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Women in Tech Index: Preliminary Study

Women in Swiss ICT education and the ICT workforce, today and over the past three decades

September 17, 2026



Our Dashboard

Executive Summary

What we can measure, we can make visible. What we can track, we can influence. And what we understand, we can change.

Switzerland's technology sector is central to the country's competitiveness, innovation capacity and future workforce. Yet women remain significantly underrepresented in ICT, even as demand for qualified technology professionals continues to grow and AI reshapes skills, roles and organisations. This makes women's participation in technology not only a diversity question, but increasingly a *talent, competitiveness and innovation issue*.

This Preliminary Study provides an evidence-based baseline of the current situation in Switzerland. The findings show an encouraging but incomplete picture: *the education pipeline is improving, but this progress is not yet translating sustainably into the workforce*.

The proportion of women studying ICT has increased substantially over the past three decades. Since 1997, the share of women among ICT students has *nearly tripled* at universities and *grown more than tenfold* at universities of applied sciences. Women now represent *21.4% and 20.3% of ICT students* at these institutions, respectively. While these shares remain low, the progress is encouraging, with no indication that the upward trend is slowing.

In addition, the share of women among Matura graduates choosing Physics and Applications of Mathematics (PAM) has increased to 26.7%, while remaining at 15.0% of graduates choosing the Technical Berufsmatura (BM). However, these educational gains have yet to translate fully into the labour market: women account for only *13.8% of the ICT workforce by occupation*, and recent labour-market figures show little further progress. The ICT workforce today stands about where the lecture halls stood five to twelve years ago.

The pipeline analysis further helps identify the stages where female participation declines. Along the university pathway, the largest drop occurs between secondary education and entry into an ICT bachelor programme, followed by further decline between graduation and entry into the workforce. The vocational pathway presents a somewhat more encouraging picture: in recent years, the share of women entering ICT bachelor's programmes at universities of applied sciences has exceeded their share among Technical Berufsmatura graduates. This finding suggests that offering diverse entry routes can help attract more women to these programmes. However, here too, female participation falls between graduation and entry into the workforce. At the rate of progress observed over the past twelve years, women are not expected to account for even 20% of the ICT workforce until the 2040s. These findings emphasize why Switzerland needs a *Women in Tech Index*.

Relevant data already exists, but it is fragmented across different sources, classifications and time periods. Without a consistent and regularly updated benchmark, it is difficult to see where progress is happening, where talent is being lost and where targeted action can have the greatest impact. The Index is intended to provide a shared, evidence-based reference point for business, education, policy makers and research — enabling stakeholders to track developments over time and base decisions on evidence rather than assumptions.

Measurement is not the objective in itself; it is the starting point for informed action. By establishing a clear baseline and tracking change over time, the Women in Tech Index makes progress visible, identifies areas that deserve greater attention and supports more focused collaboration across the Swiss technology ecosystem.

The purpose of this Preliminary Study was therefore to lay the analytical and methodological foundation for the future Index: to assess what can already be learned from officially available data, establish a common baseline and identify the areas that show the development over time. The current analysis focuses on ICT and is based primarily on data published by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (BFS), providing a transparent and robust starting point for future editions of the Index. In

future editions, the scope will also be extended to include other STEM fields, enabling a broader assessment of developments across science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The Women in Tech Index is a collaborative initiative that brings together complementary expertise from across Switzerland's technology ecosystem. The data analysis and preparation of this Preliminary Study Report were carried out at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts. The wider initiative is developed in collaboration with a working group including TechFace, Women in Tech Switzerland, Women in Robotics Switzerland and Women in Data Science Zurich, whose members contribute valuable community perspectives, networks and ecosystem expertise. Together, these complementary contributions provide a strong foundation for the continued development of the Women in Tech Index.

The ambition is not simply to produce another statistic. It is to create a *shared compass for Switzerland's technology ecosystem* — one that makes progress visible, supports informed action and helps translate commitment into measurable change.

Because when progress becomes measurable, it becomes actionable.

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1 Introduction

In 1991 the Swiss *Information and Communication Technology* (ICT) sector and public administration employed women at almost the same rate: 31.5% against 32.1%. Three decades on, the two have moved in opposite directions (Figure 1). Public administration climbed steadily past parity to 51.4%, whereas the ICT share fell through the nineties, bottomed out around 2008 and has stayed near flat ever since. At 23.7% today it sits 7.8 percentage points *below* where it started. This is the picture after years of initiatives, programmes and commitments across the industry.

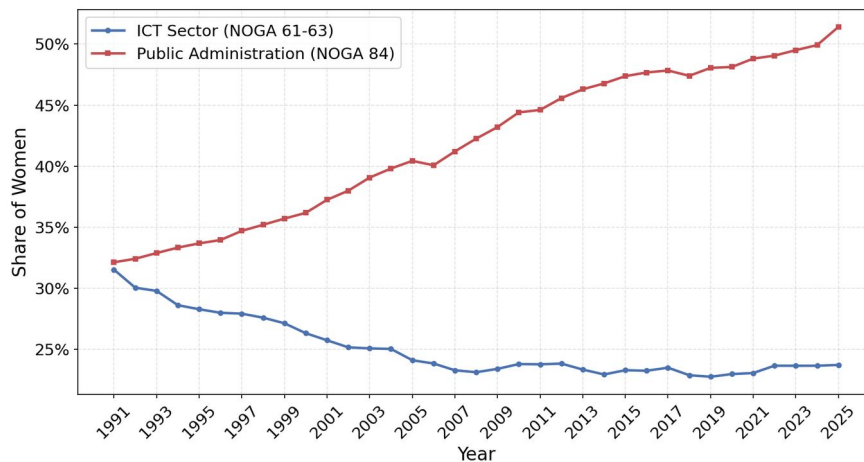


Figure 1: Share of women: ICT vs. public administration over time in Switzerland. Counted as employed persons (*Beschäftigte*), full-time and part-time alike, not full-time equivalents.

Source: BFS, BESTA: Beschäftigte nach Wirtschaftsabteilung, Beschäftigungsgrad und Geschlecht [1]

Across Europe, the share of women in tech roles fell from 22% in 2022 to 19% in 2025, and women are overrepresented in the small, low-influence job families and the entry-level positions that AI is reshaping fastest [2]. For Switzerland specifically see [3], which places ICT among the occupations most exposed to automation adoption by 2030, and reports that almost none of the 26 Swiss employers interviewed tracked AI adoption or use by gender. A gap that has so far only failed to close can widen from here.

At the same time, Swiss companies are competing for a shrinking pool of qualified professionals. Yet half of the potential talent pool — *women* — remains structurally underrepresented and insufficiently supported.

We reached out to the female tech communities in Switzerland and asked: what can we do about this? One clear consensus emerged: without collecting, measuring and publishing relevant data, it will be difficult to raise awareness and drive meaningful impact among companies, hiring managers, policy makers and the broader Swiss economy. This report is our answer to that. Together with the female tech communities in Switzerland, we plan to introduce the Women in Tech Index, the country’s first shared, evidence-based benchmark for gender diversity in tech.

This first version is scoped to ICT; we intend to widen the scope to other *Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics* (STEM) areas in future versions.

2 Education

This section traces the share of women through the early educational stages of the ICT pipeline along two parallel routes: the university route, from *Physics and Applications of Mathematics* (PAM) at the *Academic Matura* (gymnasiale Matura) to graduation, and the vocational route, from a technical

Vocational Matura (Berufsmaturität, BM; the direction *Engineering and IT, Architecture and Life Sciences*, including its laboratory variant) into a *university of applied sciences* (Fachhochschule, FH).¹ What counts as ICT at each institution type is defined in Table 2 (Appendix A.1) and Table 3 (Appendix A.2).

2.1 PAM Academic Matura Graduates

The share of women among Academic Matura graduates with PAM as a core subject rose from 21.0% in 2008 to 26.7% in 2025 (Figure 2). The series gained 4.9 pp (percentage points) over the two years to 2024, from 24.5% in 2022 to a high of 29.4%, but it then declined again by 2.7 pp in 2025. The long-run trend remains positive, yet the 2025 value still lies below one third, so PAM remains a heavily male-dominated entry point.

