

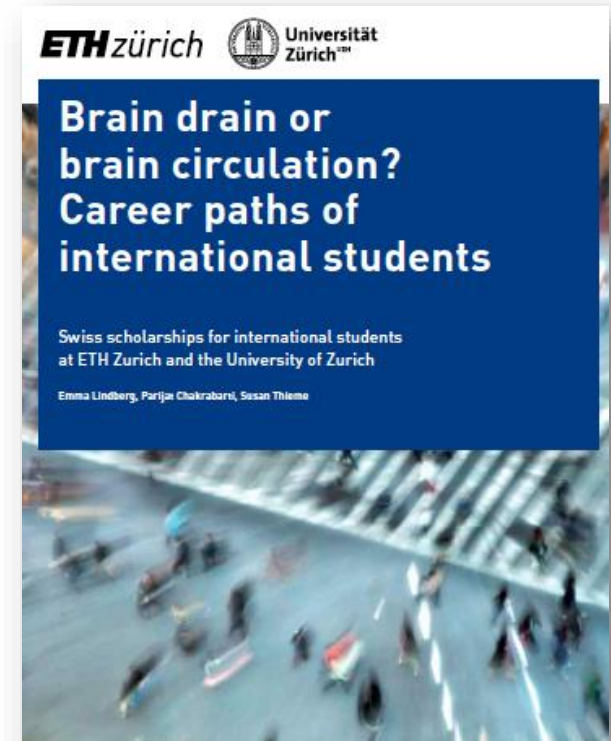
Life-changing scholarships

Online survey for FCS scholarship holders
1996-2015



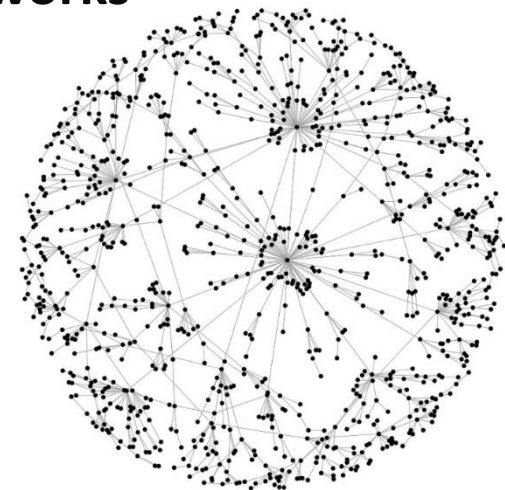
Report by Lindberg et al. 2014

- The University of Zurich and ETH Zurich studied the career path of foreign scholarship holders, including 209 former FCS holders.
- This project is based on the study by Lindberg et al., from which some questions or series of questions were borrowed or adapted.
- The authors were contacted before this questionnaire was launched. The questionnaire was discussed with Emma Lindberg.



Aim of the survey

- The subjects of this study are former FCS scholarship holders between 1996 and 2015.
- The survey looked in particular at
 - (1) professional career (**occupation**),
 - (2) geographical **mobility** and reasons for an FCS scholarship application,
 - (3) the relationship with Switzerland and the **networks** developed during the scholarship year and
 - (4) overall **FCS experience** (benefits and difficulties).



Procedure

Concept

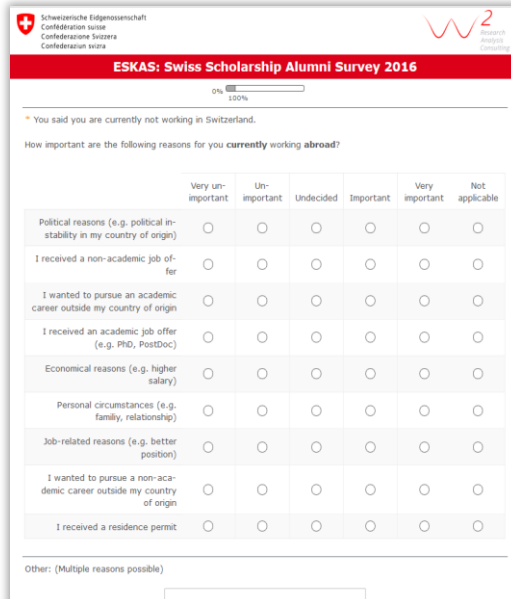
Field phase

Analysis and reporting

- Design questionnaire and online tool
- Pretest (n = 5)

- Duration: 11 November to 20 December 2016

- Descriptive analyses
- Explorative comparison before and after policy change



ESKAS: Swiss Scholarship Alumni Survey 2016

0% 100%

* You said you are currently not working in Switzerland.

