

# 2008– 2018



03

Work and income

Neuchâtel 2020

## Quality of employment in Switzerland 2008–2018



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Federal Statistical Office, CH-2010 Neuchâtel,  
[order@bfs.admin.ch](mailto:order@bfs.admin.ch), tel. +41 58 463 60 60  
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# 1 Introduction

For the majority of us, working life constitutes an essential part of our lives. Work has a considerable influence on the quality of life through the income it generates, the social contacts it allows us to make, the tensions and satisfaction we derive from it or indeed the dangers to which it may expose us.

By using a selection of indicators, this publication enables an assessment of the quality of employment in Switzerland and the way it has evolved over the past ten years. Here, the Federal Statistical Office has based itself on the manual developed by the group of experts on measuring quality of employment and which was published in 2015 by the UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe)<sup>1</sup>. This topic, which is also of international importance, is covered by numerous existing official statistics sources.

On the basis of the indicators chosen, the development of the quality of employment in Switzerland has been marked by contrasting trends over the past ten years. A fall in the number of accidents at work can be observed as well as a trend towards more highly-qualified and better paid jobs. The increase in flexible working hours and the decline in atypical working hours (in the evening, at night or at the weekend) is also noticeable. As far as social security is concerned, the share of persons in employment who contribute to the 3a pillar is growing. Fixed-term employment contracts and underemployment, however, have tended to increase over the past ten years.

The indicators in this publication may be seen as an advantage by some and as a disadvantage by others. Ultimately, readers can decide for themselves on the evolution in the quality of employment based on the selected indicators.

We hope you enjoy reading this publication.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unece.org/stats/publications/stat\\_qua\\_emp.html](https://www.unece.org/stats/publications/stat_qua_emp.html)

## 2 Safety at work

### Accidents at work and occupational illness

Source: Central Office for Statistics in Accident Insurance (SSUV)

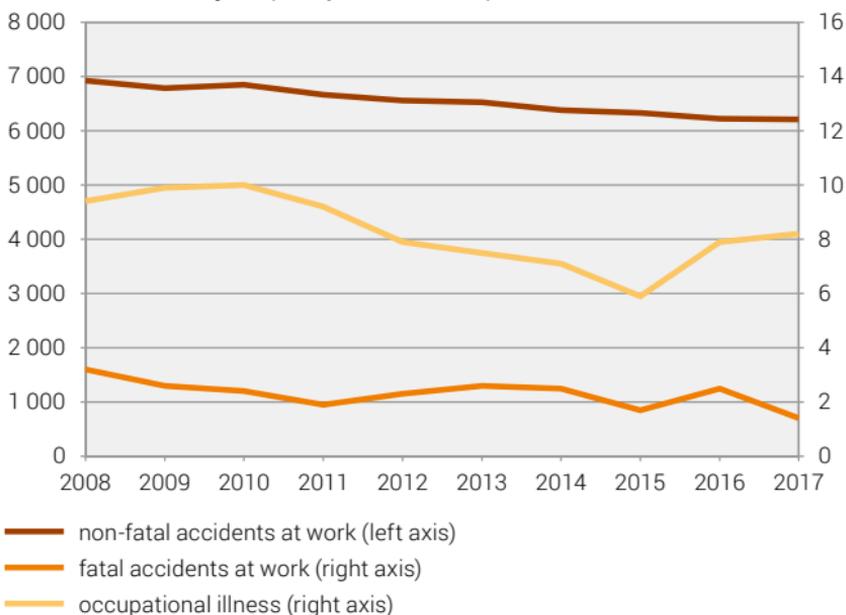
Between 2008 and 2017, workplaces in Switzerland became safer. The frequency of non-fatal accidents at work declined by 10.3% to 6211 cases per 100 000 full-time jobs. The number of fatal accidents at work also declined somewhat but is prone to slight variations (2008: 3.2 per 100 000 full-time jobs; 2017: 1.4 per 100 000 full-time jobs).

Between 2008 and 2015 a downward trend could also be observed regarding occupational illness (from 9.4 per 10 000 full-time jobs to 5.9). Subsequently, however, this trend rose again reaching 8.2 per 10 000 full-time jobs in 2017.

### Number of accidents at work and occupational illness G1

Per 100 000 full-time jobs (accidents at work)

Per 10 000 full-time jobs (occupational illness)



Source: Central Office for Statistics in Accident Insurance (SSUV)

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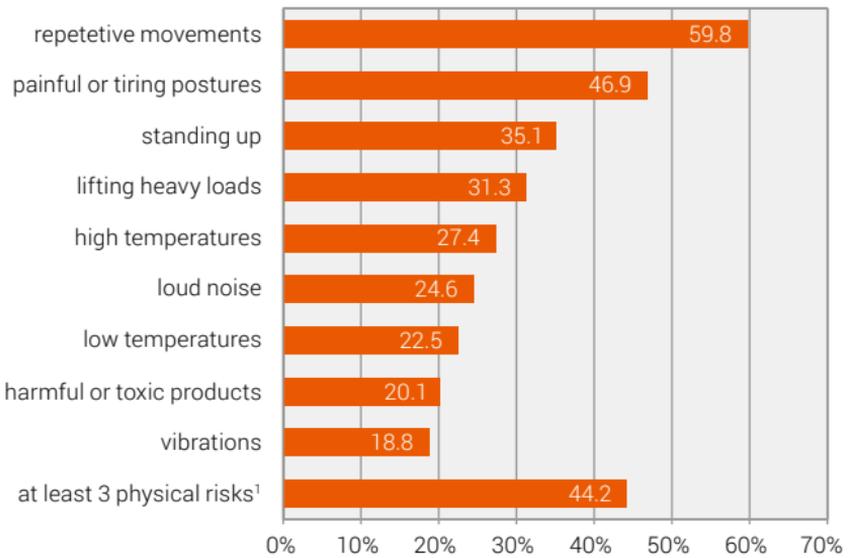
## Physical risks at work

Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

In 2017, 81.6% of employed persons said they were exposed to at least one physical risk factor at work<sup>1</sup>. The risks most frequently mentioned were “repetitive movements” (59.8%), “painful body postures” (46.9%), “standing” (35.1%) and “carrying heavy loads” (31.3%). 44.2% of employed persons are exposed to three or more risks at their place of work.

### Physical risks<sup>1</sup> at work, 2017, as % of employed persons

G2



<sup>1</sup> for at least ¼ of the time (exception: risk factor “standing up” at least ¾ of the time)

Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

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<sup>1</sup> For at least a quarter of working time (exception: risk factor “standing” for at least three-quarters of working time).

### 3 Income and benefits from employment

#### Wages

Sources: FSO – Swiss Earnings Structure Survey (SESS), Swiss Consumer Price Index (CPI)

In 2016 the standardised gross monthly median wage was CHF 6502<sup>1</sup>. This corresponds to an increase of +7.5% compared with 2008. Over the same time period the Swiss Consumer Price Index fell by 2.0%. The lower income brackets in particular benefited from the increase in wages: in the first decile<sup>2</sup> the standardised gross monthly wage rose by 9.9% to CHF 4313 and in the second decile by 8.8% to CHF 4881. In comparison, wages in the ninth decile rose by 6.3% to CHF 11 406. In 2016, the standardised gross monthly wage of the ninth decile was 2.6 times higher than that of the first decile. Eight years previously, this factor was 2.7.

Low wages are described as those that are less than two-thirds of the Swiss median wage. In 2016, 12.0% of employees were paid low wages. This share fell slightly by –0.8 percentage points compared with 2008.

#### Standardised gross monthly wage, divided into deciles, in CHF

G3



Source: FSO – Swiss Earnings Structure Survey (SESS)

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<sup>1</sup> Full-time equivalents based on  $4\frac{1}{3}$  weeks of 40 hours work.

<sup>2</sup> The deciles correspond to the 9 values that divide a population in ascending order into ten equal parts. The fifth decile corresponds to the central value (median).