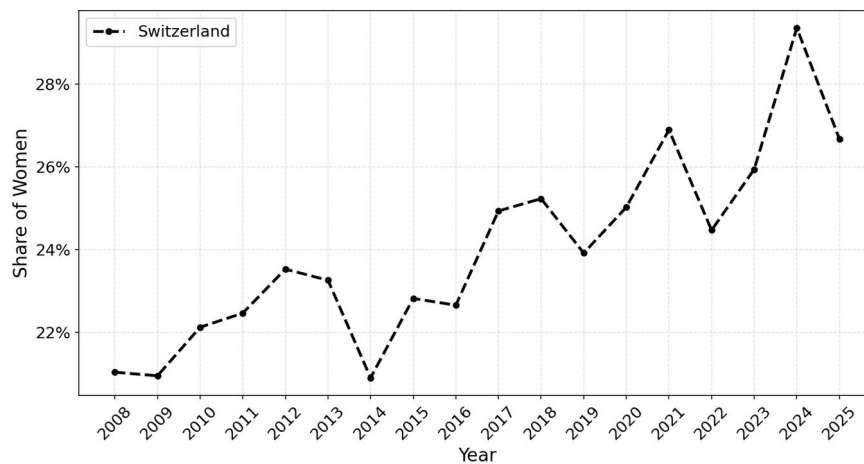


Figure 2: Share of women in Academic Matura graduates with PAM as a core subject in Switzerland over time

Source: BFS, Maturitätszeugnisse nach Schwerpunktfach, Geschlecht und Schulkanton [4]

Figure 3 breaks the same share down by canton, pooled over 2017–2025. It ranges from 11.8% in Schaffhausen ($n = 93$) to 36.8% in Uri ($n = 106$) around a national average of 25.9% ($n = 19\,139$), but both extremes rest on small cohorts and must be read with caution. The four biggest ICT cantons by sector employment (Section 4.2) all sit within three percentage points of the national average: Zurich 24.1%, Bern 25.6%, Vaud 25.2% and Geneva 23.5%. Smaller central and eastern cantons lead the ranking, and the map shows no clean language-region divide.

¹ PAM and the technical Vocational Matura are not the only routes into ICT studies at a university or an FH; see Section B.4.

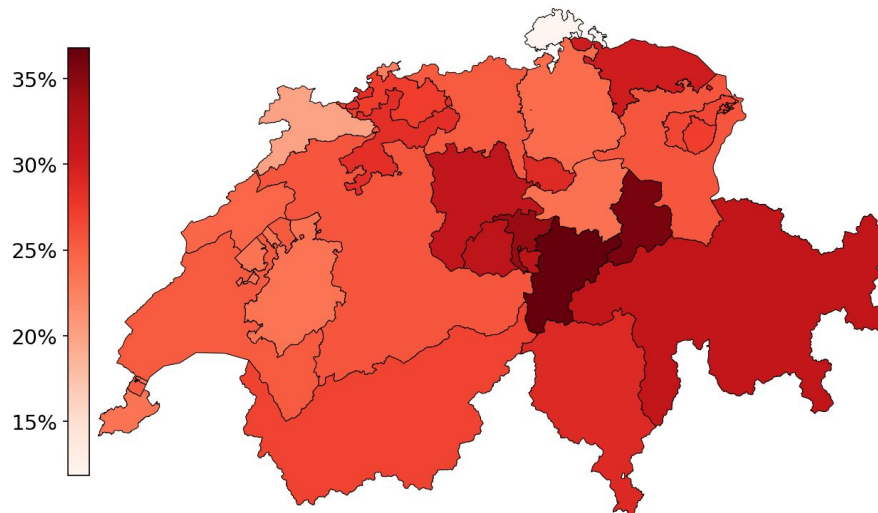


Figure 3: Share of women in Academic Matura graduates with PAM (physics & applications of mathematics) as a core subject, by canton (2017–2025 pooled)
Source: BFS, Maturitätszeugnisse nach Schwerpunktfach, Geschlecht und Schulkanton [4]

2.2 Technical Vocational Matura Graduates

The Vocational Matura can be obtained in Switzerland on two routes: the first, *Berufsmaturität 1* (BM1), is taken during the apprenticeship, alongside the vocational training; the second, *Berufsmaturität 2* (BM2), is taken after the apprenticeship has been completed. Figure 4 traces the same share on this vocational route, split into BM1, BM2 and the two pooled. Pooled, the female share among technical Vocational Matura graduates grew from 12.2% in 2005 (449 of 3 678 graduates) to 15.0% in 2025 (497 of 3 317), a gain of 2.8 pp, but it has stagnated, even declined slightly, since the 2022 peak of 15.4%. Over these two decades the number of women rose by only 48 (+10.7%) while the number of men fell by 409 (–12.7%), so the rising share reflects a shrinking male cohort as much as a growing female one. The two routes drifted apart between 2008 and 2017 and converged again from 2018 on. In general we can see a trend that women tend to rather take the BM1 route than BM2.

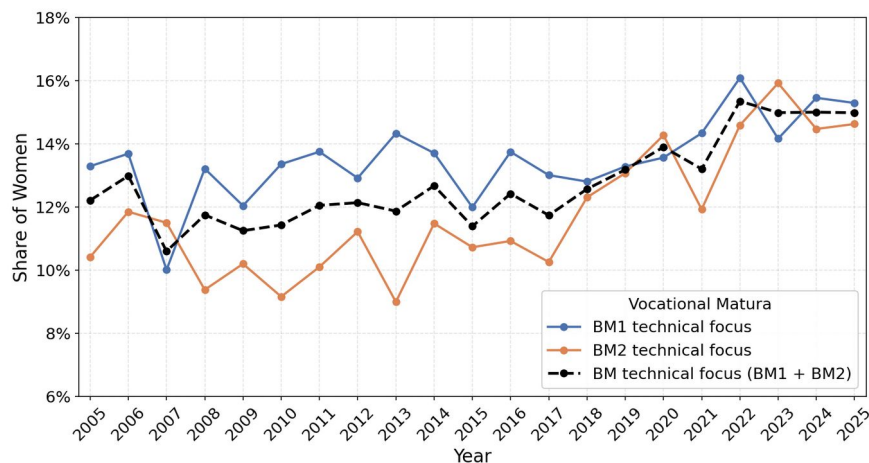


Figure 4: Share of women in Vocational Matura graduates with a technical focus in Switzerland over time, split by BM1, BM2 and the two pooled.
Source: BFS, Berufsmaturitätszeugnisse nach Ausbildungsart, Richtung und Geschlecht [5]

Figure 5 breaks the same share (BM1 and BM2 combined) down by canton, pooled over 2017–2025. It ranges from 10.5% in Aargau ($n = 2\,317$) to 19.5% in Schaffhausen ($n = 513$) around a national average of 13.8% ($n = 33\,140$). The four biggest ICT cantons by sector employment again sit

close to the national average, all within two percentage points: Zurich 15.5%, Bern 14.7%, Vaud 13.3% and Geneva 12.2%. The southern cantons (Graubünden 10.8%, Valais 10.9% and Ticino 12.0%) tend towards lower shares.

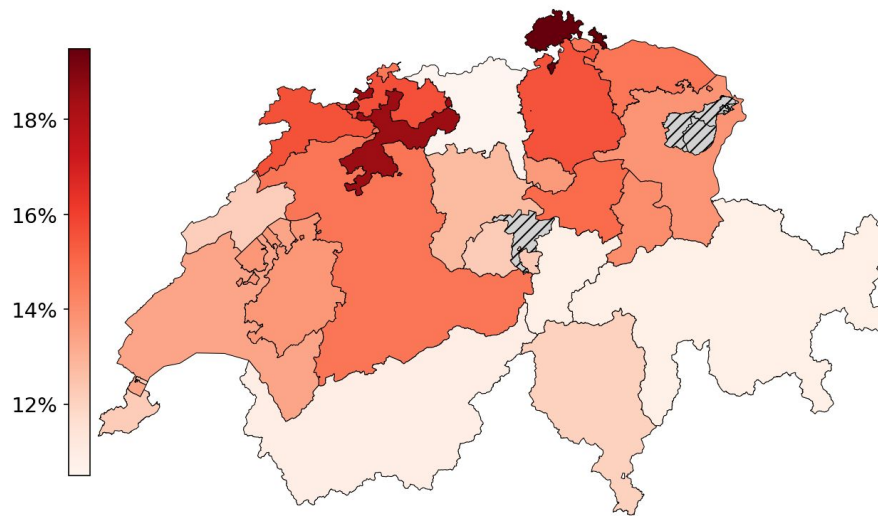


Figure 5: Share of women in Vocational Matura graduates with a technical focus, BM1 and BM2 combined, by canton (2017–2025 pooled). Cantons shown in grey: no school offers the technical Vocational Matura, or the pooled cohort is smaller than 50 graduates.

Source: BFS, Berufsmaturitätszeugnisse nach Ausbildungsart, Richtung und Geschlecht [5]

2.3 ICT Students by Institution

In the academic year 2025/26 every institution except the University of Zurich lies well below one fourth (Figure 6).² Among the selected universities and universities of applied sciences, UZH leads at 29.6%, ahead of EPFL and FHNW at 21.6%, ZHAW at 18.7%, OST at 18.0%, ETHZ at 17.3%, SUPSI at 16.2% and HSLU at 15.6%. UZH is the only institution that exceeds the 26.7% of women among PAM Academic Matura graduates (Figure 2).

Switzerland-wide, universities sit slightly above universities of applied sciences (21.4% vs. 20.3%).

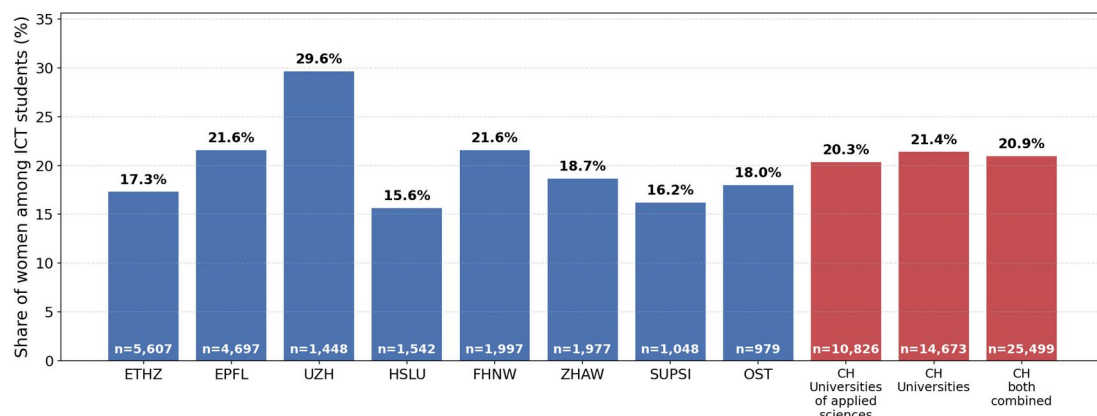


Figure 6: Share of enrolled female students in ICT by institution (2025/26). The institutions shown are a selection, not a complete list.

Source: BFS, SHIS: Studierende nach Fachrichtung, Geschlecht und Hochschule [6, 7]

² Not every institution offers the same ICT fields of study (Table 2, Appendix A.1). Each share aggregates over the fields an institution offers, so part of the spread is the programmes offered, not a within-field difference.

2.4 Share of Women over Time in Academia

The share of women at universities and universities of applied sciences rises steadily from the start of each series and steepens from roughly 2015 (Figure 7). Since 1997, the first year covered for universities of applied sciences, the share of women among ICT students has nearly tripled at universities (7.8% to 21.4%) and grown more than tenfold at universities of applied sciences, from a very low 1.7% to 20.3%. The universities stay consistently ahead, but the gap narrows from about 6 pp to around 1 pp. The rise has not lost momentum: over 2015–2025 the share gained on average 0.62 pp per year at universities and 0.95 pp per year at universities of applied sciences, against 0.32 and 0.47 pp per year over the preceding decade. Both shares nonetheless remain low: they still lie below the 26.7% of women among PAM Academic Matura graduates (Figure 2).

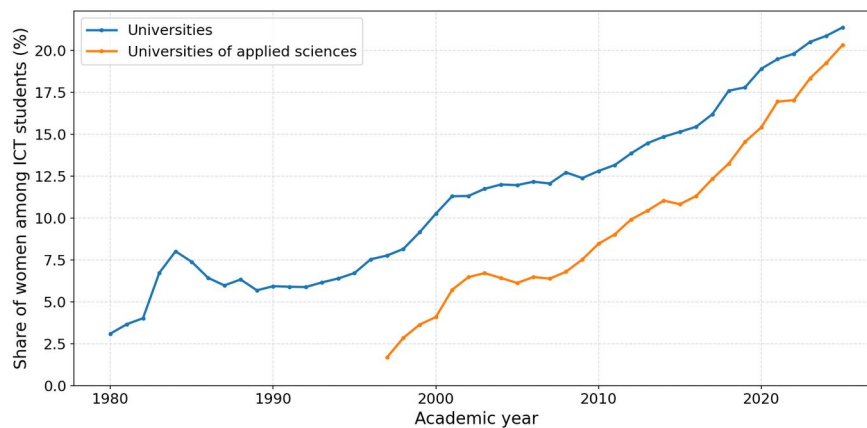


Figure 7: Share of enrolled female students in ICT: universities vs. universities of applied sciences over time

Source: BFS, SHIS: Studierende nach Fachrichtung, Geschlecht und Hochschule [6, 7]

3 Workforce

This section defines ICT by *occupation* following *CH-ISCO-19*, the Swiss occupational classification (Table 4, Appendix A.3). It therefore counts people doing ICT work, wherever they are employed. Section 4 takes the other route and measures ICT by *economic sector*; the levels of the two are not directly comparable.

3.1 Share of Women over Time in the ICT workforce

Figure 8 traces the share of women in the ICT workforce from 1990 to 2024. The 1990 and 2000 points are *Volkszählung* head counts of the whole resident population; from 2010 the series is the *Structural Survey* (Strukturerhebung, SE) [8].

The share stayed practically unchanged from the start to the end of the nineties (8.8% in 1990, 8.6% in 2000). It then grew from 10.1% in 2010 to 14.0% in 2021 and has stagnated since: 13.8% in 2022, 14.4% in 2023 and 13.8% again in 2024, our most recent data point.

That 13.8% is roughly where the share of women enrolled in ICT already stood at Swiss universities in 2012/13 (13.9%) and at the universities of applied sciences in 2019/20 (14.6%; Figure 7): the workforce today stands about where the lecture halls stood five to twelve years ago.

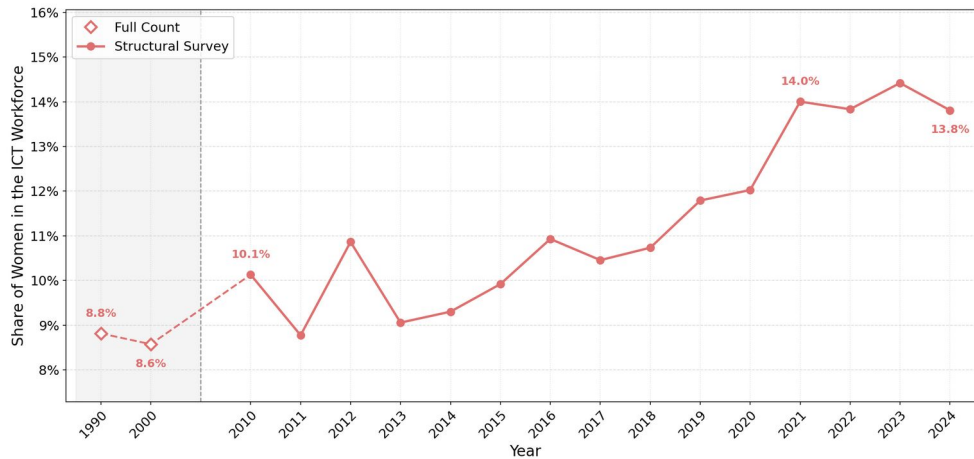


Figure 8: Share of women in the ICT workforce by year, 1990–2024. The 1990 and 2000 points are head counts of the whole resident population; from 2010 the series is the annual Structural Survey.
Source: BFS, Volkszählung, Vollerhebung (1990, 2000) und Strukturerhebung, Stichprobe (ab 2010) [8]

3.2 Share of Women by Major Region

Cumulated over 2020–2024, Zurich leads at 15.8% and the Lake Geneva region follows at 14.5%, while Eastern Switzerland (11.2%) and Central Switzerland (11.6%) trail (Figure 9). The spread of about 4.6 percentage points is wider than the cantonal spread in the sector-based measure (Figure 11), with the large ICT centres at the top.

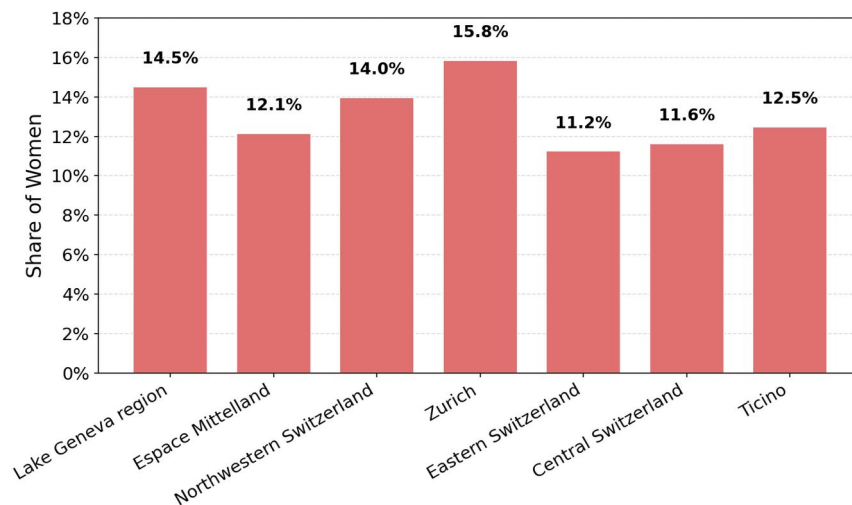


Figure 9: Share of women in the ICT workforce by major region, 2020–2024 cumulated.
Source: BFS, Strukturerhebung (SE), Spezialauswertung für die HSLU [8]

4 Sectors

Where Section 3 measured ICT by occupation, this section measures it by the sector that employs people, and examines the share of women employed in the ICT sector, across cantons and over time. The sectors counted as ICT are listed in Table 5 (Appendix A.4), following *NOGA 2008*, the Swiss classification of economic activities; shares are measured per economic sector and therefore include everyone employed at an ICT firm, not only people doing technical ICT work.

4.1 Share of Women over Time in the ICT Sector

Figure 10 traces the share of women in the ICT sector from 2011 to 2024, and it is essentially flat: 24.1% nationally in 2024 against 23.9% in 2011, with only minor cantonal movements. This stagnation stands in direct contrast to the rising female share throughout the educational pipeline (Figures 2 and 7). At roughly 24%, the sector-based share is also well above the 13.8% measured by ICT *occupation* in the same year (Section 3.1), since it also counts the non-technical staff employed at ICT firms.

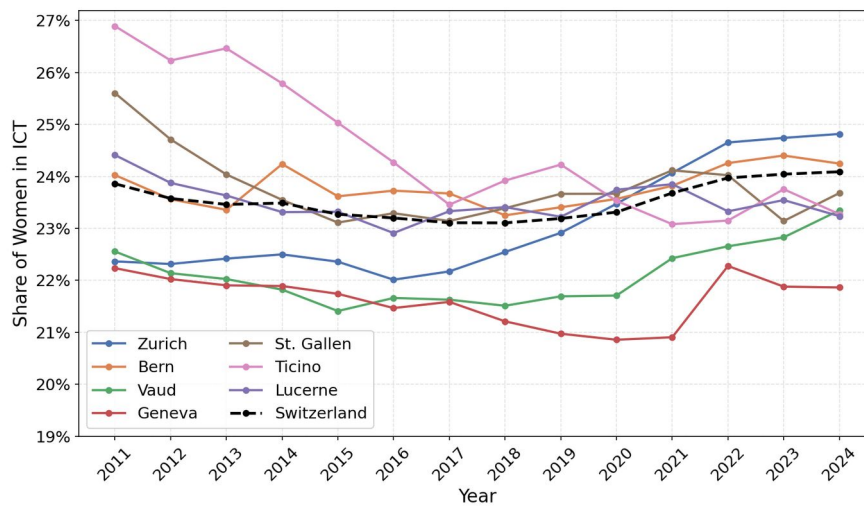


Figure 10: Share of women in ICT sector over time by canton. Counted as employed persons (*Beschäftigte*), full-time and part-time alike.

Source: BFS, STATENT: Beschäftigte nach Jahr, Kanton und Wirtschaftsabteilung [9]

4.2 Share of Women in the ICT Sector by Canton in 2024

Figure 11 breaks the 2024 share down by canton, and the differences between them are small: the female share ranges from 21.9% in Geneva to 24.8% in Zurich, all close to the national average of 24%. This contrasts with the much wider regional spread among PAM Academic Matura graduates (Section 2.1).

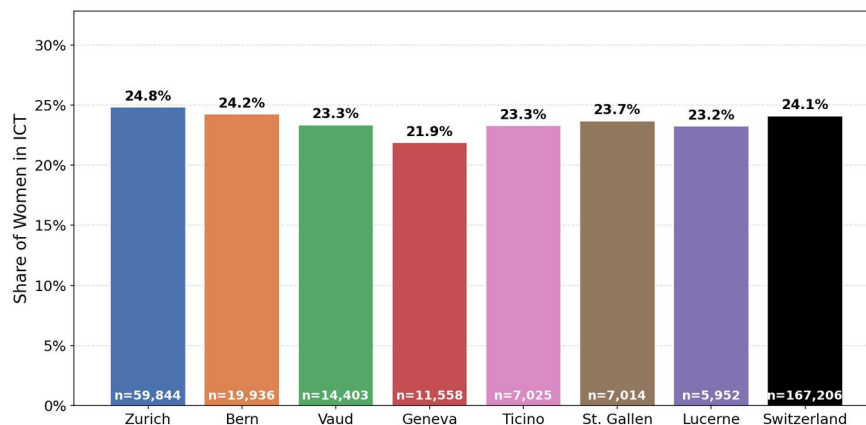


Figure 11: Share of women in ICT sector by selected cantons (2024). Counted as employed persons (*Beschäftigte*), full-time and part-time alike.

Source: BFS, STATENT: Beschäftigte nach Jahr, Kanton und Wirtschaftsabteilung [9]

5 Unemployment

Having looked at who works in ICT, we now ask who is out of work in it: this section examines the unemployment rate in the ICT sector and how it differs between women and men, first across cantons and then over time. ICT is again defined by economic sector. The rates are computed estimates rather than official figures from the *State Secretariat for Economic Affairs* (SECO); Appendix B.6 describes how they are constructed.

5.1 Unemployment Rate by Canton

Figure 12 breaks the 2024 registered unemployment rate in the ICT sector down by gender and canton. In Switzerland as a whole the rate is 2.42%: 2.92% among women and 2.26% among men, a gap of 0.65 pp.

That national gap is not carried by a few cantons alone: the female rate is higher than the male rate in all seven shown cantons (these cantons cover 75.2% of ICT sector employment), and a clear divide runs along the language border, the “Röstigraben”: Vaud (women 5.39%, men 4.10%) and Geneva (3.50%, 2.54%) lie significantly above Zurich (2.75%, 2.09%), Lucerne (2.71%, 1.47%), Bern (1.70%, 1.48%), St. Gallen (1.61%, 1.58%) and Ticino (1.51%, 1.26%). The divide holds for the level of both rates, but not for the width of the gap between them: Vaud has the widest gap at 1.30 pp, yet Lucerne follows at 1.24 pp, ahead of Geneva at 0.96 pp, and the remaining cantons range from 0.66 pp in Zurich down to 0.03 pp in St. Gallen. Ticino, Italian-speaking but not French-speaking, sits with the German-speaking cantons on the level of its rates.