How important are the following reasons for you **currently** working abroad?

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Undecided	Important	Very important	Not applicable
Political reasons (e.g. political instability in my country of origin)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I received a non-academic job offer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wanted to pursue an academic career outside my country of origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I received an academic job offer (e.g. PhD, PostDoc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Economical reasons (e.g. higher salary)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal circumstances (e.g. family, relationship)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job-related reasons (e.g. better position)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wanted to pursue a non-academic career outside my country of origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I received a residence permit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other: (Multiple reasons possible)

Description of participants

Who took part?

- Total of **1,194 subjects** (response rate: 60.2%)
- No non-respondent bias
- Sex: 49.7% female, 50.3% male
- Age: M = 34 years (SD = 4.94); Range: 21 to 54 years
- Participants from 105 countries (see map below)
 - Very high *Human Development Index* (HDI) 34.7%; high HDI 39.8%; medium HDI 13.4%; low HDI 12%
 - Primarily people from middle-class background
- Scholarships between 1996 and 2015
 - 68% before policy change
 - 32% after policy change

Participants' countries of origin



General feedback

What scholarship-holders said ...

- The scholarship is seen as a very positive and important part of their career; many alumni are very appreciative.

"Perfection cannot be improved. Everything was perfect from start to finish and you really did a great job. Thank you!"

"I would like to use this opportunity to stress how life-changing the experiences made possible by the ESKAS scholarship are."

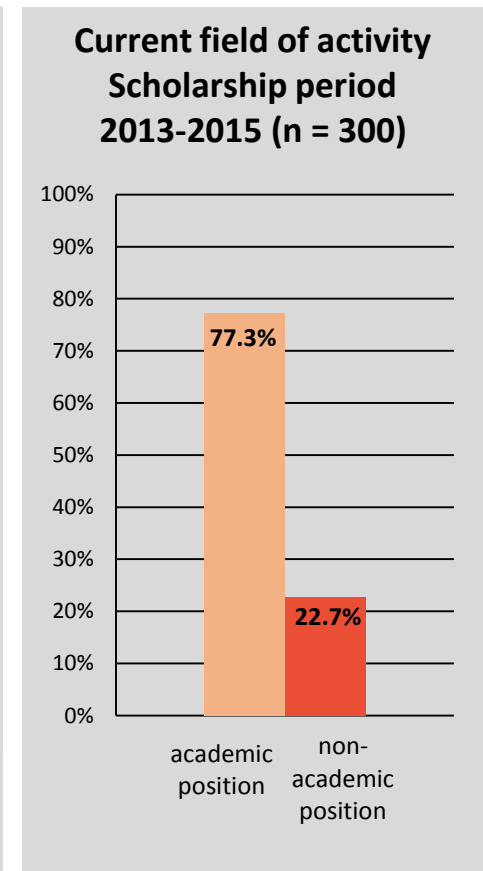
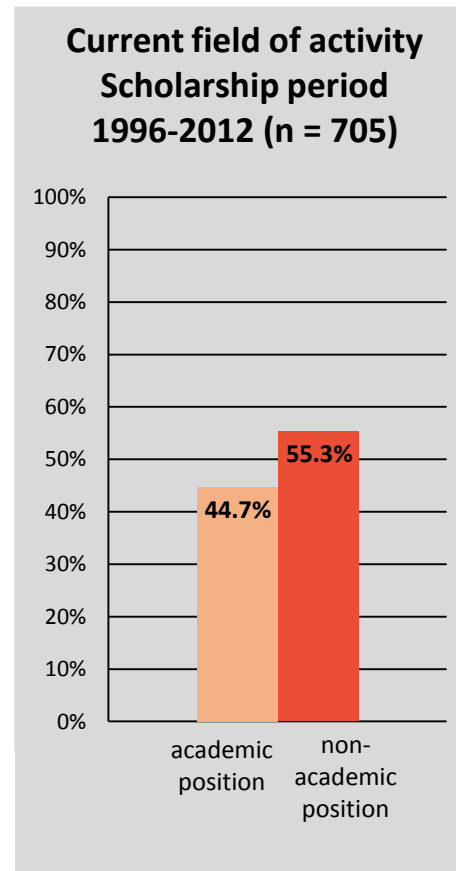
"Thank you so much for giving me this unique opportunity to study in one of the most beautiful countries. The scholarship and my 3 years in Switzerland changed my personal life and helped me grow professionally."