## Holidays

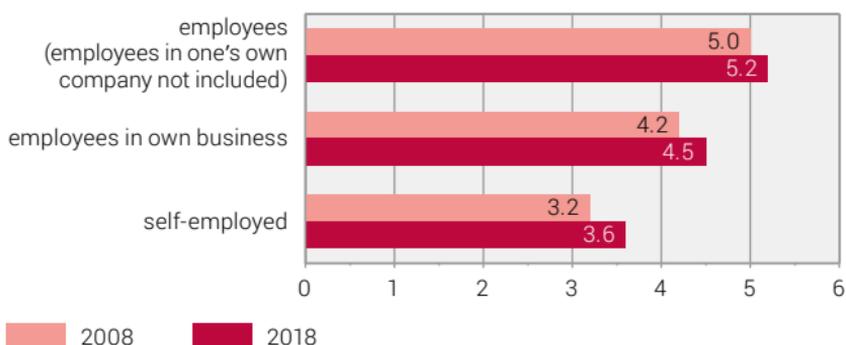
Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

In accordance with the Swiss Code of Obligations<sup>3</sup>, employees are entitled to at least 4 weeks' holiday per year and 5 weeks until the age of 21. Furthermore, many collective employment agreements stipulate 5 or more weeks' holiday from age 50.

The number of weeks' holiday per year for persons in full-time employment<sup>4</sup> rose between 2008 and 2018. Self-employed persons and employees in their own business enjoyed a greater increase (2.0 and 1.8 additional days' holiday per year respectively) than other employees (0.9 additional days' holiday). Employees, however, were entitled to one and a half weeks' more holiday than that taken by self-employed persons (2008: 5.0 weeks compared with 3.2; 2018: 5.2 compared with 3.6).

### Number of weeks' holiday per year (full-time employees)

G4



Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

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<sup>3</sup> Art. 329a, Para. i

<sup>4</sup> 15 to 64 year-olds

*Employees:* Number of weeks' holiday stipulated in contract. Full-time employees working on open contracts or with a contract lasting longer than one year. Only full-time (90–100%) employees who have been working for the same company for at least one year.

*Employees in own business:* Average number of weeks' holiday taken per year. Full-time (90–100%) employees in their own business who have been carrying out their activity for longer than one year.

*Self-employed persons:* Average number of weeks' holiday taken per year. Full-time self-employed persons who have been carrying out their activity for longer than one year.

## 4 Working time and work-life balance

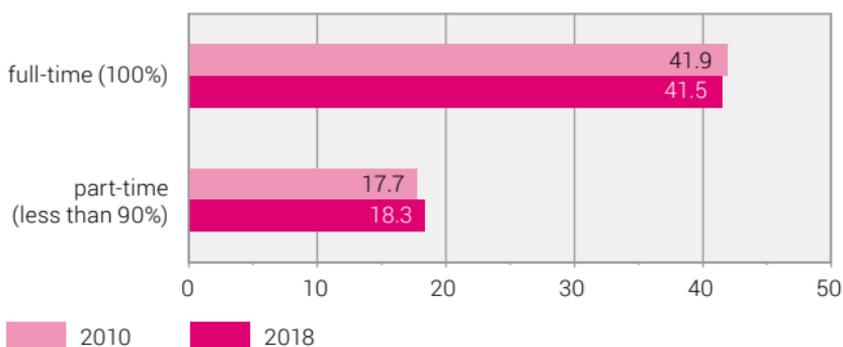
### Hours worked

Source: FSO – Work volume statistics (WV)

Between 2010 and 2018 the actual hours worked per week by full-time employed persons working 100% fell by 28 minutes to 41.5 hours. Part-time employed persons worked considerably less with 18.3 hours per week; their weekly working hours rose however between 2010 and 2018 (plus 35 minutes).

### Actual weekly hours worked by work-time percentage, in hours

G5



Source: FSO – Work volume statistics (WV)

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## Part-time work and underemployment

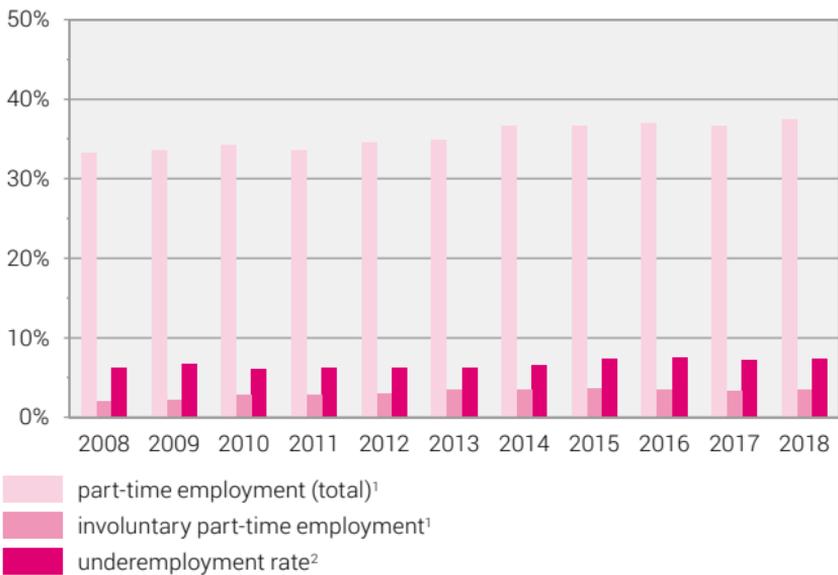
Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

In the 2nd quarter 2018, 37.4% of employed persons were working part time<sup>1</sup>. In comparison with the 2nd quarter 2008, part-time employment increased by 4.2 percentage points. However, people do not always work part-time by choice. In 2018, for various reasons, 9.0% of part-time employed persons and 3.4% of employed persons were working part-time not by choice.

Underemployment is a complementary indicator to measure shortage of work. The underemployment rate expresses the share of economically active persons working part time who wish to work more hours and are available within three months for work with a higher work-time percentage. The underemployment rate rose by +0.9 percentage points to 7.3% over the ten year period under observation. This increase, however, was not continual and fluctuated over the period. The lowest value was seen in the 2nd quarter 2010 (6.0%) and the highest in the 2 quarter 2016 (7.5%). Among the underemployed, 53.4% would like to increase their work-time percentage while continuing to work part time, whereas the remaining 46.6% would prefer to work full time.

### Percentage of part-time employed (total and involuntary) and underemployment rate, in 2nd quarter, in %

G6



<sup>1</sup> 100% = employed persons

<sup>2</sup> 100% = active persons

<sup>1</sup> Work-time percentage less than 90%

## Multiple employment

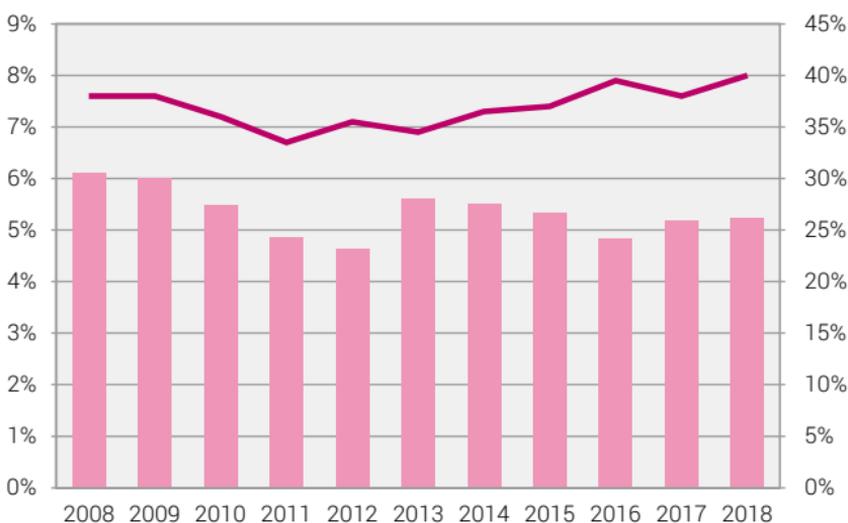
Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

Various reasons lead people to hold more than one job: perhaps because they cannot find a job offering the desired work-time percentage, out of financial necessity or due to personal interests. In the 2nd quarter 2018, 8.0% of employed persons had more than one job (358 000 persons). Ten years earlier this figure was 7.6%. In the period under observation, the lowest value was 6.7% in the 2nd quarter 2011, after which an upward trend was seen.

