

# Project report

## Alumni survey 2016

Stockholm University

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## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	3
<b>1.1 Approach</b> .....	3
<b>1.2 Selection</b> .....	4
<b>1.3 Limitations</b> .....	4
<b>2. Results</b> .....	5
<b>2.1 General results</b> .....	5
2.1.1 <i>Educational background</i> .....	6
2.1.2 <i>Work situation</i> .....	7
2.1.3 <i>How the education is valued in working life</i> .....	11
<b>2.2 Bachelor level</b> .....	11
2.2.1 <i>Educational background</i> .....	11
2.2.2 <i>Work situation</i> .....	13
2.2.3 <i>How the education is valued in working life</i> .....	15
<b>2.3 Advanced level</b> .....	15
2.3.1 <i>Educational background</i> .....	16
2.3.2 <i>Work situation</i> .....	17
2.3.3 <i>How the education is valued in working life</i> .....	19
<b>2.4 Comparisons</b> .....	20
2.4.1 <i>Bachelor level and advanced level</i> .....	20
2.4.2 <i>Gender</i> .....	21
2.4.3 <i>Internship</i> .....	23
2.4.4 <i>Studies abroad</i> .....	24
2.4.5 <i>Year for year</i> .....	25
2.4.6 <i>Other comparisons</i> .....	25
<b>3. Advice from our alumni</b> .....	26
<b>4. Conclusions</b> .....	28
<b>Appendix 1</b> .....	29

## 1. Introduction

In the spring of 2016 the Department of Political Science sent out a questionnaire to the alumni who had attained either a Bachelor or a Master's degree in Political Science from Stockholm University, during the period 2010 to 2015. The last alumni survey conducted by the department in 2010/2011 had focused only on former master students. With this new survey the department also wanted to find out more about what Bachelor level students can expect from the job market, and how the Bachelor alumni value their education after graduating.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first one concerned the alumni's work situations and the other part focused on how they value their education in Political Science in relation to their work lives. In the second part we also looked at which factors (both connected to the education but also other factors such as personal connections and previous job experiences) that they considered to have been important for them in getting jobs.

The questions about the alumni's work situations concerned how long it took for them to get a job after graduating, how long it took to get a job related to the Political Science studies, what their current occupations and salaries were, where they worked and what main work tasks they had.

The questions about the education concerned to what extent the alumni valued various knowledges/experiences gained at the university (such as knowledge in methodology, theoretical perspectives, argumentation, internship experience, studies abroad and academic writing) as being important in their working lives (see Appendix 1).

### 1.1 Approach

The questionnaire was sent out using the web based tool Survey & Report. When designing the questionnaire, we took into consideration the turnout of the previous survey, which had been conducted with telephone interviews. By doing so we were able to re-use some of the questions that had been asked and could also consider some of the problems mentioned in the report. For example, it was mentioned that no questions about types of employment had been asked, and that many respondents had a tendency of answering both Yes and No to questions. The possibility of

avoiding answers that would have been difficult to categorize was one of the main reasons why we chose to send out an online questionnaire this time.

The survey was conducted in English (with the option to write comments in Swedish), because many alumni are international citizens.

The questionnaire was sent out on April 6 and the deadline to reply was April 15, 2016.

## 1.2 Selection

From 2010-01-01 to 2015-12-31 a total of 1263 people received a degree in the main field of Political Science from Stockholm University. 931 attained a Bachelor's degree and 283 attained a Master's degree (120 credits). Furthermore, 49 people received a 60 credit Master's degree.

In the list of graduated alumni we sorted out the names that appeared twice, so that the former students who had received *both* a Bachelor's and a Master's degree within the chosen time period would not get the questionnaire sent to them twice. Because we no longer provide the one-year master's programme we also sorted out the alumni who had attained a Filosofie magisterexamen (Master of Science, 60 credits). Some of them, who had earned a Bachelor's degree during the same period (2010 – 2015), would still receive the questionnaire. For this reason we decided to include the alternative "Master's degree, 60 credits" as a possible answer to question number 3 (see Appendix 1).

When the selection was done, 1089 alumni remained on the list. The questionnaire was sent to the 1072 alumni whom we could find e-mail addresses for.

## 1.3 Limitations

In the last alumni survey conducted by the department one problem had been that respondents had a tendency of answering both Yes and No to questions. In this new survey we decided to use fixed answer categories (although multiple choice was possible for several questions). There is a risk that this has given us an opposite problem of rigid results. We tried to alleviate the problem to some extent by allowing for comments if/when the respondents considered the categories to be

insufficient. But, by using fixed categories we are aware that the results have been controlled by us.

Another problem (also mentioned in the previous survey) was that many respondents had one or several overlapping degrees in other main fields. It is likely that this affected the results on how the respondents value and describe their work lives. We do not know, for example, whether the alumni who have *not* gotten jobs related to the Political Science field have chosen that or not. An additional problem is that we did not ask *how* the alumni got their jobs. It is therefore uncertain which factor or factors they consider to have been determinant for why they got their jobs.

## 2. Results

In this section we will present some of the general results. This to give you a picture of who the respondents are and to highlight some of the general information about the education offered by the department, and about the alumni's work situations, that we find the most interesting. The results for the bachelor level and advanced level alumni are then presented separately, under section 2.2 and 2.3 respectively. Finally, in section 2.4 we present a number of comparisons, for example of how gender, internships, studies abroad as well as choice of optional courses and research subjects have affected (or not affected) the respondents' work situations.

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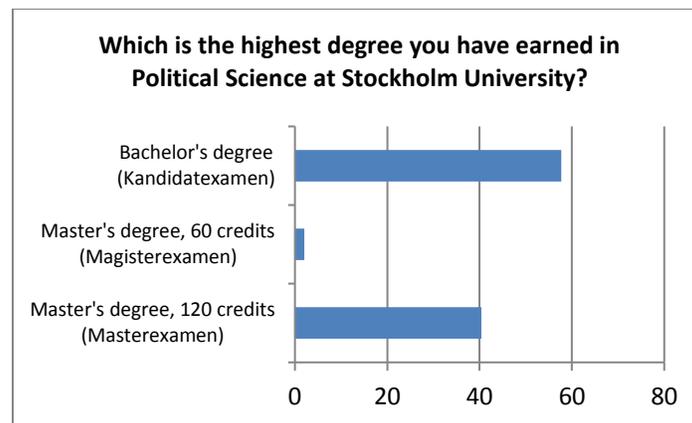
The percentages have in most cases been rounded off.

### 2.1 General results

Out of the 1072 alumni that the questionnaire was sent to, we received replies from 308, which equals a response rate of 29 %. 57 % of the respondents were women, 41 % were men and 2 % chose to identify themselves in another way. The largest group of respondents were 26 - 35 years old (73 %).

### 2.1.1 Educational background

58 % of all respondents stated that they had attained a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Stockholm University. 40 % of the respondents had attained a Master's degree, even though the advanced level alumni only made up 26 % of the total selection (the bachelor level alumni made up 74 %). This means that alumni with Master degrees are over-represented in the general results, which might be good to keep in mind when reading this section.