"ESKAS is one of the best institutions regarding communication, organisation and administration that I have ever had the pleasure of working with."

Occupation

What are FCS alumni doing today?

- 80% of subjects taking up a scholarship from 2013 onwards said that academia was their primary career objective (subjects with scholarship before 2013: 51%).
- At the time of the survey, subjects who received a scholarship from 2013 onwards were more frequently employed in academia (77%) than those with a scholarship before 2013 (45%).

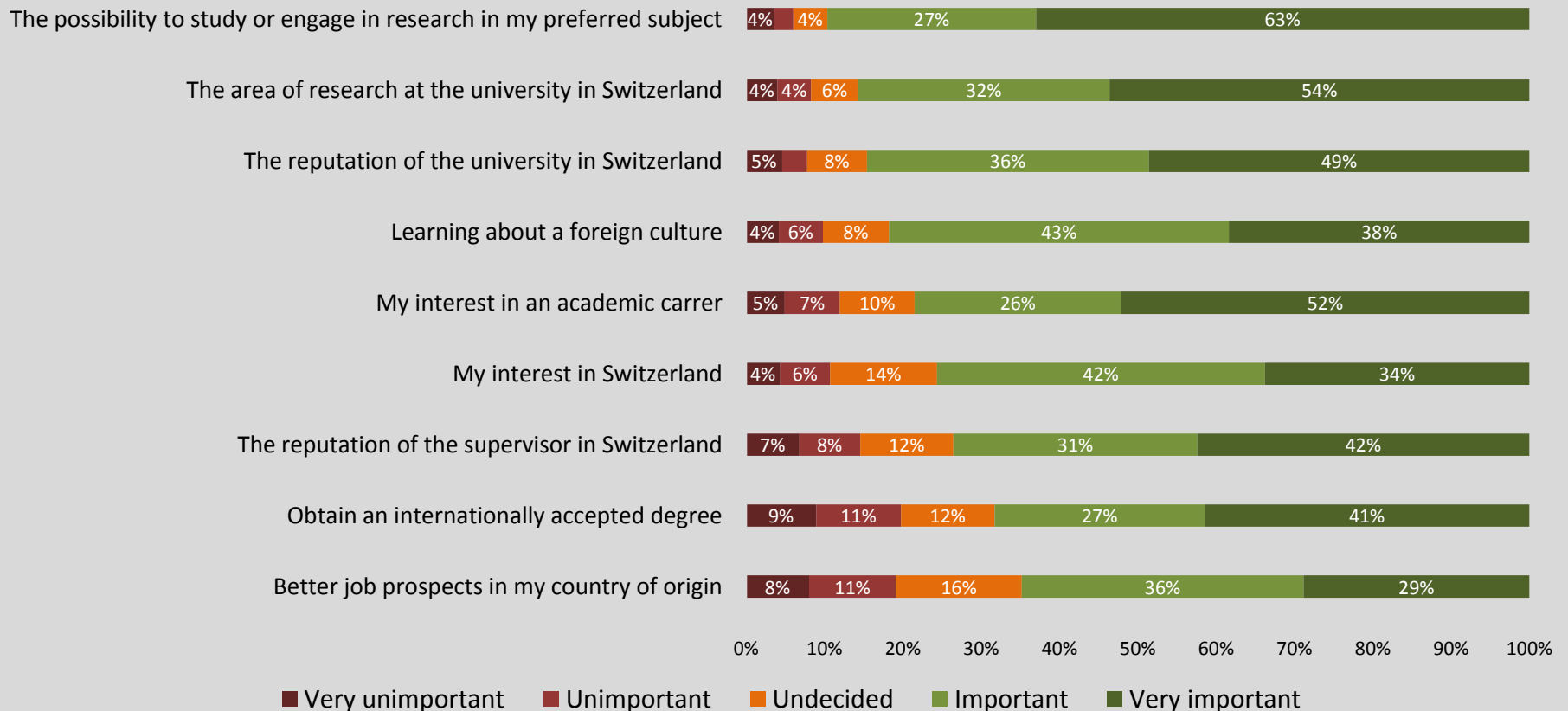


Mobility (1)

Why apply for an FCS scholarship?

