

## **Occupational trajectories of University of Applied Sciences' Graduates in gender-atypical field: men in health and social work, women in engineering and architecture.**

The feminization of the active population is an important advance in gender equality. However, the training and employment choices still remain strongly segregated according to gender, including in qualified jobs (OFS 2013; von Erlach & Segura 2011). In the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS), the work sectors with the least gender integration are health, social work, engineering and architecture. In 2013, in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, the proportion of male graduates was 24.8% in social work and 16.4% in health, while women were 17.9% of graduates in engineering and architecture. This study aims to focus on the career beginnings of these gender minorities after they graduated in one of these four fields of training.

Generally defined as a transition period between school and integration into the labor market (Demazière & Pélage 2001), entry into the labor market is a turning point in the trajectories of people's lives. Many recent studies have focused on people who choosed a training or occupation atypical with regard to their gender (Maihofer et al. 2013; Schmid et al. 2010), and confirmed that such orientations do not have same consequences for minority males than for their female counterparts.

Our study aims to fill some gaps in the current knowledge and will focus on two aspects the least studied: the institutional dimension and the individual dimension of entry into the labor market. It pursues three major objectives:

- 1) To document the professional and private situation of minority UAS graduates in these four fields, with a secondary analysis of statistical data.
- 2) To analyze existing politics and practices for welcoming minorities in enterprises and institutions of the French speaking part of Switzerland. To do this, we will conduct semi-structured interviews with people in charge of HR and management.
- 3) To analyze the professional path of minorities from an objective

perspective (employment duration, job characteristics, work conditions, etc.) and a subjective point of view, using semi-structured interviews with graduates who obtained their diploma less than 5 years ago. We will attribute special attention to the experience of this step and on the impact it has on professional and personal life.

The multi-perspective analysis of these data will allow us to show the structural, institutional and individual dimensions that make entry into the labor market easier or harder for people who have chosen an atypical profession, and to reveal some gender issues that have a greater impact on this turning point in life trajectories.

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### **Research team**

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