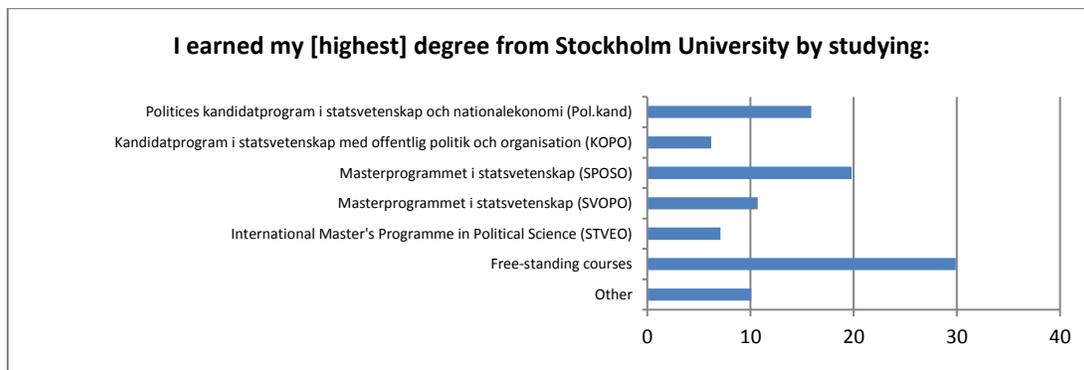


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Another thing to keep in mind is that 20 % of the respondents stated that they earned their Political Science Bachelor degrees at other universities. These respondents have only studied at our department on the advanced level. Furthermore, 7 % stated that they have earned a Master's degree at another university (3 % have a 60 credit Master's degree and 4 % have a 120 credit Master's degree). 37 % also have a degree in another main field of study. The ones most commonly mentioned were Economics (15 respondents), Business Administration (10), History (6), Law (6), International Relations (5), Teacher Education (5), Media and Communication Studies (4) and Global Development (4).

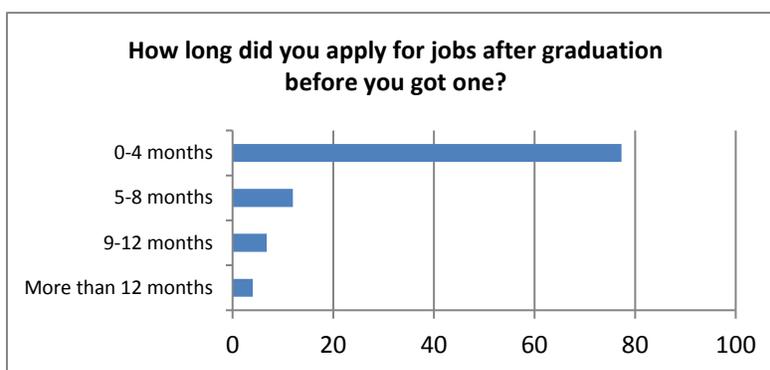
30 % of the respondents earned their highest degree in Political Science by taking free-standing courses on the Bachelor level. 20 % had taken the Swedish Master's programme in Political Science (SPOSÖ). 16 % took the Bachelor Programme in Economics and Political Science and 11 % had been students on the Master's Programme in Political Science with specialization in Public Policy and Organisations (SVOPO). (Please note once again that alumni with Master degrees are

over-represented in the results when we consider the overall selection.) Among the remaining, 6 respondents stated that they had taken the Bachelor's Programme in Business Administration and Political Science (given by Stockholm Business School in collaboration with the Department of Political Science). Furthermore, 3 respondents had taken one of our previous Master programmes and five people had studied on the Teacher Education Programme.



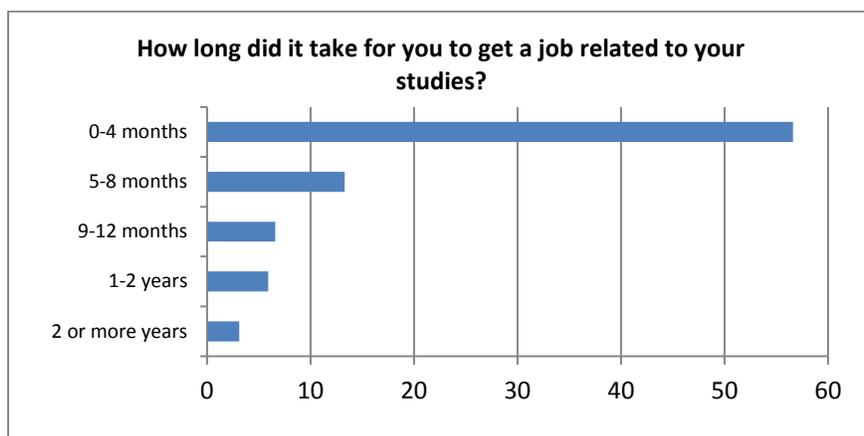
### 2.1.2 Work situation

77 % of the respondents received a job within 0 – 4 months after graduating. 12 % received a job within 5 – 8 months and 7 % within 9 – 12 months. 10 respondents (4 %) stated that they applied for jobs for more than 12 months after graduating.



The results show that getting a job that can be considered related to the Political Science studies generally takes a bit longer. 57 % of the respondents received a related job already within the 0 – 4 months and 13 % within 5 – 8 months. 16 % answered that it took them 1 to 2 years. 15 % do

not have a job that they consider to be related to the Political Science field. One explanation for this could be that 37 % of the respondents have overlapping degrees in other main fields (for example in Economics).

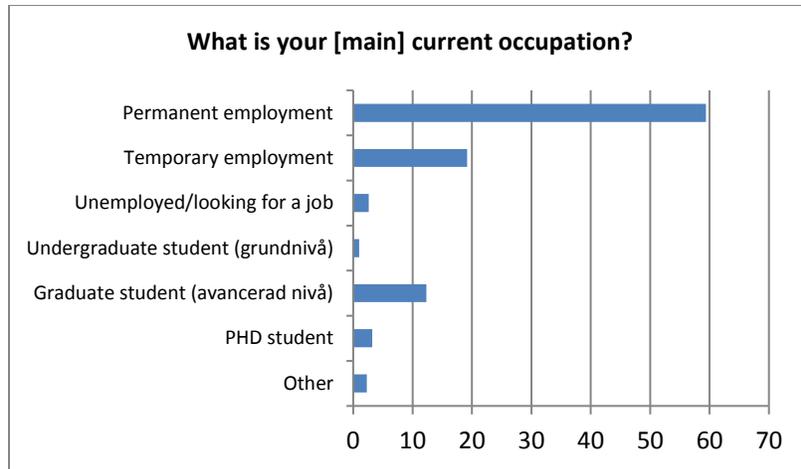


It is pleasing to find that only 3 % of the respondents stated that they were unemployed. However, we do consider some caution to be necessary when it comes to this result, since there is a risk that unemployed alumni have felt less compelled to answer the questionnaire. But according to SACO only 4.1 % of academics in the group social science, law, commerce and administration were unemployed in July 2016, which indicates that the differential should be quite small.<sup>1</sup>

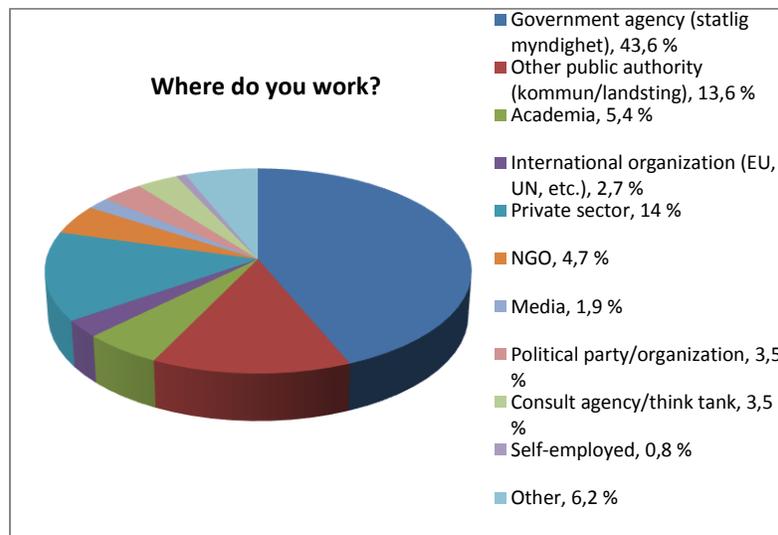
Furthermore, 59 % stated that they were permanently employed and 19 % that they were temporarily employed. 13 % have chosen to continue their studies at advanced level or are now taking a different programme/course. 3 % are PhD students.