(I/II) Importance of reasons for applying for a scholarship (n=1194)

(percentages lower than 4% are not labelled)

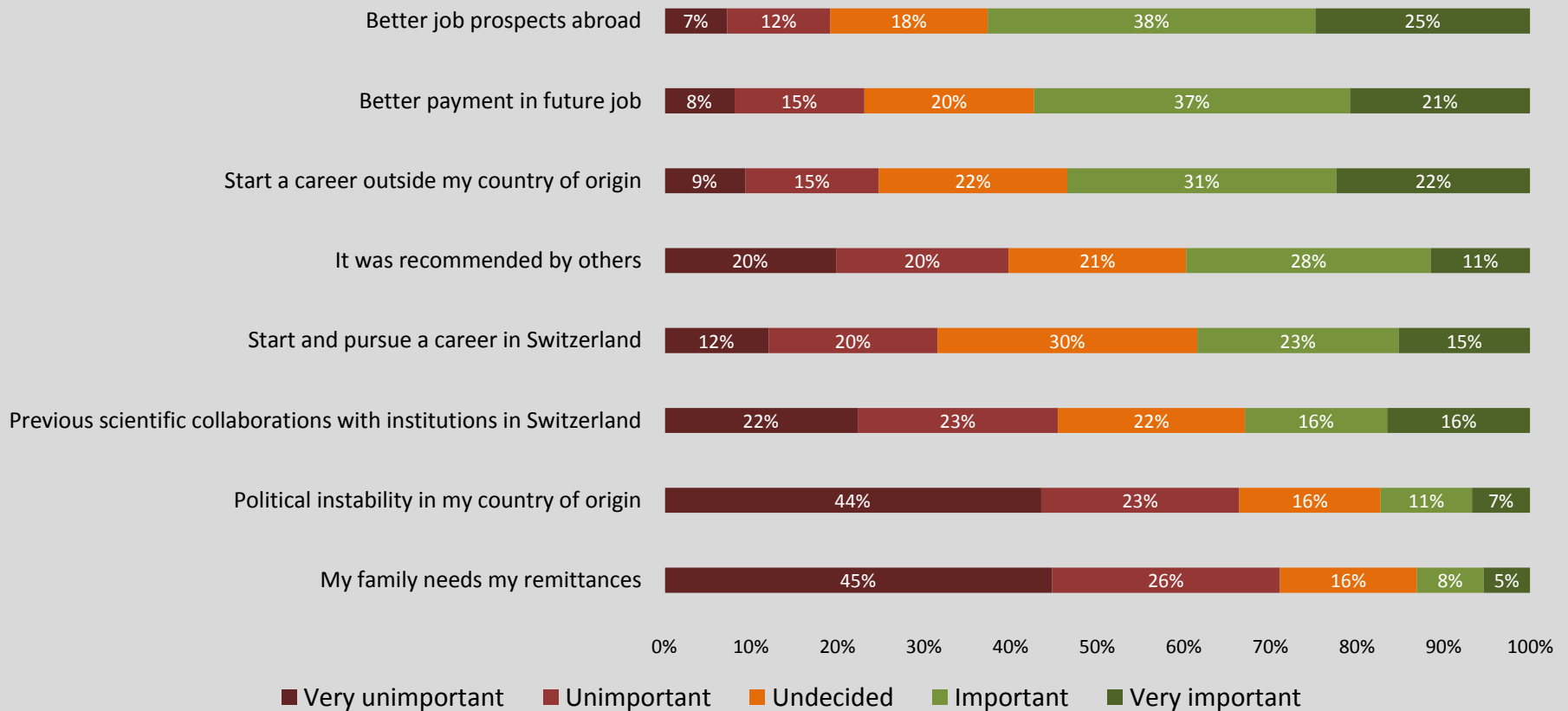


Mobility (1)

Why apply for an FCS scholarship?

