included in the analyses.

Table 7: Six indicators of professional success by type of higher education institution and kind of degree (per cent and mean; only regular employed)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
1. Voll-time employed	90	92	91	85	85	91	89
2. Unlimited term contract	66	75	85	55	65	68	70
3. Yearly gross income							
Arithm. mean	33799	36446	44920	29380	36845	36145	36588
Median	33006	36600	39006	27006	39006	39006	39000
4. Adequate level of employment	81	86	85	75	82	78	83
5. High use of qualification	48	51	64	35	50	56	51
6. High job satisfaction	69	67	65	63	66	66	66

6.1 Part-time or full time employment?

Among the regular employees (no study or vocational training) full-time employment clearly dominates. There are hardly any differences between the types of degrees.

6.2 Fixed-term or unlimited term contract?

First it is striking, that graduates from universities of applied sciences much more often have an unlimited term contract than university graduates

Table 7 shows that Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences less often have an unlimited term contract (66%) than traditional graduates from universities of applied sciences (75%).

Bachelor graduates from universities to a lesser degree have unlimited term contracts (55%) than graduates of traditional programs (65%) and master's graduates (68%). However, the master's graduates from universities of applied sciences have the highest rate (85%).

Particularly low is the rate of unlimited term contracts among bachelor's graduates of the following two field of study groups:

- Humanities and social sciences (Bachelor graduates from universities 45%, Bachelor graduates from universities of applies sciences 40%, the rate of unlimited term contracts is not significantly lower than the one among traditional graduates, 45% and 49% respectively). Here, too, the rate of unlimited term contracts is especially high among Master graduates from universities of applied sciences (74%).
- Mathematics and Natural Sciences (Bachelor graduates from universities: 45%), here the difference between traditional university graduates (68%) and master's graduates from universities (69%) is remarkable.

Table 8: Unlimited term contract (about 1.5 years after graduation) by field of study group and kind of degree (per cent; only regular employed)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
1 Humanities and social sciences	40	45	74	45	49	50	47
2 Economics	83	81	94	71	80	80	82
3 Mathematics and natural sciences	61	53	67	45	68	69	65
4 Informatik	81	87	90	88	88	87	87
5 Engineering	77	84	82	79	83	73	83
6 Agriculture, Food Science, Forestry	60	67	56	55	59	62	65

Explanation of the Table: The figure shows the proportion of unlimited term contracts by type of higher education institution, type of degree and field of study group, e.g. 40% of Bachelor graduates in the field on humanites and social sciences from universities of applied sciences have and unlimited term contract.

H6 question: "What type of contract do you have in your current employment?"

Source: INCHER-Kassel; KOAB Graduate Survey 2009 and 2010 (survey of the years 2007 and 2008, about 1.5 years after graduation).

6.3 Income

The gross annual income of graduates of the old system from universities of applied sciences and universities alike, is one and a half years after graduating among the regular employees, is about 36,500 Euros on average (slightly more than 3,000 Euros per month).

The income of Bachelor graduates from universities on average is:

- 21 percent lower in mathematics and natural science,
- 15 percent lower in the engineering,
- 12 percent lower in the economics,
- 11 percent lower in cultural and social sciences,
- 8 percent lower in agricultural, food and forestry sciences,
- 4 percent lower in computer science.

The income of bachelor's graduates from universities of applied sciences in the specific field of study groups is not consistently lower compared to traditional graduates. It is:

- 8 percent lower in cultural and social sciences,
- 4 percent lower in the economics,
- 6 percent lower in engineering,
- 3 percent higher in mathematics and natural science,
- 5 percent higher in computer science

Striking is the high income of the Master's graduates from universities of applied sciences. It could play a role that in many cases a master's program is started only after some time of professional experience.

Table 9: Gross income per year (about 1.5 years after graduation) by field of study group and kind of degree (EURO, arithm. mean; only full-time regular employed graduates)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
1 Humanities and social sciences	28053	30498	41332	25954	29060	32712	29686
2 Economics	37777	39246	54141	35727	40526	39790	40246
3 Mathematics and natural sciences	35919	34708	33756	28375	36009	38271	35652
4 Computer sciences	42523	40491	40502	40630	42466	40426	41281
5 Engineering	37061	39311	43119	34746	41119	37928	39860
6 Agriculture, Food Science, Forestry	27861	27981	29742	24994	27286	31564	28281
Total	33799	36446	44920	29380	36845	36145	36588

Frage H8: Wie hoch ist derzeit Ihr monatliches Brutto-Einkommen (inkl. Sonderzahlungen und Überstunden)?