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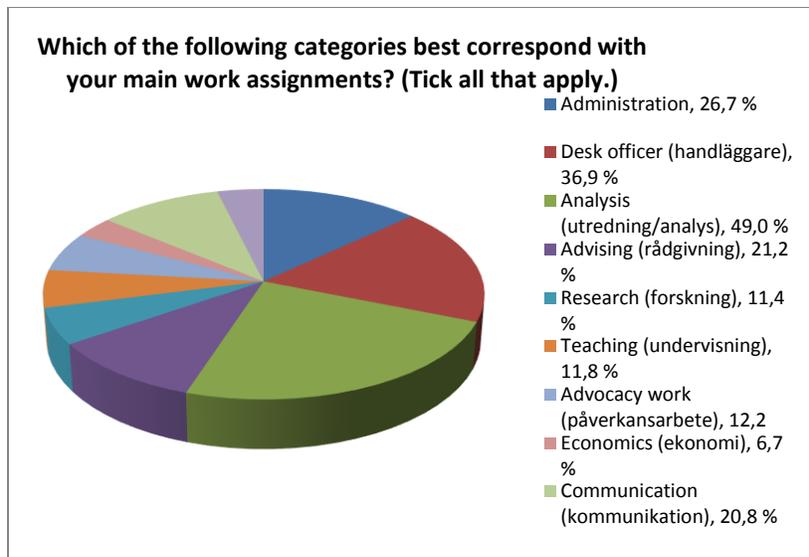
<sup>1</sup> SACO: <http://www.saco.se/vara-fragor/arbetsmarknad/arbetsloshet-for-akademiker/> [Accessed 2016-09-01]



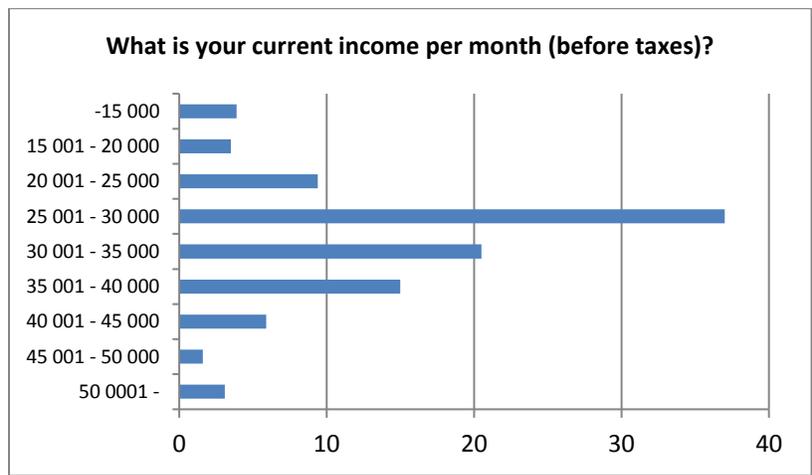
44 % of the respondents are employed by the state, which makes it the largest employer of our alumni. Some examples of workplaces mentioned are The Swedish Migration Agency, the Government Offices of Sweden (for example the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, etcetera), the Swedish Police, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention and the Swedish National Audit Office.



49 % of the respondents stated that analysis is one of their main work assignments, and 37 % are desk officers. (Please observe that it was possible to tick all applicable alternatives, which explains why the total percentage exceeds 100.)



At the time of the survey 37 % had an income of 25 001 to 30 000 SEK before taxes, which is compatible with the general level of initial salaries for social scientists in recent years.<sup>2</sup> 21 % had a salary of 30 001 to 35 000 SEK, and 15 % earned between 35 001 to 40 000 SEK per month. 19 respondents (7 %) told us that they earned less than 20 000 SEK, and 8 respondents (3 %) earned more than 50 000 SEK a month.



<sup>2</sup> See for example SACO: <http://www.saco.se/studieval--karriar/studieval/yrken-a-o/samhallsvetare/> [Accessed 2016-06-09]

### *2.1.3 How the education is valued in working life*

When it comes to the questions about the factors that potentially have affected (or might come to affect) the chances of getting a job, a pattern can be noted. The alumni who have started working after graduation tend to value factors connected to their studies higher than the alumni who have continued studying. Among the ones who are still students, 51 % state that they believe personal contacts will be important to a great extent for their chances of getting a job later on. Among the ones who have started to work, only 22 % believe that personal contacts *were* important for them to a great extent. 30 % even say that personal contacts did not affect their chances of getting a job at all. Another example is that 78 % of the ones who began working after graduating consider the knowledges they have acquired in methodology while studying are important to a great extent in their work lives. This while only 42 % of the respondents who are still studying believe that methodology *will* be important for them.

On the question of how well the studies had prepared the alumni for working life, 78 % answered that it had prepared them to some extent, to a high extent or to a great extent. Around 5 % answered that the studies had not prepared them for working life at all.

## **2.2 Bachelor level**

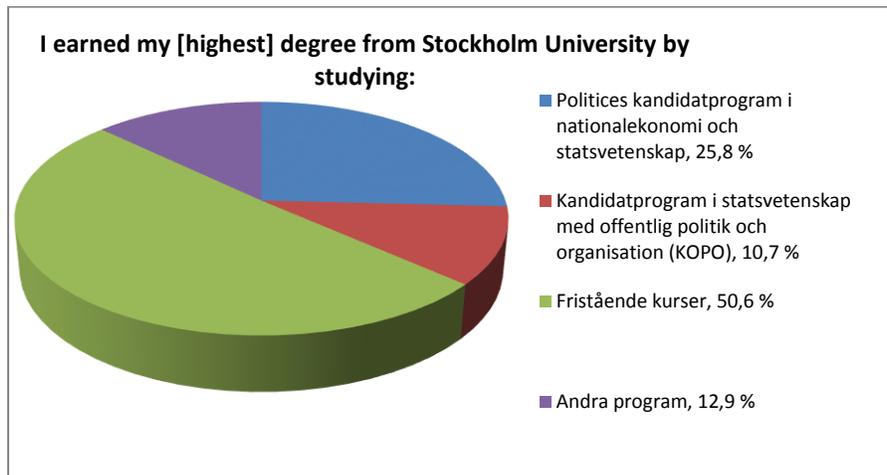
The survey was sent to 794 bachelor level alumni, and we received replies from 178 (23 %) of them. 59 % of the respondents were women, 39 % were men and 2 % chose to identify themselves in another way. The majority were 26 – 35 years old (62 %).

### *2.2.1 Educational background*

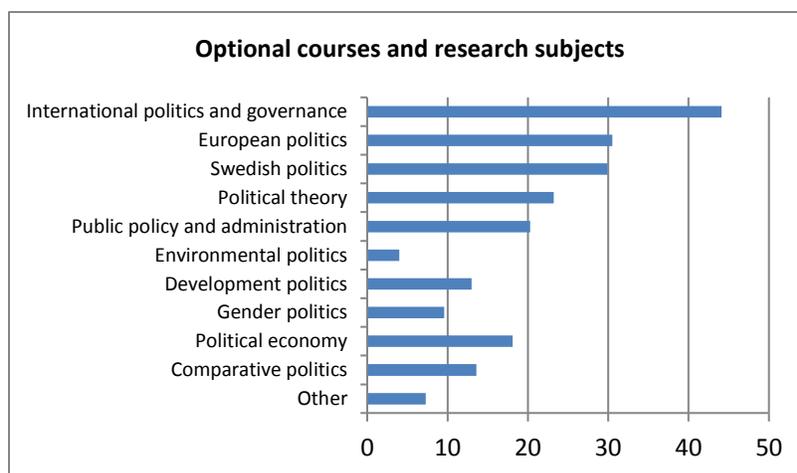
7 % of the respondents with Bachelor degrees stated that they also have a Master's degree (of one or two years) earned at another university. 37 % have an additional Bachelor's degree in another main field of study.