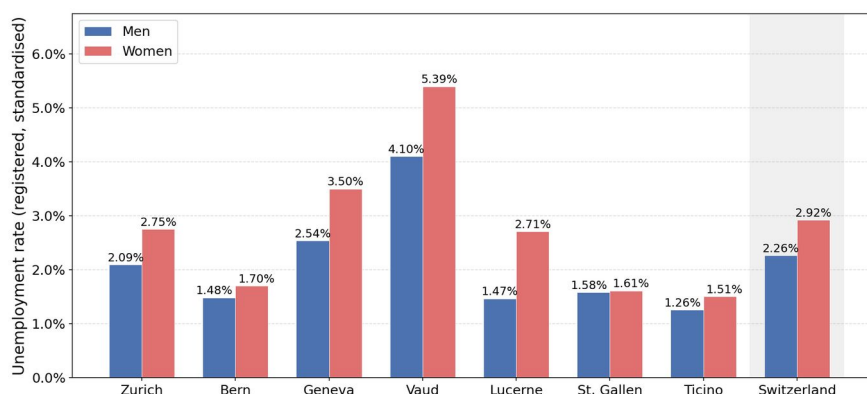


Figure 12: Unemployment rate in the ICT sector (NOGA divisions 61–63) by gender and canton in 2024
Source: SECO, AMSTAT (unemployed) [10]; BFS, STATENT (employed) [9]

5.2 Gender Gap in the Unemployment Rate over Time

Figure 13 follows that gap over time, and it shows that the gap seen across cantons is not new: in every year of the 2011–2024 series the registered unemployment rate of women in the ICT sector exceeds that of men. The series starts at 0.70 pp in 2011, widens over the following years and peaks at 1.00 pp in 2017, before falling back to 0.54 pp in 2019.

The largest single-year increase then comes in the first pandemic year: between 2019 and 2020 the gap widens by 0.34 pp to 0.88 pp, because women’s rate rose more steeply (2.36% to 3.11%) than men’s (1.82% to 2.23%). The gap narrows again over the two following years, to 0.50 pp in 2022, the lowest value of the series, then rises to 0.65 pp in 2024.

At 0.65 pp the gap is still substantial in 2024 and is practically the same gap as in 2011.

This is a phenomenon of the ICT sector rather than of the Swiss labour market as a whole. The Swiss economy without ICT stays at parity over the entire period, starting at +0.13 pp in 2011 and

never departing from zero by more than 0.06 pp from 2013 onwards, while the ICT gap never falls below +0.50 pp.

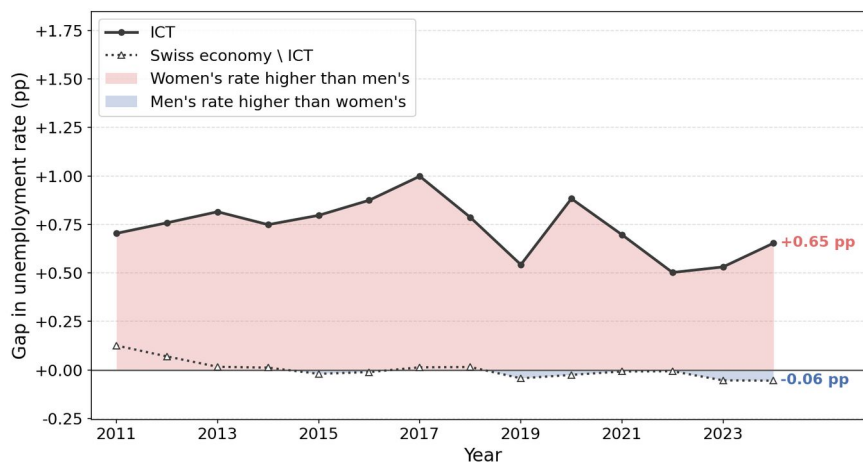


Figure 13: Gender gap in the registered unemployment rate in Switzerland over time, measured as the unemployment rate of women minus that of men in percentage points; positive values indicate a higher rate for women. ICT is NOGA divisions 61–63 and the Swiss economy without ICT is NOGA 01–96 excluding 61–63

Source: SECO, AMSTAT (unemployed) [10]; BFS, STATENT (employed) [9]

6 Pipeline

The previous sections looked at each stage in isolation. Here we stitch them together and trace the share of women along the two routes into an ICT degree, and one step past it into the workforce. Stages are not the same individuals followed over time; they are measured independently and backdated with two fixed durations: a bachelor takes three years and a master two. We further assume that the bachelor starts in the year of the Matura, the master in the year of bachelor graduation, and work in the year of master graduation. The line for master graduation 2024 therefore reads: Academic Matura and bachelor entry in 2019, bachelor graduation and master entry in 2022, master graduation and ICT workforce in 2024. The vocational route is drawn without a master stage: the FH master exists but stays small, 1 600 ICT master degrees against 23 427 bachelor degrees over 2012–2024. Anchored on bachelor graduation, the technical Vocational Matura and FH bachelor entry both fall three years earlier, and bachelor graduation is again also the workforce year.

6.1 Education (Universities) into Workforce Pipeline

Figure 14 traces the female share along the university route, grouped by master graduation year. All seven lines follow a similar shape. By far the largest drop is the first one, from the Academic Matura to ICT bachelor entry, at between 7.4 and 11.5 pp in every window. A smaller but equally consistent loss follows across the bachelor itself, 0.1 to 3.5 pp. The share then jumps sharply at master entry, by 3.3 to 6.7 pp, and gives part of that back by master graduation in every window except 2024, where it instead rises by 1.0 pp, and 2018–2019, which is flat. The dashed step into the ICT workforce (Section 3) is a drop again in all seven windows, by 1.7 to 6.3 pp. On the most recent line, master graduation 2024, the share therefore runs 23.9% at the Academic Matura, 15.9% at bachelor entry, 15.8% at bachelor graduation, 19.1% at master entry, 20.1% at master graduation and 13.8% in the workforce.

One candidate explanation for the jump at master entry is composition by nationality, as the master stage is much more international. Over 2010–2024, international students account for 31.8% of ICT

bachelor degrees at Swiss universities but 49.5% of master degrees, a gap of 17.7 pp (unweighted mean across years) [11].

The step from graduation into work has a European counterpart: McKinsey [2] puts women at 39% of tech (defined as STEM in their paper for education) master graduates in Europe in 2025 but at only 19% of tech roles, a loss of 20 pp. The jump at master entry appears in their data as well, from 32% at bachelor graduation to 36% at master entry in 2022 and from 33% to 37% in 2025, a gain of 4 pp in both years against our 3.3 to 6.7 pp.

Encouragingly, every stage grows over the twelve years covered. The gains are largest inside the university, at +7.0 pp for bachelor graduates (8.8% to 15.8%) and +6.7 pp for master graduates (13.5% to 20.1%), while the two ends of the pipeline gain the least: the PAM Academic Matura adds +2.9 pp (21.0% to 23.9%) and the ICT workforce +3.9 pp (9.9% to 13.8%).

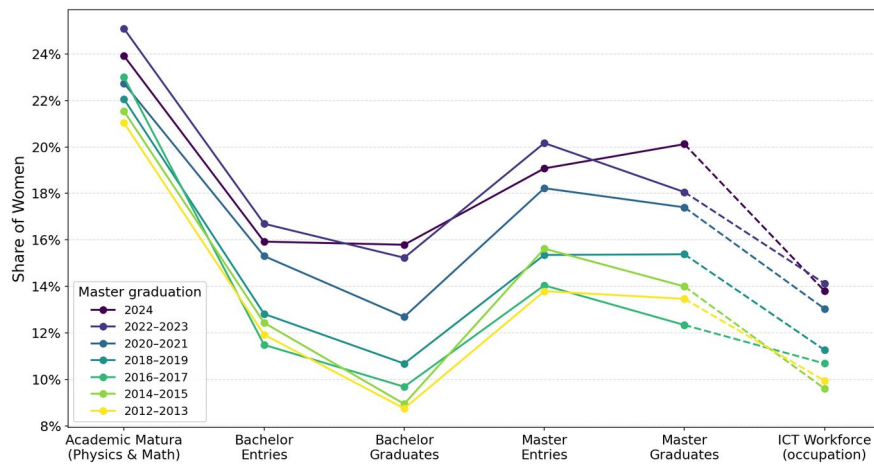


Figure 14: Share of women in the ICT pipeline (Swiss universities only)
PAM Academic Matura graduation → bachelor entries → bachelor graduates → master entries → master graduates → ICT workforce
Source: BFS, Maturitätszeugnisse und SHIS: Eintritte und Abschlüsse (UH), Eintritte Masterstufe (Sonderauswertung), Volkszählung und Strukturerhebung [4, 12, 13, 14, 8]

6.2 Vocational (Universities of Applied Sciences) into Workforce Pipeline

Figure 15 shows the same share along the vocational route, grouped by bachelor graduation year. The shape is markedly different. The first step, from the technical Vocational Matura to FH ICT bachelor entry, is the one that collapses on the university route, but here it has turned around: a loss of 0.5 to 2.1 pp for graduation years 2012–2019 and a gain of 1.7 to 4.1 pp from 2020 on. Across the bachelor itself the share then slips slightly, by 0.2 to 1.5 pp in every window except 2022–2023, which gains 0.3 pp. The dashed step into the ICT workforce (Section 3) points upward for graduation years 2012–2019, with 2014–2015 the single exception, and turns downward from 2020 on. That reversal is not a shrinking workforce: over those last three windows the share of women in an ICT occupation held its level, at 13.0% in 2020–2021, 14.1% in 2022–2023 and 13.8% in 2024. It is the share among FH ICT graduates that grew faster and overtook it, from 13.3% to 16.0% across the same three windows (Figure 15). On the most recent line, bachelor graduation 2024, the share runs 13.2% at the Vocational Matura, 17.3% at bachelor entry, 16.0% at bachelor graduation and 13.8% in the workforce. Since 2020 the FH therefore takes in a higher share of women than the technical Vocational Matura produces, the reverse of the university route, where this same step is by far the largest loss (Section 6.1). As an FH admits students from well beyond that one specialization (Section B.4), we read this as an indication that offering several entry routes helps draw women into these programmes.