Source: INCHER-Kassel; KOAB Graduate Survey 2009 (survey of the years 2007, about 1.5 years after graduation).

6.4 Adequate level

Counting the answers, " A higher academic degree " and " My academic degree" both as a reference to a level adequate employment, according to the results of the graduate survey in 2009 and 2010 a total of 83% of the regular employees is been employed adequately to their level of education. Only 9 percent had the opinion that a lower Higher education degree would fit better and only 8% deemed a Higher education degree not necessary (see Table 12). Among the Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences (13%) and even more among those of universities (19%), this group of employees not been adequately employed is considerably higher than among graduates with traditional degrees.

Table 10: Adequate level of education for present job (about 1.5 years after graduation) by type of higher education institution and kind of degree (per cent; only regular employed)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
1 A higher academic degree	12	7	10	14	5	6	6
2 My academic degree	70	79	75	61	77	72	77
3 A lower academic degree	5	7	13	6	11	16	9
4 No academic degree necessary	13	8	2	19	7	5	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Question H17: In your opinion, which academic degree is best suited for your current job? Source: INCHER-Kassel; KOAB Graduate Survey 2009 and 2010 (survey of the years 2007 and 2008, about 1.5 years after graduation).

Looking at the individual study groups (see table 13), there is only one extreme Bachelor graduates from universities in the field of mathematics and natural science clearly consider themselves been adequately employed far less often than graduates from the old system of study (62% compared to 85%).

Among graduates of the humanites and social sciences from universities level adequate employment is less widespread in total than among other field of study groups, with the exception of mathematics and natural sciences.

With regard to the so-called vertical adequacy it is still valid what has already been stated for horizontal: In computer science respondents share very similar assessments, regardless of their degree, and consider themselves been employed level adequately to very high percentage (values ranging from 84% and 92%). Also in economics and engineering there is little difference between old and new degrees with regard to level adequate employment.

Table 11: Adequate level of education for present job (about 1.5 years after graduation) field of study group and kind of degree (per cent; only regular employed)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
1 Humanities and social sciences	85	86	83	73	75	72	78
2 Economics	85	83	82	85	83	80	83
3 Mathematics and natural sciences	78	83	100	62	85	83	84
4 Computer sciences	88	88	92	91	84	84	86
5 Engineering	91	91	91	86	87	84	89
6 Agriculture, Food Science, Forestry	86	78	80	67	72	75	78

6.5 Use of qualifications

One and a half years after graduation, on average 84 percent of respondents state that their qualifications acquired during the studies are being used in their current job (the values 1 to 3 on a scale from 1 = "to a very high extent" to 5 = "not at all"). The rates are relatively similar for all types of degrees with the exception of Bachelor degrees from universities with the slightly lower value of 74 percent (see Table 12).

Table 12: Use of qualification (about 1.5 years after graduation) by type of higher education institution and kind of degree (per cent; arithm. mean only regular employed)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
1 To a very high extent	11	13	21	6	12	13	12
2	37	38	44	29	38	44	38
3	35	34	25	40	34	28	34
4	15	13	9	20	14	14	14
5 Not at all	2	2	2	5	2	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Anzahl	(1284)	(13073)	(803)	(494)	(11938)	(888)	(28480)
Use of qualification (values 1, 2 und 3)	82	85	90	74	83	84	84
Low Use of qualification (values 4 und 5)	18	15	10	26	17	16	16
Arithmetic mean	2,6	2,5	2,3	2,9	2,6	2,5	2,5

Question H15: To what extent are the knowledge and skills you acquired during study utilized in our current job? Scale from 1 = „to a very high extent“ to 5 = „not at all“.

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Source: INCHER-Kassel; KOAB Graduate Survey 2009 and 2010 (survey of the years 2007 and 2008, about 1.5 years after graduation).

A differentiated inspection by individual field of study groups shows two groups of graduates, who state an adequate use of qualifications (values 1, 2 and 3) in their current job far less often than all other groups at universities (see Table 13):

- Bachelor graduates from universities in humanities and social sciences(71%) compared to traditional graduates (79%),
- Bachelor graduates from universities in mathematics and natural sciences (71%) compared to traditional graduates (80%).

In contrast, there are hardly any differences between various types of degrees and types of higher education institutions in the field of computer science.

Work tasks close to the field of study

Another way to determine the horizontal affinity of study and work is considering the relationship between field of study and work tasks. According to this among graduates from higher education institutions in Germany job tasks close to the field of study clearly dominate. Of all respondents, only 15 percent stated that their field of study does not fit to their job tasks, stating either that another field of study would have been more useful or that the field of study would not matter at all. Here, the Bachelor graduates from universities (31% crossed the latter two possible answers) fared worse than all the other groups that are somehow in the same level (see Table 11).