A majority of the respondents (51 %) earned their Bachelor degrees in Political Science by taking free-standing courses. 26 % took the Bachelor Programme in Economics and Political Science

(Politics kandidatprogram i nationalekonomi och statsvetenskap) and 11 % took the Bachelor Programme in Political Science with Public Policy and Administration (Kandidatprogram i statsvetenskap med offentlig politik och organisation). 12 % earned their degrees by taking other programmes, for example the Bachelor Programme in Business Administration and Political Science (Kandidatprogram i företagsekonomi och statsvetenskap).



Most answered that their choices of optional courses and research subjects had an orientation towards International politics and governance (44 %) or European Politics (31 %). Third most common was Swedish Politics (30 %).



29 % of the respondents had done an internship in connection to their studies. During the period 2010 to 2015 it was only possible for programme students to take a credit earning internship course

at the department. In the autumn semester of 2016 it became an option for students taking free-standing courses as well, which is expected to increase the number of students who chose to do internships.

25 % of the respondents had done exchange studies and 16 % had studied abroad as free-movers. 58 % had not studied abroad.

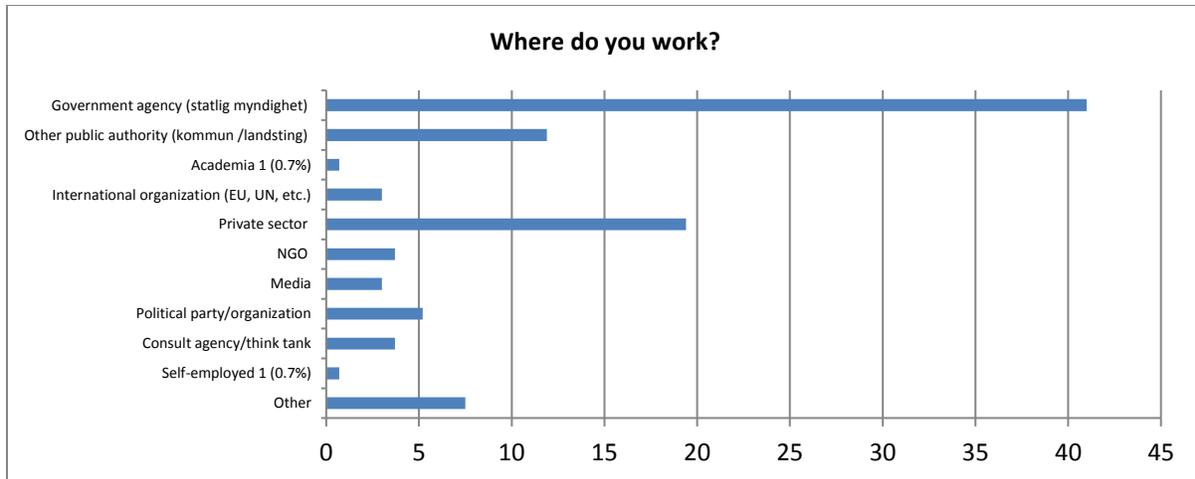
### *2.2.2 Work situation*

At the time of the survey, 57 % of the alumni with Bachelor degrees held permanent employments, while 16 % were temporarily employed. 20 % had chosen to continue their studies (either at an advanced level or by studying something else) and 3 % were unemployed. Half of the unemployed respondents (three people) stated that they had applied for jobs for more than 12 months.

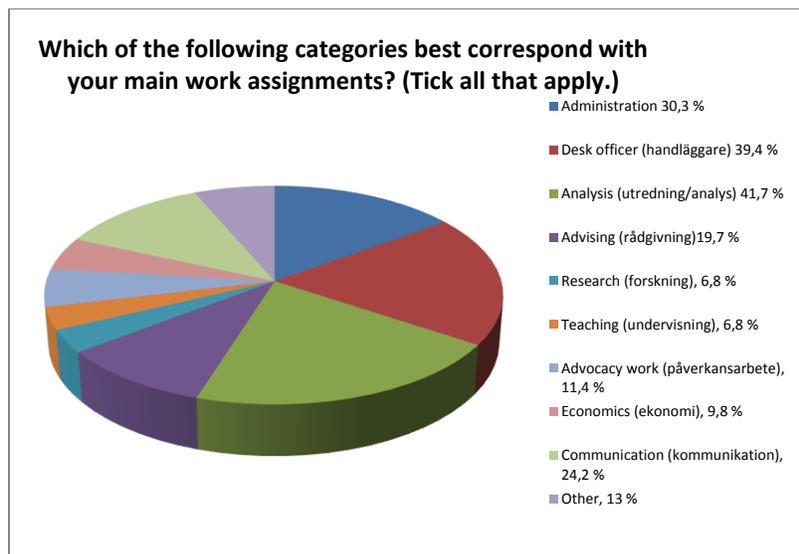
A large majority – 79 % - of the respondents got jobs within 0 – 4 months. For 9 % it took 5 – 8 months, and for 8 % between 9 – 12 months. 4 % stated that it took them more than 12 months to get their first job after graduating.

It took a somewhat longer time for the respondents to get jobs related to their Political Science studies. 56 % got a related job already within 0 – 4 months, 9 % within 5 – 8 months and 6 % within 1 – 2 years. 20 % did not have a job related to their studies at the time of the survey. One explanation for this could be that many respondents also have degrees in other main fields. Although we did not ask whether it is by choice that they have unrelated jobs, or not.

Many of the respondents with Bachelor degrees are now government employees (41 %). The second largest category was the private sector, which employs 19 %, and the third largest was other public authorities (municipalities/counties). A few examples of workplaces mentioned are the Swedish Migration Agency, the Swedish Government Offices (the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, etcetera), the Swedish Police, and the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention and the Swedish National Audit Office.

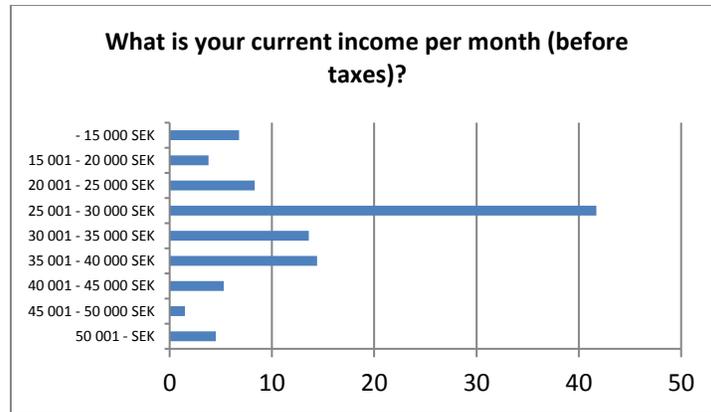


On the question of main work assignments most answered that they do analysis, administration or desk office work (please note that multiple choice was possible, which explains why the percentage exceeds 100).



94 % of the respondents stated they work full-time, while 2 % work 75 % and 4 % work 50 % or less.

42 % have a monthly income of 25 001 to 30 000 SEK before taxes. 13.6 % earn 30 001 to 35 000 SEK/month and 14.4 % earn 35 001 to 40 000 SEK/month.



### 2.2.3 How the education is valued in working life

Among the factors that may have affected the respondents (the ones who have gotten jobs) chances of getting jobs after graduation, many emphasize the importance of an academic degree and previous work experiences. 77 % estimate that having an academic degree was important to a high or very high extent for the chances of getting a job, while 46 % estimate that having a Political Science degree was important to the same extent. 68 % answered that previous work experience was important to a high or very high extent for them. 52 % found that their personal engagements were important to a high or very high extent.

