

TABLE S3-11

Postgraduation plans of doctorate recipients with definite commitments, by broad field of study: Selected years, 1977–2017

(Number and percent)

| Definite commitment and plan | All fields | Life sciences ^a | Physical sciences and earth sciences | Mathematics and computer sciences | Psychology and social sciences | Engineering | Education | Humanities | Other ^b |
|--|------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------------|--------------------|
| All definite commitments (number) | | | | | | | | | |
| 1977 | 21,345 | 3,513 | 2,333 | 616 | 4,247 | 1,828 | 5,146 | 2,461 | 1,201 |
| 1987 | 21,360 | 4,042 | 2,703 | 766 | 3,760 | 2,216 | 4,421 | 2,103 | 1,349 |
| 1997 | 25,541 | 5,424 | 2,867 | 1,251 | 4,119 | 3,643 | 4,156 | 2,668 | 1,413 |
| 2002 | 26,144 | 5,704 | 2,716 | 1,217 | 4,495 | 3,222 | 4,167 | 3,156 | 1,467 |
| 2007 | 29,812 | 6,524 | 3,253 | 2,018 | 4,713 | 4,505 | 4,147 | 2,854 | 1,798 |
| 2012 | 30,656 | 7,011 | 3,357 | 2,212 | 5,333 | 4,945 | 3,058 | 2,968 | 1,772 |
| 2017 | 33,023 | 7,541 | 3,707 | 2,536 | 5,804 | 5,729 | 3,005 | 2,719 | 1,982 |
| Reported type of plan (number) | | | | | | | | | |
| 1977 | 21,154 | 3,487 | 2,320 | 612 | 4,209 | 1,815 | 5,095 | 2,426 | 1,190 |
| 1987 | 21,196 | 4,028 | 2,699 | 760 | 3,734 | 2,201 | 4,355 | 2,077 | 1,342 |
| 1997 | 24,987 | 5,329 | 2,843 | 1,229 | 4,033 | 3,596 | 4,001 | 2,583 | 1,373 |
| 2002 | 26,037 | 5,691 | 2,709 | 1,212 | 4,478 | 3,213 | 4,144 | 3,140 | 1,450 |
| 2007 | 29,399 | 6,456 | 3,224 | 2,001 | 4,629 | 4,443 | 4,068 | 2,811 | 1,767 |
| 2012 | 28,749 | 6,638 | 3,249 | 2,101 | 4,978 | 4,667 | 2,800 | 2,734 | 1,582 |
| 2017 | 32,239 | 7,401 | 3,672 | 2,488 | 5,670 | 5,603 | 2,863 | 2,624 | 1,918 |
| Employment (percent ^c) | | | | | | | | | |
| 1977 | 81.4 | 48.4 | 53.0 | 89.1 | 89.0 | 86.5 | 97.5 | 95.5 | 97.7 |
| 1987 | 74.2 | 40.6 | 43.3 | 79.9 | 83.8 | 80.2 | 96.1 | 93.8 | 96.5 |
| 1997 | 71.6 | 39.0 | 43.0 | 76.9 | 79.0 | 79.4 | 96.3 | 93.5 | 97.0 |
| 2002 | 69.5 | 40.5 | 42.6 | 67.6 | 74.0 | 75.2 | 94.4 | 90.0 | 93.8 |
| 2007 | 63.8 | 34.5 | 33.3 | 68.4 | 67.4 | 68.3 | 94.1 | 88.0 | 92.5 |
| 2012 | 59.8 | 34.0 | 31.8 | 64.3 | 63.1 | 65.2 | 92.6 | 84.4 | 93.1 |
| 2017 | 60.9 | 40.5 | 40.8 | 68.9 | 61.3 | 62.6 | 91.5 | 79.0 | 91.2 |
| Postdoctoral study (percent ^c) | | | | | | | | | |
| 1977 | 18.6 | 51.6 | 47.0 | 10.9 | 11.0 | 13.5 | 2.5 | 4.5 | 2.3 |
| 1987 | 25.8 | 59.4 | 56.7 | 20.1 | 16.2 | 19.8 | 3.9 | 6.2 | 3.5 |
| 1997 | 28.4 | 61.0 | 57.0 | 23.1 | 21.0 | 20.6 | 3.7 | 6.5 | 3.0 |
| 2002 | 30.5 | 59.5 | 57.4 | 32.4 | 26.0 | 24.8 | 5.6 | 10.0 | 6.2 |
| 2007 | 36.2 | 65.5 | 66.7 | 31.6 | 32.6 | 31.7 | 5.9 | 12.0 | 7.5 |
| 2012 | 40.2 | 66.0 | 68.2 | 35.7 | 36.9 | 34.8 | 7.4 | 15.6 | 6.9 |
| 2017 | 39.1 | 59.5 | 59.2 | 31.1 | 38.7 | 37.4 | 8.5 | 21.0 | 8.8 |

^a Life sciences includes agricultural sciences and natural resources, biological and biomedical sciences, and health sciences.

^b Non-S&E fields not shown separately.

^c Percentages are based on the number of doctorate recipients reporting definite postgraduation commitments with response to type of plan (employment or postdoctoral study).

Source(s)

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, National Science Foundation, Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED).