

Table 2-3

Postgraduation plans of research doctorate recipients with definite commitments, by historical broad field of doctorate: Selected years, 1992–2022

(Number and percent)

Definite commitment, plan, and year	All fields	Science and engineering						Non-science and engineering			
		Total	Life sciences ^a	Physical sciences and earth sciences	Mathematics and computer sciences	Psychology and social sciences	Engineering	Total	Education	Humanities and arts	Other ^b
All definite commitments (number)											
1992	24,795	16,031	5,008	2,906	1,147	4,017	2,953	8,764	4,652	2,568	1,544
1997	25,541	17,304	5,424	2,867	1,251	4,119	3,643	8,237	4,156	2,668	1,413
2002	26,144	17,354	5,704	2,716	1,217	4,495	3,222	8,790	4,167	3,156	1,467
2007	29,812	21,013	6,524	3,253	2,018	4,713	4,505	8,799	4,147	2,854	1,798
2012	30,656	22,858	7,011	3,357	2,212	5,333	4,945	7,798	3,058	2,968	1,772
2017	33,008	25,263	7,540	3,704	2,538	5,784	5,697	7,745	3,014	2,725	2,006
2022	38,219	30,657	8,766	4,537	3,444	6,317	7,593	7,562	2,982	2,489	2,091
Reported type of plan											
1992	24,635	15,982	4,998	2,904	1,142	3,994	2,944	8,653	4,565	2,549	1,539
1997	24,987	17,030	5,329	2,843	1,229	4,033	3,596	7,957	4,001	2,583	1,373
2002	26,037	17,303	5,691	2,709	1,212	4,478	3,213	8,734	4,144	3,140	1,450
2007	29,399	20,753	6,456	3,224	2,001	4,629	4,443	8,646	4,068	2,811	1,767
2012	28,749	21,633	6,638	3,249	2,101	4,978	4,667	7,116	2,800	2,734	1,582
2017	32,227	24,785	7,402	3,671	2,490	5,650	5,572	7,442	2,875	2,629	1,938
2022	38,147	30,597	8,735	4,534	3,440	6,307	7,581	7,550	2,981	2,482	2,087
Employment plans (%)											
1992	72.0	59.0	37.3	37.9	76.4	82.5	77.9	96.2	96.8	94.7	96.8
1997	71.6	60.4	39.0	43.0	76.9	79.0	79.4	95.5	96.3	93.5	97.0
2002	69.5	57.8	40.5	42.6	67.6	74.0	75.2	92.7	94.4	90.0	93.8
2007	63.8	52.2	34.5	33.3	68.4	67.4	68.3	91.8	94.1	88.0	92.5
2012	59.8	50.0	34.0	31.8	64.3	63.1	65.2	89.5	92.6	84.4	93.1
2017	60.9	53.1	40.3	40.7	68.8	61.6	62.8	87.0	91.3	79.0	91.3
2022	61.5	56.0	46.9	45.9	67.0	56.7	67.1	83.9	89.1	75.2	86.8
Postdoctoral training plans (%)											
1992	28.0	41.0	62.7	62.1	23.6	17.5	22.1	3.8	3.2	5.3	3.2
1997	28.4	39.6	61.0	57.0	23.1	21.0	20.6	4.5	3.7	6.5	3.0
2002	30.5	42.2	59.5	57.4	32.4	26.0	24.8	7.3	5.6	10.0	6.2
2007	36.2	47.8	65.5	66.7	31.6	32.6	31.7	8.2	5.9	12.0	7.5
2012	40.2	50.0	66.0	68.2	35.7	36.9	34.8	10.5	7.4	15.6	6.9
2017	39.1	46.9	59.7	59.3	31.2	38.4	37.2	13.0	8.7	21.0	8.7
2022	38.5	44.0	53.1	54.1	33.0	43.3	32.9	16.1	10.9	24.8	13.2

^a Includes agricultural sciences and natural resources, biological and biomedical sciences, and health sciences.^b Includes other non-science and engineering fields not shown separately.

Note(s):

Percentages based on number of doctorate recipients reporting definite postgraduation commitments and the type of plan (employment or postdoctoral study). A definite postgraduation commitment includes accepting new employment or a postdoctoral study (postdoc) position or returning to predoctoral employment. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100. Beginning in 2021, a modified version of the 2020 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes was used in the survey data collection; the historical fields were constructed using the SED-CIP code crosswalk in table A-6. Therefore, the field of doctorate data prior to 2021 may not be comparable to subsequent years. For more information, see the "Technical Notes" and the SED 2021 Taxonomy Changes Working Paper (available at <https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nces23200>).

Source(s):

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Earned Doctorates.