The one factor, related to skills and experiences students acquire during studies, which is valued the highest is the experience of having analyzed and assessed information. 75 % answer that this experience has been important to a high or very high extent in working life.

Many also value academic writing highly. 69 % consider this skill to be important to a high or very high extent.

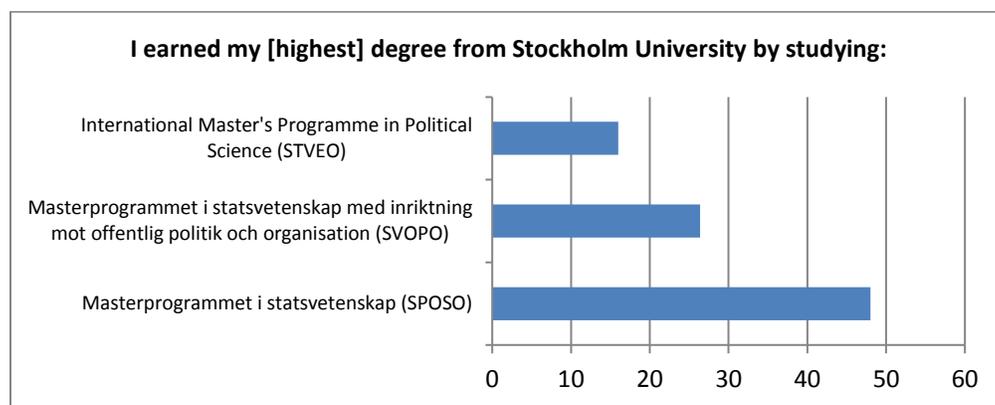
### 2.3 Advanced level

55 % of the former master students (125 respondents in total) who responded to the survey were women, 42 % were men and 2 % (three people) chose to identify themselves in another way. 89 % of the respondents were 26 – 35 years old.

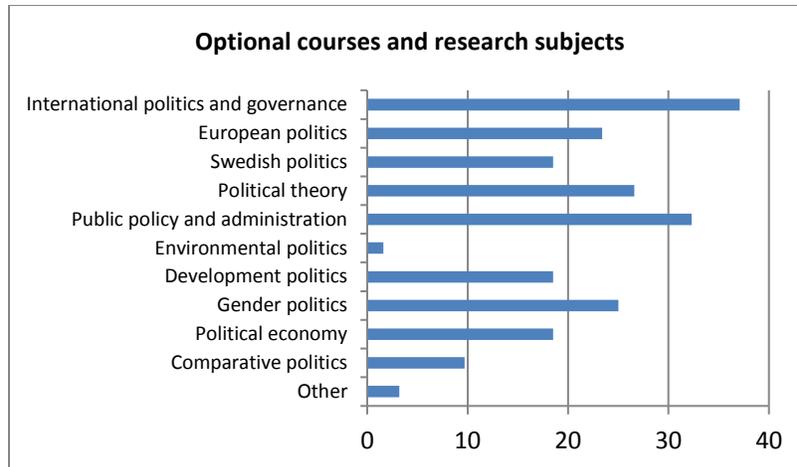
### 2.3.1 Educational background

39 % state that they earned their Bachelor degrees at other universities, and 39 % also have a degree in another main field of study. The most common combination subjects mentioned were Economics (11 respondents), Developing studies (5), Business Administration (3) and Social Anthropology (3).

48 % of the respondents earned their Master degrees by taking the Master's Programme in Political Science (SPOSO). 26 % had taken the Master's Programme in Political Science with specialization in Public Policy and Organisations (SVOPO) and 16 % had taken the International Master's Programme in Political Science (STVEO).



37 % had an orientation towards International Politics and Governance by their choices of optional courses and research subjects. The second most popular orientation was Public Policy and Administration (32 %). After that came Political Theory (27 %), Gender Politics (25 %) and European Politics (23 %).

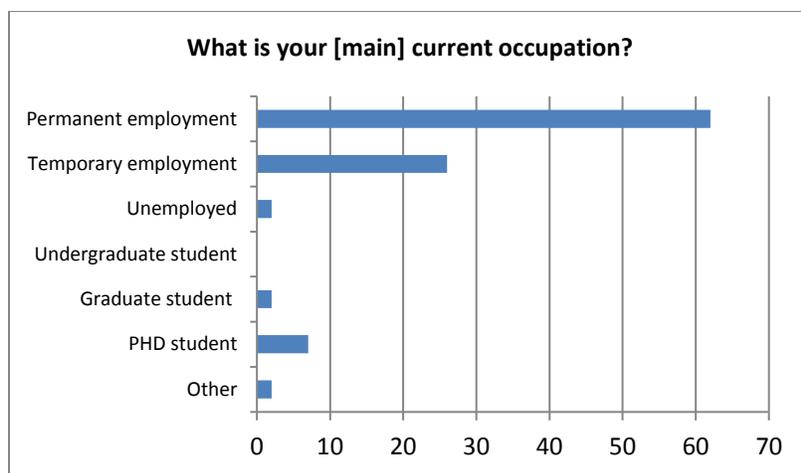


80 % of the respondents did internships during their studies at advanced level. For students enrolled in the Master's Programme in Political Science with specialization in Public Policy and Organisations, an internship of 22.5 credits was compulsory during the third semester. Students enrolled in the Swedish Master's Programme in Political Science (SPOSO) or the International Master's Programme in Political Science (STVEO) had the option of doing an internship of 15, 22.5 or 30 credits, going on exchange studies or taking an optional course during semester 4. The share of respondents who have done internships is larger for the alumni with Master degrees in general since the internship course on the first level was only available for programme students until recently (29 % of the first level programme students had done internships).

37 % of the Master alumni stated that they have studied abroad (20 % via exchange studies and 17 % as free-movers). 63 % have not studied abroad.

### 2.3.2 Work situation

62 % of the respondents stated that they were permanently employed while 26 % were temporarily employed. This means that 87 % of the respondents were employed in some form at the time of the survey. 7 % were PhD students and 2 % were advanced level students. Only two people (1.6 %) were unemployed at the time. Both had been applying for jobs for more than 12 months.



It took 0 – 4 months for 77 % of the respondents to get a job after graduating. For 14 % it took 5 – 8 months, and for 6 % it took 9 – 12 months. 3 % (4 people) answered that it took them more than 12 months to get the first job.

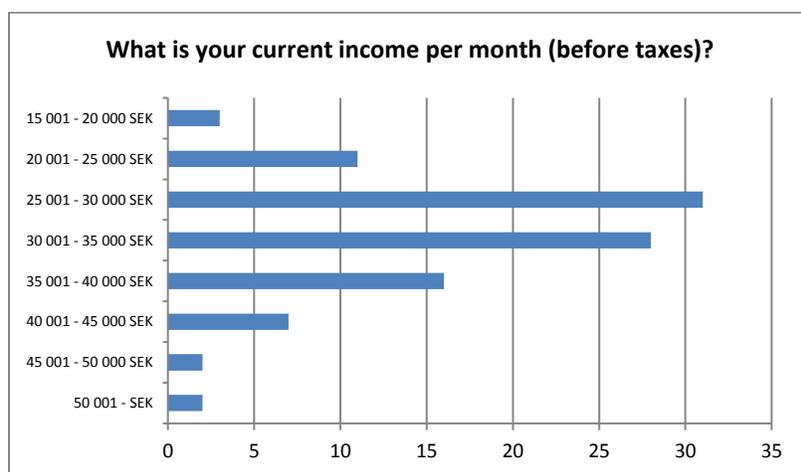
Again we can see that it has taken a somewhat longer time overall for the alumni to get jobs related to their political science studies, than it has taken for them to get *a* job. 58 % said they got a related job already within 0 – 4 months. Out of the 91 people who had gotten jobs within 0 – 4 months, 20 respondents did not get a job related to political science. 17 % got a related job within 5 – 8 months, and 8 % within 9 – 12 months. 8 % stated that they did *not* have a political science related job at the time. Again, we do not know whether this is by choice, or not.