The upward trend holds here as well: every stage grows over the twelve years covered, and the pattern of Section 6.1 repeats. The gains are largest in the middle, at +8.1 pp for bachelor entries

(9.3% to 17.3%) and +8.2 pp for bachelor graduates (7.8% to 16.0%), while the two ends gain the least: the technical Vocational Matura adds +1.9 pp (11.3% to 13.2%) and the ICT workforce +3.9 pp. However we consider this growth far too slow: at the pace of the last twelve years, roughly 0.3 pp a year, the ICT workforce would not reach one fifth women before the 2040s.

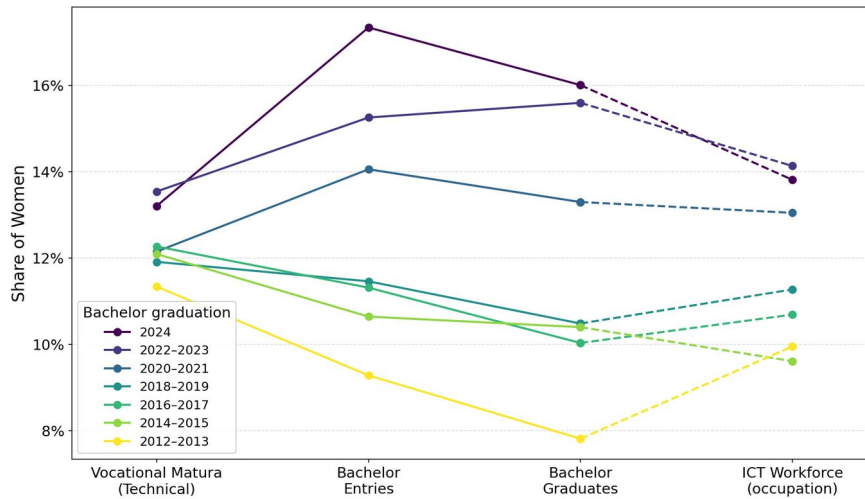


Figure 15: Share of women in the ICT pipeline (Swiss universities of applied sciences only)
 Technical Vocational Matura graduation (BM1 + BM2) → bachelor entries → bachelor graduates →
 ICT workforce | grouped by bachelor graduation year (two-year windows).
 Source: BFS, Berufsmaturitätszeugnisse und SHIS: Eintritte und Abschlüsse (FH), Strukturerhebung [5,
 15, 16, 8]

7 Graduate Survey

This section reports the occupational position (intern; assistant or doctoral student; employee without a management function; employee with a management function; self-employed) of ICT graduates five years after graduation, by gender. Both figures show the *gap*, the share of women in a position minus the share of men in percentage points, for ICT next to the non-ICT reference group, so that a gap can be read as an ICT trait or as the general pattern at that institution type. All numbers in this section come from the BFS graduate survey (ASHS) [17], whose ICT cells rest on small sample sizes and must therefore be read with caution (limitations described in Appendix B.8). We suggest running these surveys more frequently and with larger sample sizes to reduce these limitations.

7.1 University Master Graduates

All five point estimates in Figure 16 lean the same way as their non-ICT counterparts: women are less often assistants or doctoral students, less often in a position with a management function, and more often employees without one. In positions with a management function the ICT gap is the narrower of the two, -2.3 pp against -5.0 pp outside ICT.

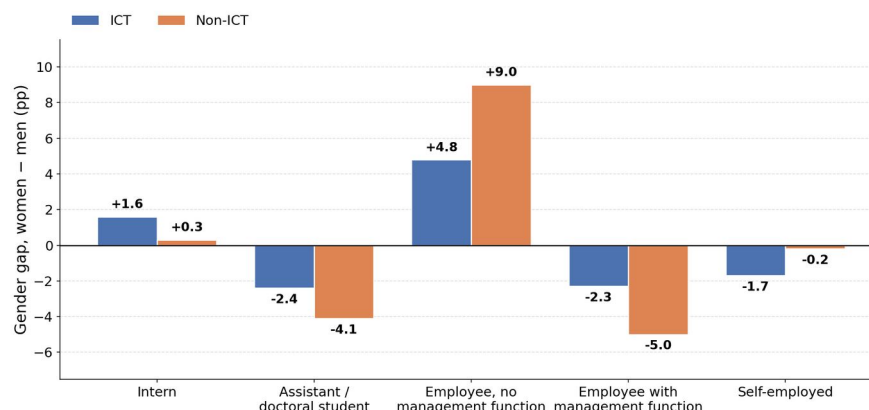


Figure 16: Gender gap in the occupational position of university master graduates, ICT vs. non-ICT
Share of women minus share of men per position, in percentage points, five years after graduation | graduation cohorts 2016, 2018 and 2020 pooled;
Source: BFS, ASHS: Berufliche Stellung nach Fachrichtung und Geschlecht, Spezialauswertung für die HSLU; the published table breaks down by Fachgruppe only [17, 18]

7.2 University of Applied Sciences Bachelor Graduates

Only two of the five point estimates in Figure 17 follow their non-ICT counterparts: women are more often employees without a management function and less often in a position with one. The remaining three are small on both sides and disagree in sign, with the assistant and self-employment gaps favouring women in ICT and men outside it, and the intern gap close to 0 either way.

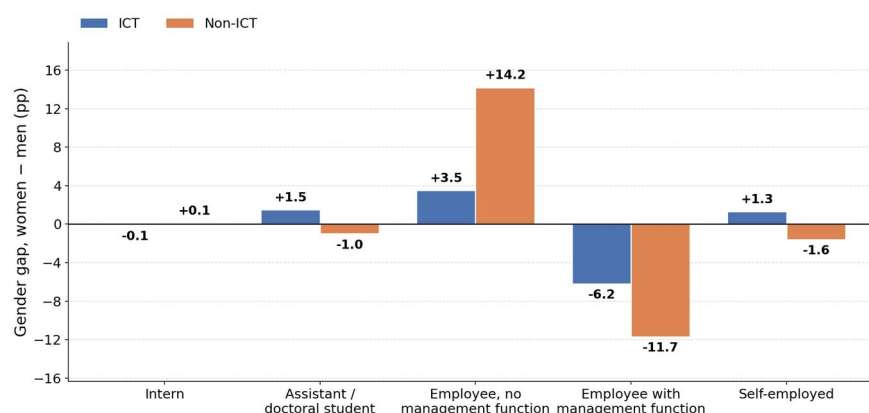


Figure 17: Gender gap in the occupational position of university of applied sciences bachelor graduates, ICT vs. non-ICT
Share of women minus share of men per position, in percentage points, five years after graduation | graduation cohorts 2016, 2018 and 2020 pooled;
Source: BFS, ASHS: Berufliche Stellung nach Fachrichtung und Geschlecht, Spezialauswertung für die HSLU; the published table breaks down by Fachgruppe only [17, 18]

Both figures place women more often among employees without a management function and less often among those with one. Employer-side data (it classifies by employer industry rather than by field of study) shows the same gap: in the Gender Intelligence Report 2025 [19], built on HR records of 376 000 employees at more than 90 Swiss companies, the share of women falls from 46% of non-management to 23% of top management, and in the tech industry from 24% to 17%.