26.2% of persons in multiple employment combined a full-time job with a part-time one. The average total work-time percentage of this group of employed persons was 117%.

### Percentage of people with more than 1 job and percentage of full-time main job and part-time second job, in 2nd quarter, in %

G7



— people with more than 1 job<sup>1</sup> (left axis)

■ full-time main job and part-time second job<sup>2</sup> (right axis)

<sup>1</sup> 100% = employed persons excl. apprentices

<sup>2</sup> 100% = people with more than 1 job

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

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## Atypical working hours

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

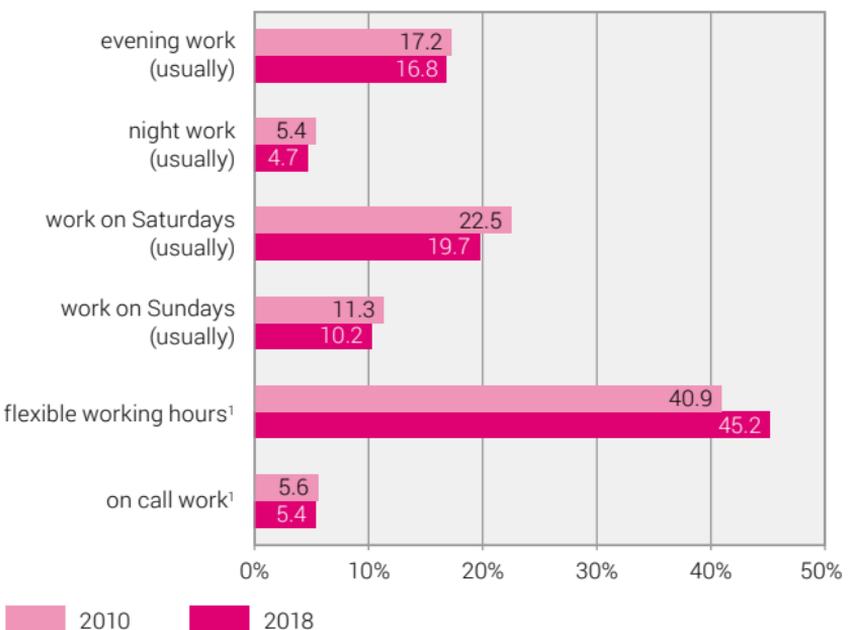
The share of persons in employment with atypical working hours declined between 2010 and 2018<sup>2</sup>: The greatest decline was for work on Saturdays (–2.8 percentage points), although one in five employed persons works on a Saturday (19.7%). Evening work<sup>3</sup> at 16.8% is also very common (–0.4 percentage points compared with 2010), followed by work on Sundays (10.2%; 2010: 11.3%). 4.7% of employed persons work regularly at night<sup>4</sup> (–0.6 percentage points compared with 2010).

Work on call fell slightly between 2010 and 2018 (–0.2 percentage points to 5.4%). 39.1% of these employees are guaranteed a minimum number of working hours.

Between 2010 and 2018 flexible working hours became increasingly important. The share of employees with flexible working times rose from 40.9% to 45.2%.

### Atypical and flexible working hours, work on call, as % of employed persons

G8



<sup>1</sup> employees

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

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<sup>2</sup> Employed persons excl. apprentices

<sup>3</sup> Evening work = 19.00 to 24.00

<sup>4</sup> Night work = 24.00 to 6.00

## Employment behaviour of mothers

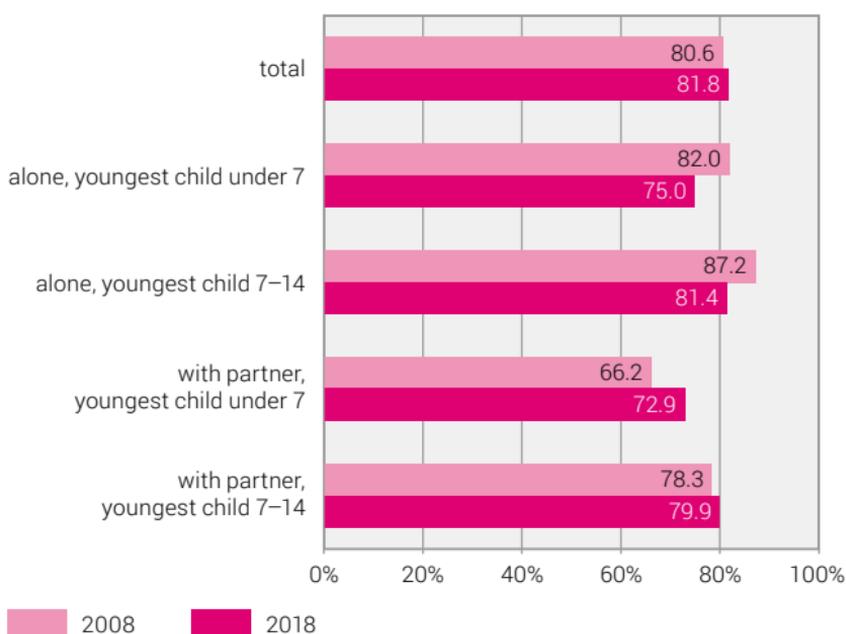
Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

Among mothers aged 25 to 54<sup>5</sup> lone mothers whose youngest child was aged between 7 and 14 were most likely to be employed (2018: 81.4%). In ten-year comparison, their employment rate has, however, fallen by 5.8 percentage points and is closer to that of mothers with a partner and youngest child aged between 7 and 14 (79.9%: +1.6 percentage points compared with 2008). A clear increase, at +6.7 percentage points, can be seen among mothers with a partner and youngest child aged under 7 (2018: 72.9%). In comparison, the employment rate of all women aged 25 to 54 was 81.8%. Compared with 2008, this corresponds to an increase of 1.2 percentage points.

In 2008, the difference between the employment rate of mothers with the youngest child under 7 years of age and that of fathers in the same situation was 29.5 percentage points (mothers: 67.1%; fathers: 96.5%). Ten years later this difference was 22.1 percentage points (mothers: 73.0%; fathers: 95.2%).

## Employment rate of 25 to 54 year-old women by family situation<sup>1</sup>, in %

G9



<sup>1</sup> 2008: average 2nd quarter, 2018: annual average

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

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<sup>5</sup> with one child aged under 15

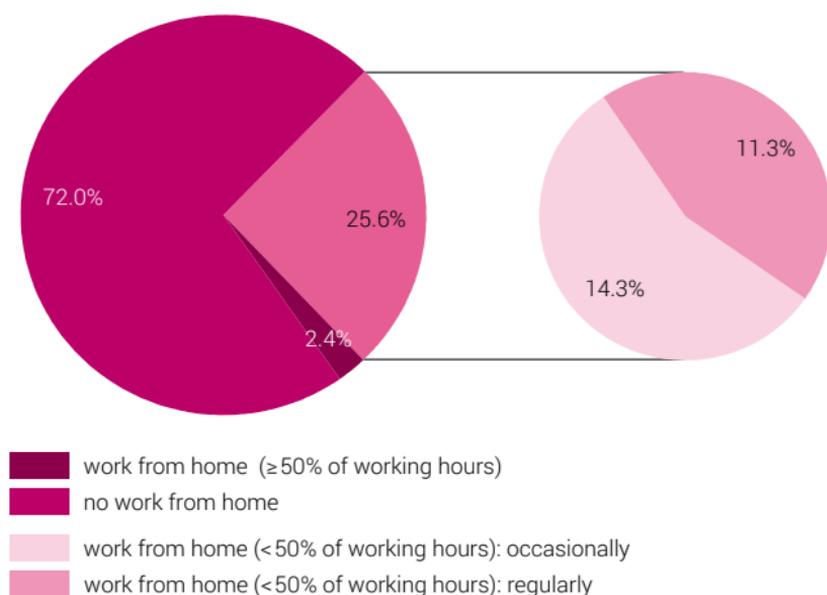
## Working at home

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

In 2018, 28.0% of employees worked from home<sup>6</sup>. 2.4% of employees work from home for at least 50% of their working hours. Another 25.6% do so less than 50% of working hours. 11.3% work regularly at home and 14.3% on an irregular basis. Among self-employed persons 20.8% work for at least half of their working hours in their private dwelling.