46 % of the respondents work for a government agency and 15 % work for another public authority (municipalities/counties). 11 % work in academia (9 out of 13 are PhD students), 8 % are in the private sector and 6 % work for an NGO.

Some of the most common workplaces mentioned are the Swedish Migration Agency and Stockholm University. The third largest employer (where 7 alumni work) is the government offices, followed by the City of Stockholm (5 respondents), the Swedish Public Employment Service (4) and the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (4). Other examples of workplaces mentioned are Faugert & Co. Utvärdering (consulting firm), Oxford Research, the Swedish National Financial Management Authority (Ekonomistyrningsverket), UN Women, the Swedish Agency for Public Management (Statskontoret), the Swedish Embassy in Kigali and the Parliament Registry of the Moderate party.

56 % of the respondents answered that they do analysis as one of their main work assignments. 34 % work as desk-officers and 23 % have administrative tasks. Furthermore, 23 % do advisory work and 17 % are researchers (note that multiple choice was possible). Some of the positions/titles mentioned by the respondents are Desk Officer (18 people), Analyst (17), PhD student (10), Secretary (6), Departmental Secretary (6), Analytic (4), Executive Officer (3) and Teacher (3).

The results showed that the alumni with Master degrees have slightly higher incomes than the alumni with Bachelor degrees. The income category of 25 001 - 30 000 SEK/month (before taxes) is the largest for both groups; 31 % of the master alumni and 42 % of the bachelor alumni have an income within this range. 28 % of the master alumni state that their income is somewhere in the category 30 001 – 35 000 SEK, while the number for the bachelor alumni is 14 % in this category. Only 4 % of the master alumni have an income below 20 000 SEK, while the number is 11 % for the bachelor alumni.



### 2.3.3 How the education is valued in working life

Out of the factors that may have affected the respondents' possibilities of getting jobs after graduating, having an academic degree and having done an internship are the two valued the highest. 88 % consider having an academic degree to be important to a high or very high extent for the chances of finding employment. This while 56 % consider having an academic degree in

Political Science *specifically*, is important to a high or very high extent. Furthermore, 60 % consider having done an internship to be as important.

Somewhat surprisingly, 43 % estimate that personal contacts were not at all important, or important only to a small extent for their chances of getting jobs. Instead, 51 % valued earlier work experiences as important to a high or very high extent.

The one factor (related to experiences and knowledges students acquire during studies) which is most highly valued in working life, is the experience of having analyzed and assessed information. 62 % consider this experience to be important to a very high extent and 22 % considers it important to a high extent. Fewer consider the experience of having analyzed information from different theoretical perspectives to be as important; 50 % think it is important to a high or very high extent (29 % consider it important to some degree).

Many also value academic writing greatly. 43 % consider the practice in academic writing to be important to a very high extent in working life, and 31 % think it is important to a high extent.

## **2.4 Comparisons**

### *2.4.1 Bachelor level and advanced level*

We see no significant differences in the possibilities for bachelor alumni or master alumni to find employment after being awarded their degrees. At the time of the survey 57 % of the alumni with Bachelor degrees and 62 % of the alumni with Master degrees were permanently employed. One difference in the results was that a larger percentage of master alumni held temporary employments. This while a larger percentage of bachelor alumni had continued studying (at advanced level, or another programme/course), which evens out the results. Two respondents (1.6 %) among the master alumni, and six respondents (3.4 %) among the bachelor alumni, were unemployed.

We found no significant differences in the time it has taken for bachelor alumni and master alumni to find employment, or to find jobs related to the Political Science studies. However, 20 % of the bachelor alumni stated that they did not have a job related to their Political Science studies, while

only 8 % of the master alumni said the same. We also found that a larger percentage of bachelor alumni work in the private sector (19 %) than master alumni (8 %) and that a larger share of master alumni work in the public sector (63 % compared to 53 %). This could potentially be explained by the fact that many of the bachelor alumni have overlapping degrees in fields such as economics. Potentially, this could also be interpreted as an indicator that a Master's degree increases the chances of getting a Political Science related job.

A larger percentage of master alumni stated that they do analytic work and research, than the bachelor alumni (which could to some extent be explained by the fact that a Master's degree is a prerequisite for PhD studies). The bachelor alumni, then, work with economics and communication to a greater extent than the master alumni.

We find that the master alumni have slightly higher incomes than the bachelor alumni. The median income for the bachelor alumni is 25 001 - 30 000 SEK/month, before taxes, while the median income for the master alumni is 30 001 - 35 000 SEK. The dispersion in income levels is also greater for the bachelor alumni. For example, 7 % (nine respondents) stated that they make less than 15 000 SEK per month, and 5 % (six respondents) make more than 50 000 SEK per month. Only one person (0.8 %), among the master alumni, stated that he or she makes less than 15 000 SEK per month, and two respondents (2 %) make more than 50 000.

We note that, on the question of to what extent the alumni value various factors as having been important for their chances of getting a job, the master alumni tend to value their academic degree and their *degree in Political Science* greater than the bachelor alumni. The bachelor alumni, then, tend to hold personal contacts, earlier work experiences and personal commitments higher than the master alumni do. This could indicate that a Master's degree in Political Science has a somewhat higher value on the job market than a Bachelor's degree, and that the bachelor alumni therefore rely more on other experiences and personal contacts when looking for jobs.

#### 2.4.2 Gender

The most striking differences that we find connected to gender is that 10 % more men than women hold permanent employments, and that women are over-represented in holding temporary employments (on both levels). The women seem to find employment somewhat faster than men

(83 % compared to 69 % got jobs within 0 – 4 months), but still the average incomes are higher for the male alumni; 66 % of the men have incomes of over 30 000 SEK, while only 42 % of the women do. The median income for men is in the category 30 001 – 35 000 SEK, and the median income for women is in the category 25 001 – 30 000 SEK.

We note that the differences in income was less significant for men and women who held Master degrees. The share of male master alumni was larger in the category 30 001 – 35 000 SEK (32 % compared to 26 %), but the women's average income was somewhat higher (closer to 30 000 SEK) than the men's. At the same time, the women's income levels showed a greater dispersion.

A comparison can be made with the results of a report from the Swedish Mediation Office (Medlingsinstitutet) about the income differences between men and women in 2015. According to this report, women made on average 87.5 % of what men made (over all sectors) in 2015. The average income per month for men in 2015 was 34 100 SEK, and 29 900 SEK for women.<sup>3</sup> According to the same report, newly graduated men and women have different expectations of what income they will be able to receive ones they get a job, and the report authors point to a covariance between expected and actual income. In 2012 the difference in expectation was 8.6 % (on average men expected an income of 29 460 SEK and women of 26 930 SEK per month).<sup>4</sup>

Among the women who *had gotten jobs* after graduation, most valued the academic degree, the academic degree in *Political Science*, internship experience, exchange studies and earlier work experiences higher than the men did (looking at the mean values). The men valued grades, optional courses and research subjects, personal contacts and personal engagements higher than the women did.

Among the respondents who had continued studying (on advanced level or other education) after earning a Bachelor's degree, the men only valued having an academic degree in *Political Science*, the internship experience and exchange studies higher than the women. Interestingly enough, more women than men *have* done internships (53 % compared to 42 %) and studied abroad (43 %

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<sup>3</sup> The Swedish Mediation Office's report *The wage differential between women and men 2015* (2016):

[http://www.mi.se/files/PDF-er/att\\_bestalla/loneskillnader/skillnaden15.pdf](http://www.mi.se/files/PDF-er/att_bestalla/loneskillnader/skillnaden15.pdf)

[accessed 2016-09-15] pp. 16-17.

<sup>4</sup> Op. cit. pp. 34-38.

compared to 35 %). It is also interesting to note that, among the respondents who are still studying, women value, for example, “personal contacts” higher than men do. This while the results for respondents who have begun working after graduation is the opposite, where men valued personal contacts higher than the women did. This could indicate that the respondents who have not yet started to look for qualified jobs to some extent overestimate resources and experiences that they “lack”, and underestimate resources and experiences they possess.

When it comes to which knowledges and experiences acquired from the studies that have proven important in working life, women valued most factors higher than the men did. These factors were: knowledge in the field of Political Science, analyzing and assessing information, academic writing, argumentation, working in groups and reading, writing and speaking English. The men on their part valued the experiences of having analyzed and assessed information from different theoretical perspectives, training in methodology and giving oral presentations higher than the women. More male than female respondents also have analytical work assignments (56 % compared to 45 %), work as researchers (14 % compared to 10 %) and advisors (29 % compared to 16 %). Instead the female respondents work as desk-officers to a higher extent (40 %) than the men (31 %) do.

To sum up, the Political Science education and the experiences and knowledges it brings is overall valued higher by women, both during and after studies. One interpretation of these results could be that both male and female students to some extent adapt to the different conditions they expect to meet when they enter the job market (where the education, with a few exceptions, is potentially less important for the male than the female alumni).

### 2.4.3 Internship

Apart from gender, having done an internship seems to be the factor with the greatest impact on the alumni’s work situations. We note, for example, that a somewhat larger share of the ones who *had* done internships got a job within 0 – 4 months after graduating (86 %) than the ones who had not (74 %). 66 % of the alumni who had done internships also got a job related to the Political Science studies within this period, while only 45 % of the ones who had not done internships received related jobs as fast. Furthermore, none of the alumni who had done internships stated that

they were unemployed at the time of the survey, while 7 people (out of 156) who had *not* done internships were.

Concerning income levels we note that the share of alumni with an income of 30 001 - 35 000 SEK is larger in the group who have done internships (28 % compared to 11 %). The average income is therefore higher in the group of alumni who did internships during their studies, and the median is within the category of 30 001 - 35 000 SEK. The median income for alumni who had not done internships was 25 001 - 30 000 SEK, and the dispersion was greater. Among the ones who had done internships, there were more respondents who stated that they work as analysts and desk-officers, and have jobs in the public sector.

We decided to take a closer look at whether respondents who had done internships were less inclined to value personal contacts as important for the chances of finding employment, or not. This because we found it surprising that only 22 % of all respondents stated that personal contacts had been important to a great extent for their chances of getting jobs after graduating, and 30 % had stated that it was of no importance at all. But it turned out to be the opposite case: 27 % of the ones who had done internships valued personal contacts as important to a very high extent, and 13 % to a high extent. This while only 16 % of the ones who had *not* done internships valued personal contacts as important to a very high extent (and 15 % to a high extent). The alumni who had not done internships valued other factors, like previous work experience, higher than the ones who had done internships (46 % compared to 29 % stated that it was important to a very high extent). However, in the last question where we asked the respondents to give their best advice to current and future students, many replied that it is important to build up a personal network while you are a student. This indicates that personal contacts actually is considered important for future employment, although perhaps not crucial in many cases.

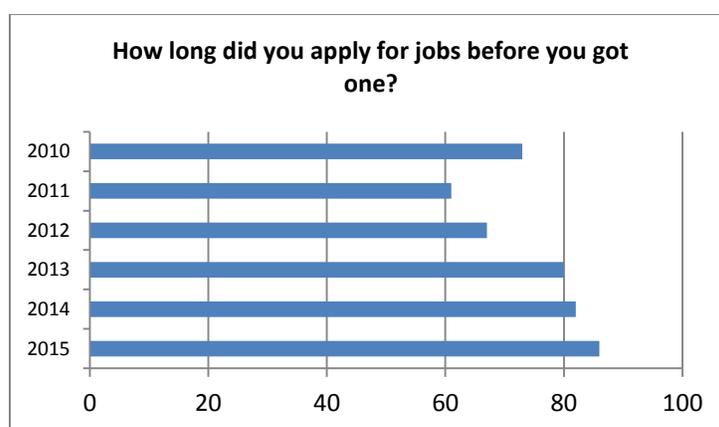
#### 2.4.4 *Studies abroad*

We have not noticed any remarkable differences in how well the students who have studied abroad have done after graduating, compared to the ones who have not. One difference that we do find is that alumni who have studied abroad also have had jobs abroad after finishing their studies to a greater extent. However, we do not know if the ones who have held employments abroad got these

jobs thanks to the merit of having studied abroad, or because they simply had a greater interest in finding employment abroad.

#### 2.4.5 Year for year

The most interesting find when we compared the results for the different graduating years (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015) was that alumni who graduated in the more recent years have gotten jobs faster. The diagram below shows the percentage of respondents, graduating in the different years, who stated that they received a job within 0 – 4 months after earning their degrees.



Another difference is that it was more common for alumni graduating in 2015 to have done internships in connection to studying (56 %) than it was for the alumni graduating in 2010 (42 %). This while fewer of the ones graduating in 2015 had studied abroad (36 %) than the ones who graduated five years earlier (46 %).

#### 2.4.6 Other comparisons

Some of the factors we compared did not show any notable differences. For example, we did not find any differences in how programme students and students taking free-standing courses have performed in the job market. Another question we posed was whether the selection of optional courses and research subjects had any effect on the possibilities of finding employment, or not. Alumni with an orientation towards Political Economy were permanently employed (73 %) to a somewhat greater extent than the other groups (the average was 60 %). The respondents who stated they had an orientation towards Environmental Politics stood for the fewest permanently employed

(33 %). It should be noted, however, that only nine respondents stated that this category corresponded best with their choices of optional courses and research subjects. Overall, we considered the number of respondents in each category to be too small for conclusions to be drawn. Also, 34 % of all respondents did not consider their choices of optional courses and research subjects to have been important at all for their chances of finding employment, and 18 % answered that it had an impact only to a small extent. Potentially it would have been more interesting to ask if the respondents saw any connection between their choices of optional courses and research subjects, and their current jobs. Many respondents did recommend taking the opportunity to specialize in a subject of interest to increase the chances of getting a job within that field later on. Therefore it seems like the choices of optional courses and research subjects have little impact on the chances of getting a job, but it might still matter for the chances of getting a *certain* job.

### 3. Advice from our alumni

The last question we posed was what advice the alumni had for Political Science students who want to better prepare for working life. The most common advice was to do an internship. Here are a few examples:

”I recommend students to do an internship one semester since the education is quite theoretical. For me it worked as a great complement because it provided the opportunity to ‘try an organization out’ during one semester. My best advice to get as much out of the internship as possible is to show willingness to learn, to dare to try more difficult tasks, and most importantly to be open to learning from others in the workplace. I also recommend students to really think about what they want to get out of the internship before applying for placements, and try to devote some time to the application.”

“Intern, intern, intern. Work, work, work.

Numerous of the students with the highest grades in my class are still unemployed, or employed within sectors unrelated to political science, whilst the ones who spent time interning, working and getting contacts outside the academic world are the ones with the highest salaries and most rewarding jobs.

Don't slack. Get your degree – but remember: contacts and experience is far more important than grades! [...]"

"The number one reason why I so quickly got a fun and stimulating job was the internship I did during the last semester of the master programme. Incredibly valuable and educational. Gave a foothold on the labour market and good experience."