Table 13: Field of study related work tasks (about 1.5 years after graduation) by type of higher education institution and kind of degree (per cent; only regular employed graduates)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
1 My field of study is the only possible/by far the best field for my present work tasks	38	43	32	21	38	31	40
2 Some other fields could prepare for the area of work as well	46	44	55	48	45	52	46
3 Another field would have been more useful for my present work tasks	12	8	7	17	10	10	9
4 in my present work the field of study does not matter very much	4	4	6	14	7	7	6
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Question H16: How would you describe the relationships between your field of study and your work tasks? Only one answer please. Source: INCHER-Kassel; KOAB Graduate Survey 2009 and 2010 (survey of the years 2007 and 2008, about 1.5 years after graduation).

The subject-specific analysis shows that the relation between field study and job tasks is significantly lower among two groups of graduates than among all other groups:

- 61% of Bachelor graduates from universities in the humanities and social sciences stated having job tasks close to their field of study, compared to 73% of traditional degrees;
- 65% of Bachelor graduates from universities in mathematics and natural science compared to 82 % of the traditional degrees.

6.6 Job satisfaction

The greatest similarity of the work situation of graduates from various university and degree types is reflected in the satisfaction with the job situation (see Table 14). About two-thirds of the (regular) employees express satisfaction, of which:

- 69 percent are Bachelor's graduates from universities of applied sciences,
- 65 percent are Master's graduates from universities of applied sciences,
- 67 percent are graduates from universities of applied sciences of the old system,
- 63 percent are Bachelor graduates from universities,
- 66 percent are Master's graduates from universities,
- 66 percent are the graduates from universities of the old system.

The comparison between fields of study reveals a very different picture. Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences in all the examined field of study groups are more satisfied than graduates with traditional degrees (e.g. computer science, Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences 79% satisfied; universities of applied sciences traditional degrees 72% satisfied. The exception here is the graduates from the field of study group of Agricultural, Food and Forestry sciences Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences: 54% satisfied, universities of applied sciences traditional degrees: 59% satisfied).

Among the Bachelor graduates from universities computer science stands out (85% satisfied compared to 77% of Traditional degrees), while among the engineers the Bachelor graduates are much less satisfied (65%) than the traditional graduates (74%).

Table 14: Job satisfaction (about 1.5 years after graduation) by type of higher education institution and kind of degree (per cent; arithm. mean; only regular employed graduates)

	University of applied sciences			University			Total
	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	Bachelor	Trad. degree	Master	
1 Very satisfied	22	17	20	19	18	18	18
2	47	50	46	44	48	48	49
3	21	23	21	22	23	22	23
4	7	8	9	10	8	9	8
5 Very unsatisfied	3	2	5	5	3	3	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
High job satisfaction (values 1 und 2)	69	67	65	63	66	66	66
Medium (value 3)	21	23	21	22	23	22	23
Low job satisfaction (values 4 und 5)	10	10	14	15	11	12	11
Arithmetic mean	2,2	2,3	2,3	2,4	2,3	2,3	2,3

Frage K3: How satisfied are you with your current job situation?

Quelle: INCHER-Kassel; KOAB Absolventenbefragung 2009 und 2010 (Befragung der Jahrgänge 2007 und 2008 about 1.5 years after graduation).

7. Conclusion

In the summary of the main findings it is important to note that the proportion of graduates with a bachelor's and master's degree only makes up a small part of all graduates. Second, the graduate survey one and a half years after graduation can only illuminate the starting face of employment. Long-term professional development cannot be analyzed yet.

High international mobility while studying

The bachelor graduates of German universities report that 16 percent of them during the course of their study have completed at least one semester abroad. In the Master's level 17 percent study temporarily abroad (Bachelor graduates from universities). Considering that three-quarters of university bachelor graduates continue their studies, one can estimate that about 27 percent of students in the Bachelor-Master system, have studied abroad for a while before the degree with which they start employment. Among the graduates from university programs of the old system, the corresponding percentage is much lower with 19 percent.

The relatively high international mobility of graduates of the new programs, however, can be partly explained partly by the high proportion of the humanities and social sciences among them. This field of study group already had an above average international mobility in the past.

Of the graduates from the universities of applied sciences 14 percent have studied abroad during the course of the Bachelor study. Among the graduates of the old diploma programs

from universities of applied sciences, this value is only 9 percent. Here too, the new study system clearly proves beneficial for studies abroad.