### Employees working from home, by frequency, 2018, in %

G 10



Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

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<sup>6</sup> excl. apprentices

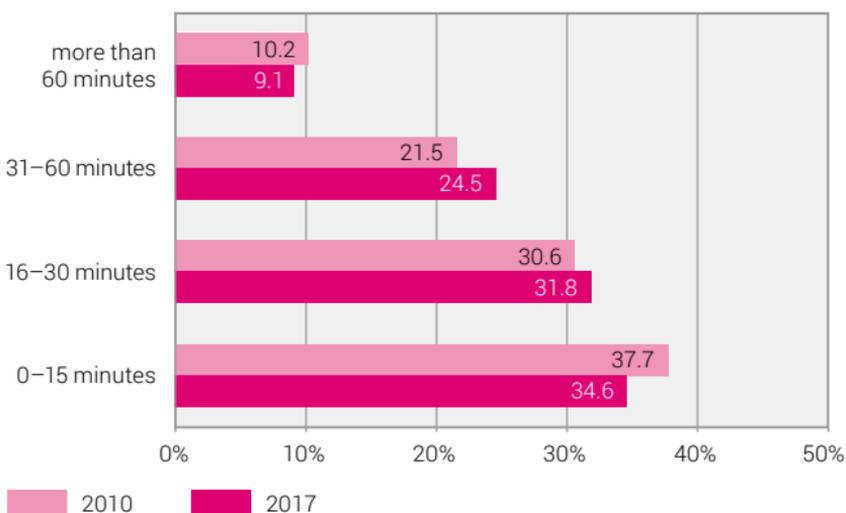
## Length of commuting time

Source: FSO – Structural Survey (SS)

In 2017, two-thirds of employed persons had a commute that took less than 30 minutes (0 to 15 minutes: 34.6%; 16 to 30 minutes: 31.8%). Almost one in ten employed persons spent more than 60 minutes on their commute. In comparison with 2010 medium commute times have gained in importance (16 to 30 minutes: +1.2 percentage points; 31 to 60 minutes: +2.9 percentage points). The share of employed persons who take between 0 to 15 minutes, however, has declined by 3.1 percentage points.

### Length of commuting time among employed persons, in %

G11



Source: FSO – Structural Survey (SS)

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## Loss of earnings in the event of maternity leave

In Switzerland, maternity benefits are anchored in law in the “Federal Act on Compensation for Loss of Earnings for Persons on Military Service or Maternity Leave”<sup>7</sup> which came into force on 1 July 2005. Maternity benefits are paid in the form of daily allowances and correspond to 80% of the average income from employment. Employed women are legally entitled to 14 weeks maternity leave.

## Work flexibility for family reasons

*Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS), “Work-life balance” module*

Being able to adapt working hours to fit in with family responsibilities can contribute to a better work-life balance. In 2018, 68.5% of employees responsible for regular caring for children or adult family members were able to move the start and finish of their working hours by at least an hour for family reasons<sup>8</sup>. Around half of employees with caring responsibilities were able to organise their working hours so that they were able to take whole days off for family reasons without having to use any days’ holiday in order to do so (51.2%)<sup>9</sup>.

## Negative impact of work on personal life

*Source: FSO – Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC)*

In 2017, a small share of employed persons felt that work had a very negative impact on their life. 12.0% of employed persons indicated, on a scale of 0 (no interference whatsoever) to 10 (very considerable interference of work with personal life), a value of 8 to 10<sup>10</sup>. This share was 13.4% in 2007, corresponding to a decline of 1.5 percentage points in ten-year comparison.

<sup>7</sup> Loss of Earnings Compensation Act LECA, CC no. 834.1

<sup>8</sup> 18 to 64 year-olds. Survey question: “Do you have the possibility to modify the time you start and/or finish work every day by at least one hour for family reasons?”

<sup>9</sup> 18 to 64 year-olds. Survey question: “Do you have the possibility to organise your work schedule to take off whole days for family reasons without taking them from your holidays?”

<sup>10</sup> Survey question: “To what extent does work keep you away from your private activities and family responsibilities more than you would like, with 0 = not at all and 10 = very much?”

## 5 Security of employment and social protection

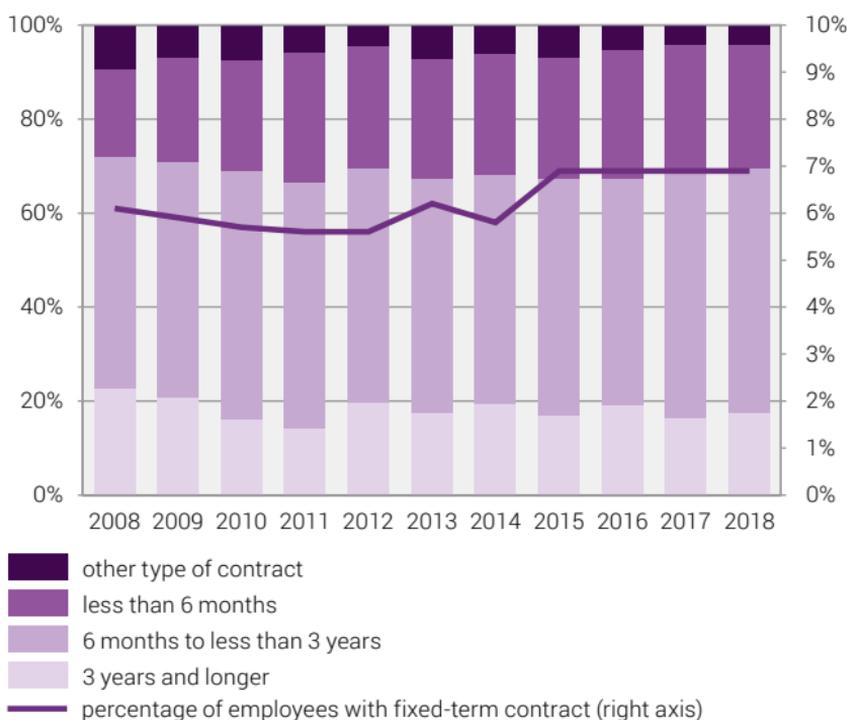
### Temporary employment

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

In the 2nd quarter 2018, the percentage of employees with fixed-term contracts was 6.9%<sup>1</sup>, which represents an increase of 0.8 percentage points compared with the 2nd quarter 2008. In 2018, 26.4% of the 236 000 fixed-term employees were working on a contract due to expire within five months. A further 52.0% were on a contract lasting from six months to under three years. Some employees on a fixed-term contract found their job through a private employment agency which also pays their salary. In 2018, 1.2% of employees (with permanent residence in Switzerland) were in such a situation.

### Percentage of employees<sup>1</sup> with fixed-term employment contracts and distribution by duration of employment contract, in 2nd quarter, in %

G12



<sup>1</sup> excl. apprentices; 25 years and older

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

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<sup>1</sup> 25 years or older

## Length of service

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

The majority of employed persons<sup>2</sup> remains loyal to their company for a long time: In 2018, 58.1% of employed persons had been working for five or more years for the same company (2008: 61.1%) and another 28.4% had been working there for one to less than five years (2008: 27.6%). Only 13.4% had worked in the same enterprise for less than one year (2008: 11.2%).

## Self-employed persons without employees

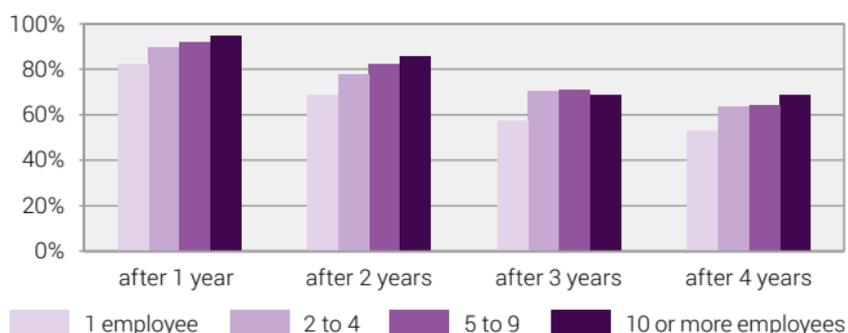
Sources: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS), Business demographic statistics (UDEM0)

Self-employed persons without employees can be exposed to increased financial risk as well as precarious working conditions, particularly at the beginning of their self-employed activity. This is reflected in the survival rate of new businesses. 52.7% of the newly founded enterprises in 2013 employing one person were still active four years later (2017). The corresponding survival rate of enterprises with 10 employees or more was 69.0% in 2017.