(II/II) Importance of reasons for applying for a scholarship (n=1194)

(percentages lower than 4% are not labelled)

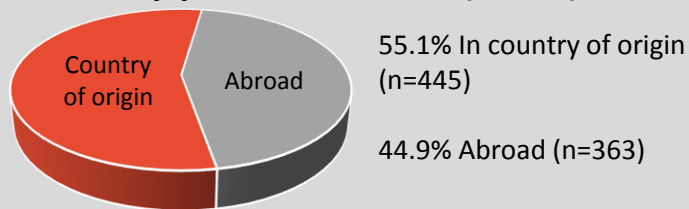


Mobility (2)

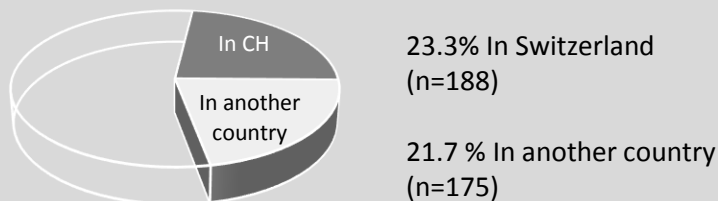
Where are FCS alumni today?

- The share of those returning to their country of origin is slightly higher among scholarship holders after 2013 compared to scholarship holders prior to 2013 (65% vs. 55%).

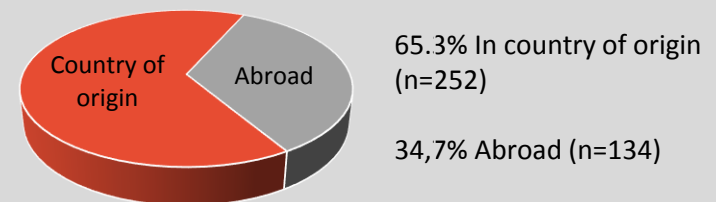
Current location
Country of origin vs abroad
Scholarship period 1996-2012 (n=808)



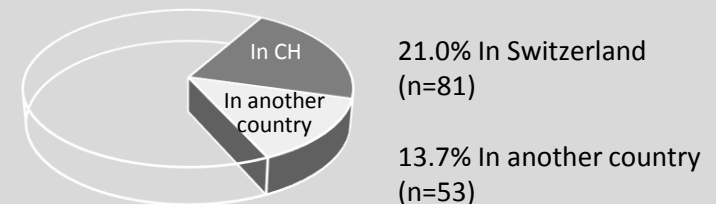
Current location of scholarship holders working abroad



Current location
Country of origin vs abroad
Scholarship period 2013-2015 (n=386)



Current location of scholarship holders working abroad



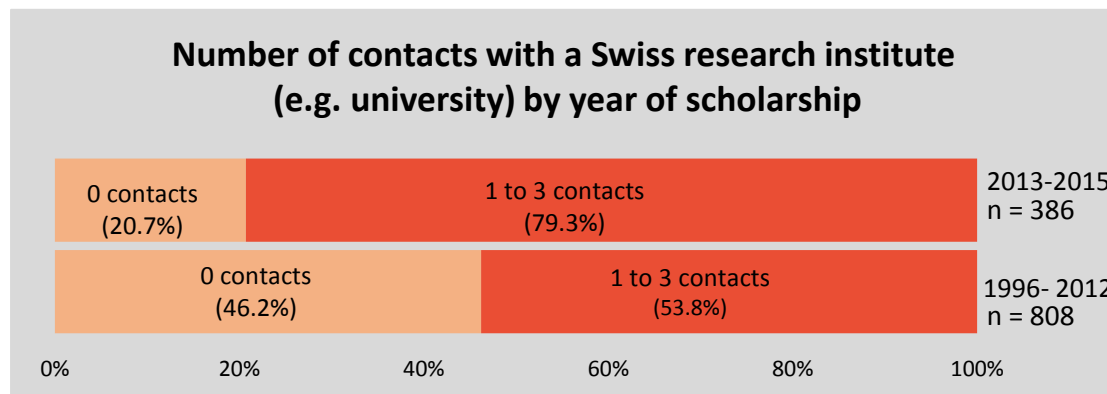
Mobility (3)

Different trends in different countries?

- Almost all geographically mobile people from low HDI countries migrate to countries with a high HDI.
- Being awarded an internationally recognised qualification is of particular significance for scholarship-holders from countries with a low or middle HDI.
- Countries with a very high HDI are the most popular destinations. Most former scholarship-holders living and working abroad are in countries with a very high HDI.
- People tend to choose to work abroad for professional reasons.
- People tend to choose to work in their country of origin for personal reasons.