8 Conclusions: Putting It All Together

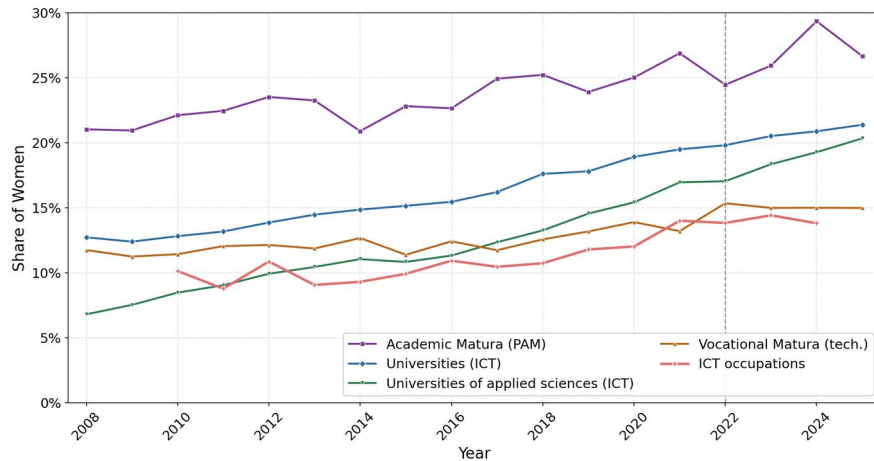


Figure 18: Share of women over time: education pipeline vs. ICT workforce
 Switzerland | Academic Matura graduates with PAM as a core subject (Figure 2), enrolled ICT students at universities and universities of applied sciences (Figure 7), technical Vocational Matura graduates (BM1+BM2) (Figure 4) and ICT occupations (Figure 8). The grey vertical rule marks 2022, the year at which Table 1 splits the window.
 Source: BFS: Strukturerhebung, Maturitäts- und Berufsmaturitätszeugnisse, SHIS [8, 4, 5, 6, 7]

	earliest	2022	latest	Δ to 2022	per 3 yr to 2022	Δ since 2022
Academic Matura (PAM)	21.0% (2008)	24.5%	26.7% (2025)	+3.4	+0.7	+2.2
Universities (ICT)	12.7% (2008)	19.8%	21.4% (2025)	+7.1	+1.5	+1.6
Universities of applied sciences (ICT)	6.8% (2008)	17.0%	20.3% (2025)	+10.2	+2.2	+3.3
Vocational Matura (technical)	11.7% (2008)	15.4%	15.0% (2025)	+3.6	+0.8	-0.4
ICT occupations	10.1% (2010)	13.8%	13.8% (2024)	+3.7	+0.9	-0.0

Table 1: Share of women per series at the earliest year, 2022 and the most recent year, with the change in pp split at 2022. The two windows are of unequal length, so the “per 3 yr to 2022” column rescales the change up to 2022 to a three-year span, which is what makes it directly comparable to the “ Δ since 2022” column.

Source: as Figure 18

Figure 18 sets the education pipeline next to the labour market on a shared axis: the PAM Academic Matura from Section 2.1, enrolled ICT students at universities and universities of applied sciences from Section 2.4, the technical Vocational Matura from Section 2.2, and ICT occupations from Section 3.1. Table 1 splits each at 2022. Across the window every line has risen, the two student series by far the most: the universities of applied sciences by 13.5 pp, from 6.8% to 20.3%, and the universities by 8.7 pp, from 12.7% to 21.4%. The workforce line has risen little by comparison: ICT occupations have only gained 3.7 pp since 2010.

The split at 2022 separates the lines still moving from those that have stopped. The universities of applied sciences and the PAM Academic Matura now move faster than over the fourteen years before, PAM adding 2.2 pp over 2022–2025 against a long-run +0.7 per 3 yr, despite a 2.7 pp drop from its 2024 peak of 29.4%; the universities hold their pace. Against that, the technical Vocational Matura has given back 0.4 pp since its 2022 peak. The labour market has not moved either: ICT occupations are flat since 2022.

We have shown that the gender gap exists in ICT, but ICT is not the only place where it is found. This report is the groundwork for an Index: a first baseline built primarily from public BFS data, and a shortlist of the indicators worth tracking, along with the limits that come with them (Section B). Building the Index on that, beyond ICT and on a repeating schedule, is our next step.

The data is public. The story it tells is yours to use: share it with a student, a teacher, or a young woman wondering whether tech has a place for her. It does.

A Definitions

This appendix lists every category we count as ICT. Four definitions are needed, because the underlying statistics describe people in three different ways: by their field of study (universities, universities of applied sciences individually), by their occupation, and by the economic sector of their employer. All four rest on official nomenclatures of the BFS.

Each of the four selections is built to mirror the others as closely as its own nomenclature allows, so that the educational, occupational and sectoral figures can be read side by side. We state explicitly that a one to one mapping between them does not exist: the nomenclatures are independent of each other, they differ in granularity and they draw their boundaries in different places. Every comparison across the four definitions is therefore an approximation rather than an exact correspondence.

A.1 ICT Definition - Universities of Applied Sciences (FH)

Study programmes at the universities of applied sciences are classified in the BFS *Fächerkatalog der Fachhochschulen* [20], the field nomenclature used throughout the higher education statistics, which sorts every programme into a *subject area* and, below it, a *field of study*. Table 2 lists the ten fields of study we count as ICT; they underlie every FH figure in Sections 2 and 6. For each field the table also reports the number of female students in the academic year 2025/26 and the share of women within that field, which makes the main drivers of the ICT aggregate visible.

Subject Area	Field of Study	Female students 2025/26	Women (%)
Business and Services	Business Information Technology	687	21.9
Engineering and IT	Computer Science	662	16.4
Engineering and IT	Media Engineering	343	56.0
Business and Services	Business Information Systems	157	32.0
Engineering and IT	Medical Informatics	146	61.9
Engineering and IT	Microtechnology	73	15.1
Engineering and IT	Electrical Engineering	66	6.2
Engineering and IT	Systems Engineering	57	8.3
Engineering and IT	Information Technology	11	14.5
Engineering and IT	Telecommunications	0	–
ICT total		2 202	20.3

Table 2: Selected ICT fields of study from the BFS *Fächerkatalog* (field catalogue) for universities of applied sciences (FH) [20]. The last two columns give the number of female students in each field in the academic year 2025/26, summed over all Fachhochschulen, and the share of women within it [7]. Telecommunications has no students left in 2025/26 and only carries weight in the earlier years of the series.

A.2 ICT Definition - Universities

Universities have a separate field nomenclature, the *Fächerkatalog der universitären Hochschulen* [21], built the same way. Table 3 lists the five fields of study we count as ICT. Because the two catalogues are independent nomenclatures with different field names and different granularity, the two selections are made separately and their categories do not map one to one onto each other.

Subject Area	Field of Study	Female students 2025/26	Women (%)
Exact Sciences	IT	1 972	21.2
Mechanical and Electrical Engineering	Electrical Engineering	541	19.7
Mechanical and Electrical Engineering	Microtechnology	293	22.1
Mechanical and Electrical Engineering	Communication Systems	193	23.1
Economics	Business Informatics	139	30.1
ICT total		3 138	21.4

Table 3: Selected ICT fields of study from the BFS Fächerkatalog (field catalogue) for universities [21]. The last two columns give the number of female students in each field in the academic year 2025/26, summed over all universities, and the share of women within it [6].

A.3 ICT Definition - CH-ISCO-19 (Occupations)

Occupations are coded in *CH-ISCO-19* [22], the Swiss occupation nomenclature in use since 2019 and the occupation variable of the BFS surveys behind Section 3. It adopts the four levels of the international ISCO-08 classification [23] unchanged and adds a fifth, Swiss-specific level below them, the occupational type (*Berufsart*), which splits some of the international unit groups into the occupations that are common in Switzerland.

We selected the occupations in Table 4 to mirror the ICT fields of study of the two previous definitions as closely as the nomenclature allows, so that the occupational picture stays comparable with the educational one.

Table 4: Selected ICT occupations from the Swiss occupation classification CH-ISCO-19 [22].