In the second quarter 2018, 16.5% of employed persons were self-employed (2nd quarter 2008: 17.5%) and 8.1% of employed persons were self-employed without employees (2nd quarter 2008: 8.6%). Consequently, approximately one in two self-employed persons works alone (49.2%).

## Survival rate of companies newly founded in 2013 (situation: 2017) by size category, in %

G 13



Source: FSO – Business demographic statistics (UDEM0)

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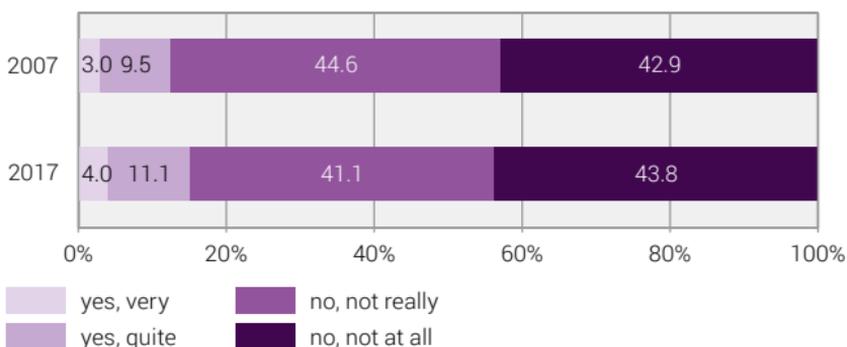
<sup>2</sup> 25 years or older

## Perceived job security

Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

The overwhelming majority of employed persons feel that their job is secure. In 2017, 43.8% were not at all afraid and a further 41.1% were not very afraid of losing their job (2007: 42.9% and 44.6% respectively). Almost half of respondents (45.4%) said that if they were to lose their job, they would find a similar job very or quite easily (2007: 40.0%).<sup>3</sup>

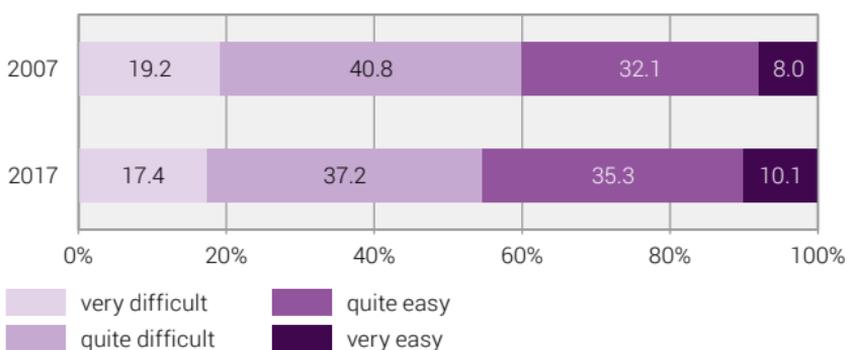
### Afraid of losing job, as % of employed persons G 14



Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

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### In event of losing job, difficulty in finding similar job, as % of employed persons G 15



Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

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<sup>3</sup> Survey question: "Are you afraid of losing your current job?" and "If you were to lose your current job/apprenticeship: how easy would it be for you to find a similar job?"

## Social benefits: Unemployment

In Switzerland, female employees aged 18 to 63 and male employees aged 18 to 64 are insured on a compulsory basis against unemployment. Should an employed person lose his or her job and fulfil certain conditions, he or she is entitled to a daily allowance. Self-employed persons, however, are generally not insured against unemployment.

## Social benefits: Old-age provision

Source: FSO – Household Budget Survey (HBS)

The old-age provision in Switzerland is based on a three-pillar system. The **1st pillar** includes, amongst other provisions, the old-age and survivors insurance (AHV/AVS), to which contributions are compulsory for all 18 to 63-/64 year-old employed persons. It aims to cover basic needs in old age.

Occupational pension plans come under the **2nd pillar**. In the event of old age, disability or death this acts as a complement to the first pillar. In principle, contributions are compulsory for employees who earn more than a stipulated minimum annual wage (2019: CHF 21 330). It is optional for self-employed persons. The purpose of the occupational pension plan is to enable persons to continue with the same standard of living after the onset of old age, disability or death.

In 2017, 90.6% of employees and 16.4% of self-employed persons<sup>4</sup> paid 2nd pillar contributions.<sup>5</sup> In 2007, these percentages were 87.8% and 21.3% respectively.

Voluntary contributions can be paid into the **3rd pillar** (private pension) to complement the 2nd pillar occupation pension plan. This is divided into fixed and flexible pension plans (pillars 3a and 3b). Access to the fixed pension plan is usually blocked until the start of retirement<sup>6</sup>. Pension plan holders can decide the amount of the contributions themselves, up to a maximum amount. With flexible pension plans, the insured person can have access to the amount saved at any time, as the 3b pillar is not tied to a specific period of time.

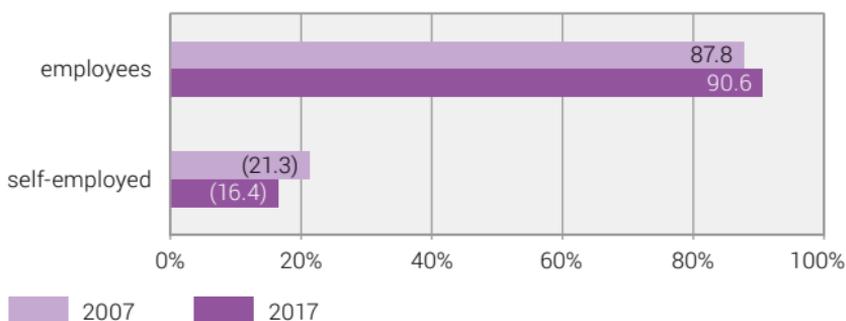
<sup>4</sup> Extrapolation based on fewer than 50 observations. The result should be regarded with great caution (concerns 2007 and 2017).

<sup>5</sup> employed population aged between 25 and normal retirement age in accordance with AHV/AVS

<sup>6</sup> main exceptions: Becoming self-employed, buying own property, emigration

In 2017, 56.9% of self-employed persons and 55.8% of employees paid contributions to the 3a pillar<sup>7</sup>. This corresponds to an increase of +14.4 and +10.2 percentage points compared with 2007.

## Employed persons contributing to the 2nd pillar, in % G16

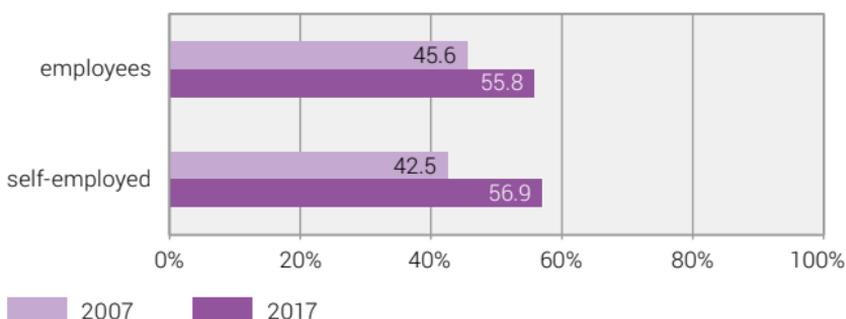


(Figure): extrapolation based on fewer than 50 observations. The results should be interpreted with great caution.

Source: FSO – Household Budget Survey (HBS)

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## Employed persons contributing to the 3a pillar, in % G17



Source: FSO – Household Budget Survey (HBS)

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<sup>7</sup> employed population aged between 25 and normal retirement age in accordance with AHV/AVS

## 6 Social dialogue

### Collective agreements and minimum wages

Source: FSO – Survey on collective labour agreements in Switzerland (SCLA)

In 2016, 575 collective employment agreements (CEA) with normative provisions were registered in Switzerland<sup>1</sup>. 1 877 900 employees were subject to a CEA, 95.3% of whom were bound to a collective agreement with minimum wages. In comparison with 2007, the proportion of employees bound by such a contract has risen by 28.1%.