Some other good advice was:

- Adapt your thesis to what type of job you wish to have in the future.
- Work extra within a field of interest to you.
- Join an organization or do voluntary work.
- Think about what your goal with studying is, well in advance. What do you want to do when you finish?
- Find your passion and "your field", that you become an expert in.
- Complement studies with practical courses.
- Use the opportunity to learn scientific methods! The method courses are useful in working life.
- Take a statistics course as a complement.
- Network during your studies.
- Develop your language skills.
- Think broad, start low and work your way up.
- Challenge yourself!

## 4. Conclusions

In the spring semester of 2016 the Department of Political Science conducted a survey with the purpose of finding out what the department's most recent alumni were doing after earning their degrees. The survey - a questionnaire - was sent to 1072 former students who had received a Bachelor's or a Master's degree in the main field Political Science from Stockholm University during the period 2010 to 2015. The questions that were asked concerned for example their current work situations as well as how the alumni valued the Political Science education in their working lives.

The results showed that the alumni who earned degrees in Political Science during the time period 2010 – 2015 received jobs quickly after graduating, most of them within 0 – 4 months. The majority also received jobs that they considered relevant for their education in Political Science. The largest employer of our alumni is the state (which had employed 44 % of the respondents), followed by other public authorities (14 %) and the private sector (14 %). Most alumni stated that they work as desk officers or analysts.

The value of doing an *internship* was emphasized as a great opportunity to increase the chances of finding work more easily after graduation. Another factor that stood out for its impact on the job situation is *gender*. *Knowledge of methodology* was highlighted by the respondent as an important skill at their jobs.

In conclusion, we find that a degree in Political Science quickly leads to a job and that having done an internship is of great value for employment. However, conditions for female and male alumni differ on the job market.

## Survey questions

1. *I identify my gender as:*
  - Woman
  - Man
  - I would like to define this myself
  
2. *Age:*
  - 25 or younger
  - 26 - 35
  - 36 - 45
  - 46 or older
  
3. *Which is the highest academic degree you have earned in Political Science at Stockholm University?*
  - Bachelor's degree (Kandidatexamen)
  - Master's degree, 60 credits (Magisterexamen)
  - Master's degree, 120 credits (Masterexamen)
  
4. *Do you have an academic degree in Political Science from another university?*
  - Yes, a Bachelor's degree (Kandidatexamen)
  - Yes, a Master's degree, 60 credits (Magisterexamen)
  - Yes, a Master's degree, 120 credits (Masterexamen)
  - No
  
5. *Do you have an academic degree in another main field of study?*
  - No
  - Yes (please specify)
  
6. *What year did you graduate?*
  - 2010
  - 2011
  - 2012
  - 2013
  - 2014
  - 2015
  
7. *I earned my [highest] degree from Stockholm University by studying:*
  - Politices kandidatprogram i nationalekonomi och statsvetenskap (Pol.kand)
  - Kandidatprogram i statsvetenskap med inriktning offentlig politik och organisation (KOPO)
  - Masterprogrammet i statsvetenskap (SPOSO)
  - Masterprogrammet i statsvetenskap med inriktning mot offentlig politik och organisation (SVOPO)
  - International Master's Programme in Political Science (STVEO)
  - Magisterkurs i statsvetenskap
  - Free-standing courses
  - If other, please specify
  
8. *Which of the following study areas best reflect your choices of optional courses and research subject(s)? (Tick all that apply.)*
  - International politics and governance
  - European politics

- Swedish politics
- Political theory
- Public policy and administration
- Environmental politics
- Development politics
- Gender politics
- Political economy
- Comparative politics
- If other, please specify

9. *Did you do an internship in connection to your studies?*

- Yes
- No

10. *Have you studied abroad?*

- Yes, as an exchange student
- Yes, as a free-mover
- No

11. *What is your [main] current occupation?*

- Permanent employment
- Temporary employment
- Unemployed/looking for a job
- Undergraduate student (grundnivå)
- Graduate student (avancerad nivå)
- PHD student
- If other, please specify

12. *For how long have you been applying for jobs after graduation?<sup>5</sup>*

- 0 – 4 months
- 5 – 8 months
- 9 – 12 months
- More than 12 months

13. *How long did you apply for jobs after graduation before you got one?<sup>6</sup>*

- 0 – 4 months
- 5 – 8 months
- 9 – 12 months
- More than 12 months

14. *How long did it take for you to get a job related to your studies?*

- 0 – 4 months
- 5-8 months
- 9 – 12 months
- 1 – 2 years
- 2 or more years
- I do not have a job related to my studies

15. *Where do you work?*

- Government agency (statlig myndighet)
- Other public authority (kommun/landsting)

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<sup>5</sup> The question was asked to unemployed respondents.

<sup>6</sup> Question 13 – 21 and question 23 were asked to permanently and temporarily employed respondents.

- Academia
- International organization (EU, UN, etc.)
- Private sector
- NGO
- Media
- Political party/organization
- Consult agency/think tank
- Self-employed
- If other, please specify

16. *What is the name of your current workplace?*

17. *What is your position/title at your workplace?*

18. *How much do you work?*

- Full time
- 75 %
- 50 %
- 25 %
- If other, please specify

19. *What is your current income per month (before taxes)?*

- [up to] 15 000 SEK
- 15 001 – 20 000 SEK
- 20 001 – 25 000 SEK
- 25 001 – 30 000 SEK
- 30 001 – 35 000 SEK
- 35 001 – 40 000 SEK
- 40 001 – 45 000 SEK
- 45 001 – 50 000 SEK
- 50 001 – SEK

20. *Which of the following categories best correspond with your main work assignments? (Tick all that apply.)*

- Administration
- Desk officer (handläggare)
- Analysis (utredning/analys)
- Advising (rådgivning)
- Research (forskning)
- Teaching (undervisning)
- Advocacy work (påverkansarbete)
- Economics (ekonomi)
- Communication (kommunikation)
- If other, please specify

21. *To what extent have the following factors affected your chances of employment? (1 = not at all, 5 = to a great extent)*

- Academic degree
- Academic degree in Political Science
- Academic grades
- Choices of optional courses and research subject(s)
- Internship
- Studies abroad
- Personal contacts

- Previous job experience
- Personal engagements/interests

22. *To what extent do you think the following factors will affect your chances of employment? (1 = not at all, 5 = to a great extent)*<sup>7</sup>

- Academic degree
- Academic degree in Political Science
- Academic grades
- Choices of optional courses and research subject(s)
- Internship
- Studies abroad
- Personal contacts
- Previous job experience
- Personal engagements/interests

23. *To what extent have the following knowledges/experiences from your university studies been important in your working life? (1 = not at all, 5 = to a great extent)*

- Knowledge in the field of Political Science
- Doing research projects
- Analyzing and assessing information
- Assessing information from different theoretical perspectives
- Knowledge of methodology
- Academic writing
- Argumentation
- Oral presentations
- Working in groups
- To read, write and speak English

24. *To what extent do you think the following knowledges/experiences from your university studies will be important in your working life? (1 = not at all, 5 = to a great extent)*

- Knowledge in the field of Political Science
- Doing research projects
- Analyzing and assessing information
- Assessing information from different theoretical perspectives
- Knowledge of methodology
- Academic writing
- Argumentation
- Oral presentations
- Working in groups
- To read, write and speak English

25. *How well have your studies prepared you for your working life? (1 = not at all, 5 = to a great extent)*

26. *How well do you think your studies have prepared you for your working life? (1 = not at all, 5 = to a great extent)*

27. *Where is your job located (name the city)?*

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<sup>7</sup> Question 22 and 24 were asked to unemployed respondents, as well as respondents who had continued studying.

28. *Have you been employed abroad since you graduated?*

- *Yes*

- *No*

29. *Do you have any advice for how Political Science students can prepare for working life?*