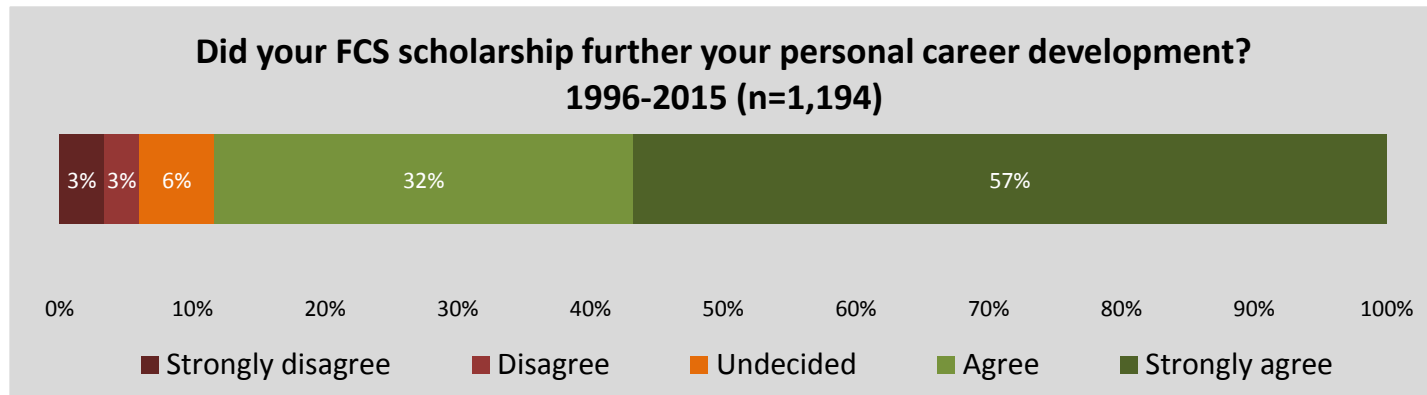
Do FCS alumni maintain their contacts?

- Former FCS scholarship-holders have on average about 15 professional or private contacts resulting from their FCS scholarship (median: 10).
- The number of private and professional contacts is about the same.
- Alumni are very interested in remaining in contact with Switzerland and their host universities via alumni networks (about 90%).
- 62% of scholarship-holders stated that they were in contact with between one and three Swiss research institutions (e.g. a university) at the time of the survey.



Experiences with FCS

What benefits does an FCS scholarship bring?



In which areas does the university provide support?

- Students receive both academic and social/administrative mentoring.

Conclusions

- The FCS alumni questioned have a **strong subjective perception of the benefits** of the FCS scholarship - both personal benefits (network) and professional benefits (research skills).
- At the time of the questionnaire, a **majority (58%) of respondents are in their country of origin**, 23% in Switzerland.
- Since the **policy change**, the key interest of the scholarship-holders seems to be to **further their academic career**.
- **Mentoring at and by the higher education institution** is the FCS scholarship USP and key factor in its success.
- The FCS alumni network, built up over several decades, and the **considerable goodwill** generated towards Switzerland should be exploited to a greater extent and more effectively.

Conclusions

The FCS awards scholarships to the ambitious and talented from around the world.

This benefits the young academic community in the countries of origin and the scientific community in general.

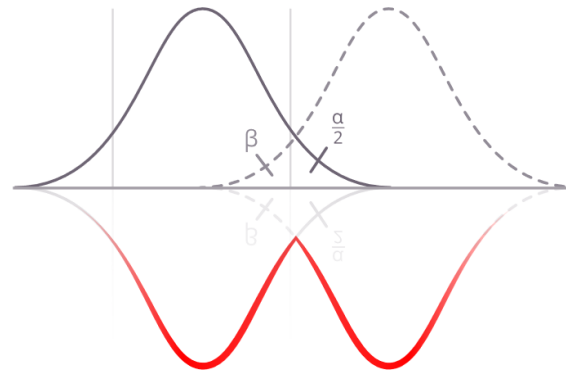
Contact

w hoch 2 GmbH

📍 Münstergasse 72
3011 Bern

☎ +41 31 558 58 63

✉ info@w-hoch2.ch
www.w-hoch2.ch



Secretariat of the Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students

📍 State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI
Einsteinstrasse 2
3003 Bern

✉ sgs@sbfi.admin.ch
www.sbfi.admin.ch/scholarships_eng
Twitter: @Swiss_FCS