### Trade unions

Source: Confederation of Swiss Trade Unions

In 2017, 718 378 people belonged to trade union. In relation to the number of jobs with a work-time percentage of at least 50%, this corresponds to a membership rate of 17.9%. Ten years later the corresponding share was 22.8%.

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<sup>1</sup> CEA with normative provisions: Provisions on the conclusion, nature and termination of employment relationships between the employers and individual employees. Employees subject to several CEAs are counted for each CEA. This concerns, in particular, employees working on a temporary basis (contract staff). From 2012, this includes employees subject to the CEA of the economic activity "temporary work" (recruitment agencies).

## Strikes and lockouts

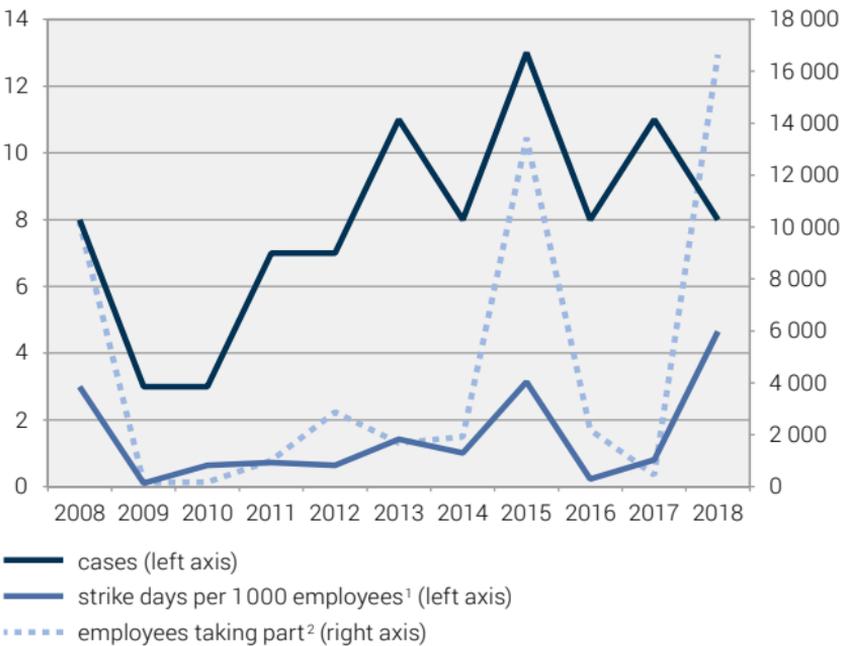
Source: FSO – Survey on collective labour disputes (KASE)

Strikes and lockouts are legally recognised in Switzerland<sup>2</sup>, but in comparison with other countries, the right to strike is seldom exercised. In Switzerland, strikes tend to take place within companies rather than within whole sectors.

In 2018, 8 collective labour disputes took place in Switzerland. These strikes involved a relatively large number of strike days (4.6 per 1000 employees) and an equally high number of employees taking part (16 647).

## Strikes and lockouts

G18



<sup>1</sup> Employees: up to 2009 according to the Employment Statistics (ES). From 2010 estimates based on the ES and the Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS), excl. self-employed, employees working in own company and family members working in family business.

<sup>2</sup> maximum

Source: FSO – Survey on collective labour disputes (KASE)

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<sup>2</sup> Federal constitution, Art. 28 on freedom of association

## 7 Qualifications and continuing education

### Qualifications

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

Within the past ten years, the more highly qualified occupations (managers, professionals, technicians and associated professionals) have steadily gained in importance: whereas in the 2nd quarter 2008, 45.9% of employed persons worked in more highly qualified occupations, in the 2nd quarter 2018 this figure was 50.5%<sup>1</sup>.

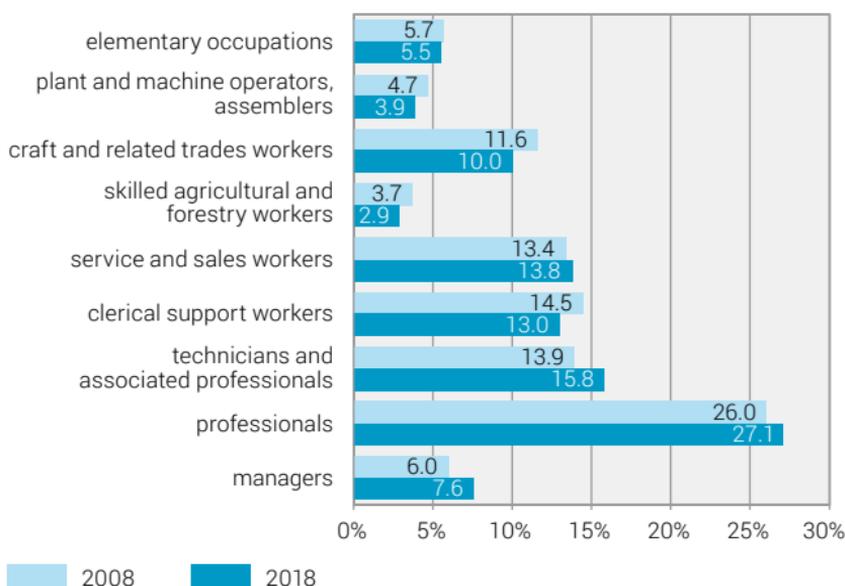
### Overqualification in employment

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

In 2018, an estimated 14.5% of employees<sup>2</sup> who had completed tertiary level education were overqualified for their job. These people were holding a job for which tertiary level education was not necessary. From the 2010 to 2018 period, this percentage remained relatively stable (2010: 13.6%).

### Employed persons by major occupational groups<sup>1</sup>, in 2nd quarter, in %

G 19



<sup>1</sup> Swiss Standard Classification of Occupations (CH-ISCO-19)

Source: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS)

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<sup>1</sup> excl. apprentices

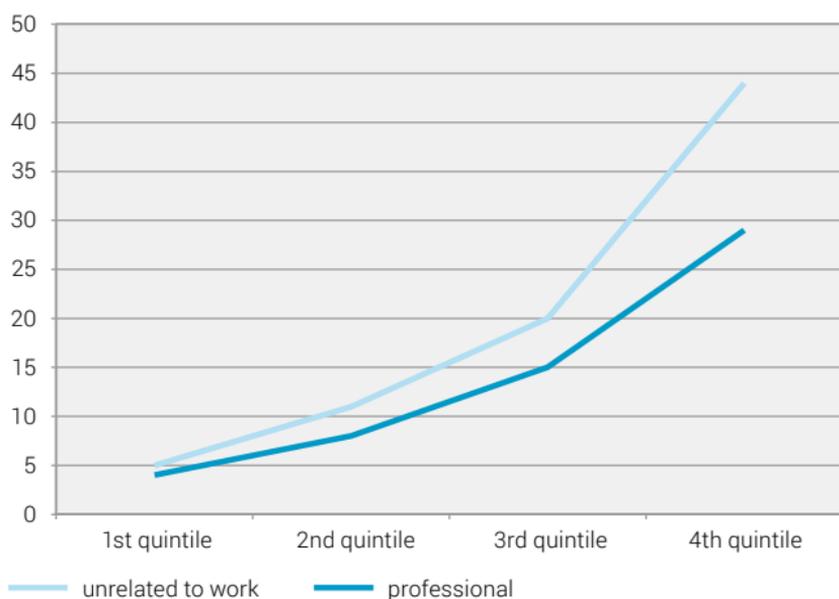
<sup>2</sup> 15 to 64 year-olds, excl. apprentices

## Continuing education and training

Source: FSO – Swiss Adult Education Survey (AES)

In 2016, 65.0% of employed persons<sup>3</sup> had taken part in non-formal professional continuing education and training (continuing education and training unrelated to work: 27.8%). Employed persons working full-time, with a work-time percentage of 90–100%, are more likely to take part in continuing education than part-time employed persons with a work-time percentage of less than 50% (68.1% compared with 47.7%). The mean length of professional continuing education and training was 9 hours; that of continuing education and training unrelated to work was 15 hours.