On top of that in Germany almost as many graduates have been abroad during their studies for other study-related purposes (foreign language courses, summer schools, internships, etc.). Summing up these shorter stays abroad during their studies with semesters abroad, it turns out that in total 28% of bachelor graduates from universities and 27% of the bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences have gathered experiences abroad during their studies.

The European ministers have called for a target value of the Bologna process in 2020 that 20 percent of graduates should have spent some time abroad from studying or internships (see the Leuven-communicé: http://www.bmbf.de/pub/leuven_communique.pdf: "Bis 2020 sollen mindestens 20 Prozent der Graduierten im Europäischen Hochschulraum einen Studien- oder Praktikumsaufenthalt im Ausland absolviert haben.").

Considering estimated value of other statistics that about 3 percent of German graduates spend their entire study up to the degree abroad, the result is: German Higher Education Institution and students have already reached the Bologna target for mobility for 2020 a decade earlier.

High rate of continuing studies.

The KOAB-graduates surveys can help answer the question which percentage of Bachelor graduates goes into the employment system after they graduate, and which percentage continues their studies. It was shown that there are several variants of calculating the rate of continuing studies, depending on whether you consider people who are exclusively studying or people who are working while studying. The rate of continuing studies among Bachelor graduates determined in this report of 78 percent at universities and 43 percent at universities of applied sciences includes both groups, people who are exclusively studying as well as those who are working while studying.

In an international comparison between countries with longer experience with the Bachelor-Master system (USA, UK and Australia), these rates seem high. However, it should be considered that these countries have a much higher entrance rate. On the other hand, if you make a comparison between the rate of graduates from long study programs in Germany (about 10 to 11% of a cohort) and the rate of master graduates in these countries (about 12% of a cohort), these differences appear small. Since it is not foreseeable that in the near future the entrance rates in Germany will dramatically increase, a high rate of continuing studies as determined in the KOAB graduate survey, seems adequate to keep to the qualification level on its current state. Countries, whose higher education system also consists of two types of higher education institutions (universities and universities of applied sciences), report similarly high rates of continuing studies.

Few unemployed graduates

Only 4 percent of Bachelor graduates from German universities and 6 percent of graduates from German universities of applied sciences remain without employment. The average job search duration of Bachelor graduates from German higher education institutions does not differ from the job search duration of graduates of the old system.

The professional situation of bachelor's graduates

57 percent of Bachelor graduates of German universities, are employed full time compared to 67 percent of graduates from the old long study programs, this can be explained by the fact that Bachelor graduates more often study while working. Considering only the regular employees (exclusively working) then almost 90% of graduates are working full-time and there are no relevant differences in the contract situation between the new and the old degrees.

The rate of employees with unlimited term contracts 1.5 years after graduation among university Bachelor graduates (36 percent) and other university graduates (38 percent) is almost equal, in both cases, the initially fixed-term employment in public service has a heavy impact. Considering, however, only regular employees somewhat larger differences between old and new study programs become apparent, the latter having unlimited term contracts less often.

The income of graduates from new study programs in most of the field of study groups, is slightly lower than among the traditional study programs. The differences are less obvious (less than 10 percent) at universities of applied sciences. The differences are highest among graduates of mathematics / natural science (-21% to the disadvantage of the Bachelor's), of engineering (-15%), of Economics (-12%) and of humanities and social sciences(-15%).

The graduates from university Bachelor programs in Germany rate the relationship between study and work not as positive as the graduates from the old long university study programs : This is reflected in the assessment whether employment is according to the level of qualification (77 percent compared to 87 percent; 69 percent to 84 percent for regular employees), and in the statement that knowledge acquired during the studies can mostly be used in the job (45 percent compared to 55 percent, 35% compared to 50 percent for regular employees). With regard to high job satisfaction there is a similar picture: 53 percent compared to 63 percent (63% compared to 66% for regular employees).

The results of the survey KOAB graduate survey of 2009 cannot support the fears of an acceptance issue of university Bachelor graduates in general.

Looking at the individual fields of study it shows two extremes (both STEM subjects): Bachelor graduates in mathematics and natural science indeed seem to have a much more problematic entry into professional life than traditional graduates. For most of the above mentioned indicators they fair much worse than traditional graduates. The margin increases (for some indicators even significantly) when compared to Master graduates. However, for Bachelor graduates in computer science there are next to no difference, both in comparison to traditional university graduates and Bachelor graduates from universities of applied sciences.

Trend?

A comparison of the results from the years 2009 and 2010 shows no significant changes. Merely a higher rate of continuing studies among graduates of the cohort of 2008 is obvious. Whether this was influenced by the economic development (financial and economic crisis in 2008/2009) cannot be clarified with our data.

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