4-Digit	Unit Group (ISCO-08)	5-Digit	Occupational Type (CH-ISCO-19)
1330	Information and communications technology service managers	13300	Information and communications technology service managers
2151	Electrical engineers	21510	Electrical engineers
2153	Telecommunications engineers	21530	Telecommunications engineers
2356	Information technology trainers	23560	Information technology trainers
2434	Information and communications technology sales professionals	24340	Information and communications technology sales professionals
2500	Information and communications technology professionals, n.f.s.	25000	Information and communications technology professionals, n.f.s.
2510	Software and applications developers and analysts, n.f.s.	25100	Software and applications developers and analysts (excluding computer engineers), n.f.s.
		25101	Computer engineers
2511	Systems analysts	25110	Systems analysts, n.f.s.
		25111	Systems analysts, architecture and controlling
		25112	Systems analysts, consulting
2512	Software developers	25120	Software developers, n.f.s.
		25121	Software developers, software engineering
		25122	Software developers, business informatics
		25123	Software developers, system engineering and architecture
		25124	Software developers, project management
2514	Applications programmers	25140	Applications programmers
2519	Software and applications developers and analysts not elsewhere classified	25190	Software and applications developers and analysts not elsewhere classified (excluding quality and testing)
		25191	Software and applications developers and analysts, quality and testing

4-Digit	Unit Group (ISCO-08)	5-Digit	Occupational Type (CH-ISCO-19)
2520	Database and network professionals, n.f.s.	25200	Database and network professionals, n.f.s.
2521	Database designers and administrators	25210	Database designers and administrators
2522	Systems administrators	25220	Systems administrators
2523	Computer network professionals	25230	Computer network professionals
2529	Database and network professionals not elsewhere classified	25290	Database and network professionals not elsewhere classified (excluding security management and data mining)
		25291	Database and network professionals, security management and data mining

A.4 ICT Definition - NOGA 2008

NOGA 2008 [24] is the Swiss classification of economic activities, identical to the European NACE Rev. 2 [25] down to the four-digit class and extended below that for Swiss purposes. Every business in Switzerland carries a NOGA code for its main activity, which is why NOGA is also the sector classification behind the employment and unemployment statistics used in Sections 4 and 5. The BFS is currently in the middle of replacing it with *NOGA 2025* [26], which enters the published statistics from 2026 onwards. All sector data in this report is still coded in NOGA 2008, so our definition is built on that version.

Table 5 lists the three divisions we count as ICT: 61 (telecommunications), 62 (IT services) and 63 (information services). Two ICT-related activities are deliberately left out. Manufacturing of ICT hardware (division 26) is excluded because the report is about ICT services rather than electronics production. Software publishing is excluded for a different reason. It sits in division 58 (*Publishing*), where only two of the seven classes are ICT, the publishing of computer games (5821) and of other software (5829). The remaining five have nothing to do with ICT: books (5811), directories and mailing lists (5812), newspapers (5813), journals and periodicals (5814) and other publishing (5819). Our employment and unemployment sources resolve sectors only to the two-digit division, so division 58 can be taken whole or not at all, and taking it whole would count the entire Swiss publishing industry as ICT. We therefore leave it out.

2-Digit	Division	4-Digit	Class
61	Telecommunications	6110	Wired telecommunications activities
		6120	Wireless telecommunications activities
		6130	Satellite telecommunications activities
		6190	Other telecommunications activities
62	Computer programming, consultancy and related activities	6201	Computer programming activities
		6202	Computer consultancy activities
		6203	Computer facilities management activities
		6209	Other information technology and computer service activities
63	Information service activities	6311	Data processing, hosting and related activities
		6312	Web portals
		6391	News agency activities
		6399	Other information service activities n.e.c.

Table 5: Selected ICT sectors from NOGA 2008 [24]

B Limitations

Every figure in this report is an aggregate built from published data, and a number of constraints limit how far its results can be pushed.

B.1 Gender is Recorded as a Binary

Every source used in this report records gender as either Woman or Man. People who identify as neither are therefore either absent from the published tables or counted in one of the two, and nothing in this report can speak about them.

B.2 Two Employment Sources for the ICT Sector

The share of women in the ICT sector rests on two BFS sources. BESTA [1] is a quarterly establishment *survey* reaching back to 1991 but published for Switzerland as a whole only (no cantonal split); it carries the long series of Figure 1. STATENT [9] is an annual register-based (AHV) full count with a cantonal split, but it covers only 2011 to 2024; it carries Figures 10 and 11 and supplies the employment denominator of the unemployment rates in Section 5. Over the fourteen years both cover, the two national series differ by 0.30 pp on average and never by more than 0.62 pp (2024: 24.1% on STATENT against 23.7% on BESTA).

B.3 The Technical Vocational Matura as an ICT Proxy

The Vocational Matura data contains no ICT-specific direction: the technical direction is the most natural choice for a student heading into ICT, so it stands in for ICT in Section 2.2 (Figures 4 and 5), on the vocational pipeline (Figure 15) and in the Vocational Matura line of Figure 18. That direction is broader than ICT: it is composed of three main areas, *Engineering and IT*, *Architecture* and *Life Sciences*, and it includes the laboratory variant (*Chemistry and Biology*). The series also spans a change of classification: the *Technical Direction* of BMV 1998 becomes *Engineering and IT*, *Architecture* and *Life Sciences* under BMV 2009, and the migration is staggered by route (BM2 in 2016, BM1 only in 2018/19). We splice the two by summing the old and the new rows per year; since they are never populated for the same students the sum is exact, but the two labels are not a perfectly identical scope.

B.4 Two Entry Routes out of Several

Section 2 traces two entry routes into ICT studies, PAM at the Academic Matura and the technical Vocational Matura, but neither specialization has to be chosen to enter a university or a university of applied sciences. An Academic Matura admits to a university independently of the core subject chosen, and to an FH after at least one year of work experience in an occupation related to the chosen field of study, so PAM is one entry point among many, and a Vocational Matura in a non-technical direction admits to an FH as well. Further routes into ICT bypass both specializations: the Passerelle, which admits Vocational Matura holders to a university, higher vocational education (höhere Fachschule), and career changers who enter ICT occupations without a formal ICT qualification.

B.5 Withheld Cells in the Structural Survey

The occupation-based ICT workforce carries Figures 8 and 9, the closing stage of both pipeline figures and the ICT occupation line of Figure 18. From 2010 it comes from the Structural Survey [8], a sample survey that withholds any cell resting on fewer than five sampled people, for data protection. A withheld cell therefore holds less than the smallest cell the survey does publish, and we count it as two

fifths of that. In 2024 this adds about 260 women to a total of 25 700, roughly one percent of it (about 280 men to a total of 160 100, under a fifth of a percent of it). The 1990 and 2000 points are full counts and thus contain no imputation.

B.6 Construction of the ICT Unemployment Rates

The rates in Section 5 are computed proxies rather than official SECO sectoral rates: registered unemployed (SECO AMSTAT [10]) divided by employed (STATENT) plus registered unemployed. Three construction choices matter. First, the series starts in 2011 for two independent reasons: AMSTAT does not carry NOGA division 63 (information service activities) before June 2009 and STATENT has no coverage before 2011. Second, AMSTAT publishes monthly numbers, so the annual value is the mean of the year's twelve months, matching the annual reference period of the denominator. Third, the rates are directly standardised over the NOGA divisions rather than pooled: pooling weights each division by its share of *that sex's* own labour force, so part of a gap would reflect where women and men work rather than how their rates differ within a division. Figure 12 applies one shared standard, the national combined-sex ICT mix of 2024, so the cantons stay comparable with each other; Figure 13 standardises each series on its own combined-sex mix, recomputed yearly, since ICT and the rest of the economy share no divisions and no common standard exists.

B.7 No Traceability of Individuals in the Pipeline

The pipeline in Section 6 does not follow the same individuals across stages. The BFS publishes no data set tracing people from the Matura through graduation and into work, so we measure each stage independently and stitch the stages together by back-dating with fixed assumed durations. The steps between stages are therefore differences between separately measured cohorts, not observed departures: they show where the share of women falls, not which women left or when. Traceable individual-level data is what a future version of this index would gain the most from, since it would let us locate the drop-off exactly instead of inferring it from aggregates.

B.8 Sample Size in the Graduate Survey

The two figures in Section 7 come from the BFS graduate survey (ASHS [17]), a sample survey rather than a full count. Once its respondents are split by institution type, field group, gender and occupational position, the ICT cells rest on few observations. Pooling the three cohorts (2016, 2018, 2020) per gender, the 95% confidence interval of the gender gap stays below 2 pp throughout on the non-ICT side but runs from 0.2 to 8.7 pp on the ICT side.

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