### Length of non-formal education and training attended by purpose of participation, 2016<sup>1</sup>, in hours G20



<sup>1</sup> continuing education and training within the past 12 months

Source: FSO – Swiss Adult Education Survey (AES)

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<sup>3</sup> 25 to 64 year-olds. Non-formal education and training covers educational activities within a pupil-teacher relationship, which is not part of the education system (courses, conferences, seminars, private lessons, training at work).

## 8 Employment-related relationships and work motivation

### Relationship with colleagues and superiors

Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

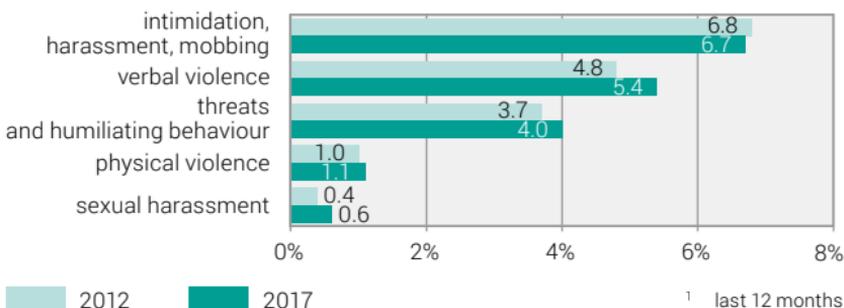
A significant majority of employed persons benefit from the help and support of their colleagues at work. In 2017, 71.2% of employed persons indicated that they can “usually” or “always” count on their colleagues (2012: 70.2%). Furthermore, two-thirds of employed persons can “usually” or “always” call on the help and support of their superior (66.5%; 2012: 66.4%)<sup>1</sup>.

### Violence in the workplace

Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

In 2017, 11.5% of employed persons experienced at least one of the following types of violence at work: physical or verbal violence, threats and humiliating behaviour, intimidation, mobbing or sexual harassment (in the last 12 months). In 2012, this share was 10.9%. In 2017, 1.5% of employed persons were exposed to three or more types of violence (2012: 1.7%). At 6.7%, the most frequently mentioned type of violence was “intimidation, harassment or mobbing” (–0.1 percentage points compared with 2012). Verbal violence occupies second place at 5.4% (+0.6 percentage points), followed by “threats and humiliating behaviour” (2012: 3.7%; 2017: 4.0%).

### Violence in workplace<sup>1</sup>, as % of employed persons G21



Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

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<sup>1</sup> Survey question: “For each statement, please tick the answer that corresponds most closely to you.”

- My colleagues help and support me (usually, always)
- My superior(s) help and support me (usually, always)

## Room for manoeuvre

Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

32.9% of employed persons were affected by lack of manoeuvre<sup>2</sup> at work in 2017. These people indicated that they had never or rarely been able to: influence work, decide on breaks, make full use of skills or always learn something new. Compared to 2012, this value has remained stable.

## Purposefulness of work

Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

Motivation and subjective well-being at work can be influenced by the feeling that one's job serves a purpose. In Switzerland in 2017, 84.8% of employed persons indicated that most of the time (50.1%) or always (34.7%) their job served a purpose. In comparison with 2012, this is a decline of 1.2 percentage points for people that feel their job is useful most of the time ("always": +0.1 percentage points).

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<sup>2</sup> Questions on room for manoeuvre:

- I have very little room for manoeuvre in how I carry out my work (usually, always)
- I can take a break when I like (seldom, never)
- I can always learn something new at work (seldom, never)
- I can make full use of my skills (seldom, never)

## Work intensity

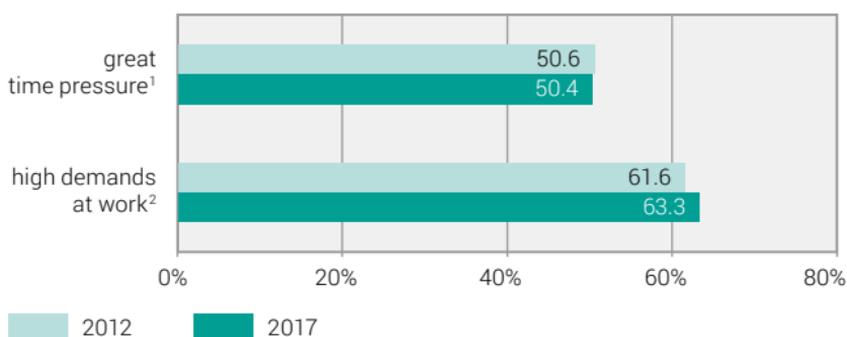
Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

In 2017, half of employed persons were under great time pressure at work and indicated that they had to work at a fast pace or under deadline pressure (or both together) for at least three-quarters of their working hours. Having to work at a fast pace is more common than deadline pressure (43.8% of employed persons compared with 34.8%; 2012: 44.3% compared with 34.2%).

63.3% of employed persons are exposed to high demands at work<sup>3</sup> such as having to think of many things at the same time or frequently having to interrupt one's own work due to unexpected tasks. In 2012, slightly fewer employed persons were affected by high demands at work (61.6%).

### Work intensity, as % of employed persons

G22



<sup>1</sup> fast pace of work (¾ of working hours or more) or working under time pressure (¾ of working hours or more) or both

<sup>2</sup> at least one of the following situations: thinking of too many things at once (usually, always); having to rush (usually, always); disturbing interruptions (frequent or very frequent); conflicting orders (usually, always); difficulty balancing work and family responsibilities (usually, always)

Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

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<sup>3</sup> thinking of too many things at once (usually, always); having to rush (usually, always); disturbing interruptions (frequently or very frequently); conflicting orders (usually, always); difficulty balancing work and family responsibilities (usually, always)

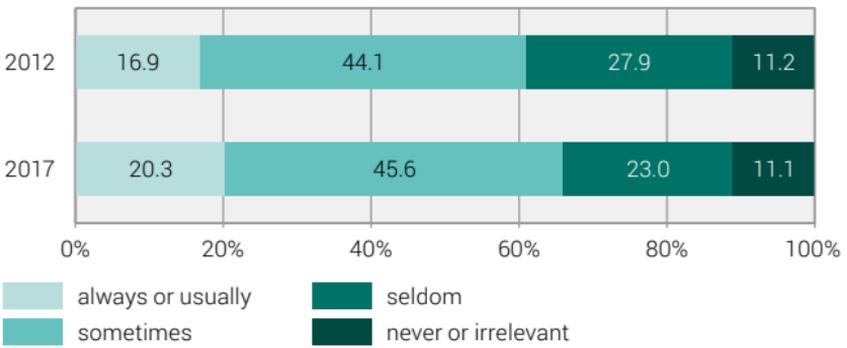
## Stress at work

Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

One in five people indicated in 2017 that they “always or usually” were under stress at work (20.3%), and another 45.6% of employed persons said that they “sometimes” suffered from stress. These shares increased in comparison with 2012 (+3.4 and +1.6 percentage points respectively). At the same time, the share of “seldom stress at work” fell by 4.8 percentage points to 23.0%.

### Stress at work, as % of employed persons

G23



Source: FSO – Swiss Health Survey (SHS)

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## 9 Equality at work

### Gender equality

Sources: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS), Swiss Earnings Structure Survey (SESS), Swiss Health Survey (SHS), Household Budget Survey (HBS)

In this chapter, comments are made on a selection of gender equality indicators. A more detailed table with indicators for other variables such as nationality and age can be downloaded from the following link:

[www.statistics.admin.ch](http://www.statistics.admin.ch) → Look for statistics → Work and income → Employment and working hours → Employed persons → Working conditions → Quality of employment.

**Wages:** In 2016, the standardised gross monthly wage (median) was CHF 6830 for men and CHF 6011 for women. According to an analysis commissioned by the Federal Statistical Office, and based on the arithmetic mean, 55.9% of the gender wage gap in average wages is due to explainable variables<sup>1</sup>. Between 2008 and 2016, the gross median wage of women rose more for women than it did for men (+11.7% compared with +5.9%). Women are twice as likely as men to be paid low wages (17.0% compared with 7.6%). However, the share of women receiving low wages declined by 2.6 percentage points, whereas that of men saw a very slight increase (+0.4 percentage points).

**Work-time percentage:** Women are three times as likely as men to work part-time and have greater difficulty in finding a work-time percentage which meets their wishes. Their underemployment rate is 11.5% compared with 3.6% for men (+0.5 and +1.3 percentage points respectively compared with 2008). 10.6% of women have more than 1 job (men: 5.8%).

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<sup>1</sup> [www.statistics.admin.ch](http://www.statistics.admin.ch) → Look for statistics → 03 – Work and income → Wages, income from employment and labour costs → Wage levels – Switzerland → Wage gap  
Explainable variables: Education, years' service, age, occupational position, level of qualifications required, occupation, sector, etc.

**Atypical employment:** Men are more likely to carry out night work whereas women work more often in the evening and on Saturdays and Sundays. Women are also more likely to work on call (6.2% compared with 4.6%) and are more often on short-term contracts (7.3% compared with 6.5%).

**Flexible working hours:** Half of men benefit from flexible working hours (women: 39.9%); men are also more likely to have the possibility of moving the start and end of their working hours by at least one hour due to family responsibilities. Women, conversely, are more often able to take a whole day off for this reason.

**Social benefits:** The share of employed persons paying 2nd pillar contributions is significantly higher for men than for women (employees: 96.9% compared with 83.8%; self-employed persons<sup>2</sup>: 22.2% compared with 8.0%). Large differences between men and women can also be observed in respect of 3a pillar contributions (employees: 61.1% compared with 50.2%; self-employed: 58.2% compared with 54.9%).

**Risks in the workplace:** 82.1% of women and 81.1% of men indicated that they are exposed to physical risks at work. Furthermore, women are more often confronted with violence in the workplace (12.3% compared with 10.7%).

**Qualifications:** The share of women in more highly qualified occupations has risen over the past ten years by 5.4 percentage points to 48.5% (men: +3.8 percentage points to 52.2%). However, women are considerably more likely to be overqualified for their job than men (16.0% compared with 13.1%).

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<sup>2</sup> Extrapolation based on fewer than 50 observations. The results should be interpreted with great caution.

## Equality at work

| Indicator   | Year | Women  | Men     |
|---|------|--------|---------|
| Physical risk factors at work <sup>1</sup>        | 2017 | 82.1%  | 81.1%   |
| Standardised gross monthly median wage            | 2016 | 6011   | 6830    |
| Low wages: less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of median wage | 2016 | 17.0%  | 7.6%    |
| Underemployment rate                              | 2018 | 11.5%  | 3.6%    |
| Evening work <sup>2</sup>                         | 2018 | 17.6%  | 16.1%   |
| Night work <sup>2</sup>                           | 2018 | 3.7%   | 5.7%    |
| Work on Saturday <sup>2</sup>                     | 2018 | 21.8%  | 17.9%   |
| Work on Sunday <sup>2</sup>                       | 2018 | 10.8%  | 9.6%    |
| Flexible working hours <sup>3</sup>               | 2018 | 39.9%  | 50.2%   |
| On call work                                      | 2018 | 6.2%   | 4.6%    |
| Work flexibility for family reasons:              |      |        |         |
| Can move start and end of work by at least 1 hour | 2018 | 63.5%  | 72.8%   |
| Take whole day off                                | 2018 | 55.1%  | 47.9%   |
| Temporary employment                              | 2018 | 7.3%   | 6.5%    |
| Contributions to 2nd pillar                       |      |        |         |
| Employees   | 2017 | 83.8%  | 96.9%   |
| Self-employed                                     | 2017 | (8.0%) | (22.2%) |
| Contributions to the 3a pillar                    |      |        |         |
| Employees   | 2017 | 50.2%  | 61.1%   |
| Self-employed                                     | 2017 | 54.9%  | 58.2%   |
| Highly qualified <sup>4</sup>                     | 2018 | 48.5%  | 52.2%   |
| Over-qualified <sup>5</sup>                       | 2018 | 16.0%  | 13.1%   |
| Experienced violence at work in past 12 months    |      |        |         |
| Little room for manoeuvre <sup>6</sup>            | 2017 | 37.0%  | 29.3%   |

<sup>1</sup> Employed persons who are exposed to at least one physical risk (for at least a quarter of working time).

<sup>2</sup> Employed persons who usually work evening, nights, Saturdays and Sundays.

<sup>3</sup> Weekly/monthly working hours with/without core hours, annual working hours, no formal specifications, other model

<sup>4</sup> Persons employed in following major groups: Management, professionals, technicians and associated professionals

<sup>5</sup> Employees with tertiary education in jobs for which such a qualification is unnecessary.

<sup>6</sup> Breaks when desired (seldom, never); very little say in deciding how to carry out work (usually, always); can always learn something new at work (seldom, never); make full use of skills (seldom, never)

(Figure): Extrapolation based on fewer than 50 observations. The results should be interpreted with great caution.

## Equality at work (end)

| Indicator   | Change in percentage points |        |        |
|---|-----------------------------|--------|--------|
|   |                             | Women  | Men    |
| Physical risk factors at work <sup>1</sup>                      | 2007–2017                   | 6.7    | 5.7    |
| Standardised gross monthly median wage                          | 2008–2016                   | 11.7%  | 5.9%   |
| Low wages: less than <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> of median wage | 2008–2016                   | -2.6   | 0.4    |
| Underemployment rate  | 2008–2018                   | 0.5    | 1.3    |
| Evening work <sup>2</sup>                                       | 2010–2018                   | -0.2   | -0.6   |
| Night work <sup>2</sup>   | 2010–2018                   | -0.8   | -0.5   |
| Work on Saturday <sup>2</sup>                                   | 2010–2018                   | -2.7   | -3.0   |
| Work on Sunday <sup>2</sup>                                     | 2010–2018                   | -1.2   | -1.2   |
| Flexible working hours <sup>3</sup>                             | 2010–2018                   | 5.2    | 3.7    |
| On call work  | 2010–2018                   | -0.7   | 0.3    |
| Work flexibility for family reasons:                            |                             |        |        |
| Can move start and end of work by at least 1 hour               | -                           | -      | -      |
| Take whole day off  | -                           | -      | -      |
| Temporary employment  | 2008–2018                   | 0.9    | 0.7    |
| Contributions to 2nd pillar                                     |                             |        |        |
| Employees   | 2007–2017                   | 4.0    | 1.7    |
| Self-employed   | 2007–2017                   | (-9.1) | (-1.5) |
| Contributions to the 3a pillar                                  |                             |        |        |
| Employees   | 2007–2017                   | 11.2   | 9.4    |
| Self-employed   | 2007–2017                   | 26.3   | 8.1    |
| Highly qualified <sup>4</sup>                                   | 2008–2018                   | 5.4    | 3.8    |
| Over-qualified <sup>5</sup>                                     | 2010–2018                   | 0.2    | 1.1    |
| Experienced violence at work in past 12 months                  |                             |        |        |
| 12 months   | 2012–2017                   | 0.6    | 0.5    |
| Little room for manoeuvre <sup>6</sup>                          | 2012–2017                   | -0.3   | 0.1    |

<sup>1</sup> Employed persons who are exposed to at least one physical risk (for at least a quarter of working time).

<sup>2</sup> Employed persons who usually work evening, nights, Saturdays and Sundays.

<sup>3</sup> Weekly/monthly working hours with/without core hours, annual working hours, no formal specifications, other model

<sup>4</sup> Persons employed in following major groups: Management, professionals, technicians and associated professionals

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(Figure): Extrapolation based on fewer than 50 observations. The results should be interpreted with great caution.

Sources: FSO – Swiss Labour Force Survey (SLFS),  
Swiss Earnings Structure Survey (SESS), Swiss Health Survey (SHS),  
Household Budget Survey (HBS)

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## 10 References and further information

Information on the topic "Work and income" (FSO):

[www.statistics.admin.ch](http://www.statistics.admin.ch) → Look for statistics → 03 – Work and income

Work and income definitions (FSO):

[www.statistics.admin.ch](http://www.statistics.admin.ch) → Look for statistics → 03 – Work and income → Statistical sources and concepts → Definitions

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Federal Statistical Office

CH-2010 Neuchâtel

[order@bfs.admin.ch](mailto:order@bfs.admin.ch)

tel. +41 58 463 60 60

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