

Temporary Workers in Switzerland 2024

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Executive Summary

Staffing service providers' success is determined entirely by the temporary workers they supply, for these workers are the staffing leasing services' whole reason for being. The opinion and social research institute gfs-zürich recently took temporary workers' pulse with a survey. Who works temporarily? In which functions and industries are the temporary workers employed? What characteristics distinguish these people from the rest of the Swiss working population? How long do they work temporarily and how satisfied are they with temporary work and their staffing service provider? You will find answers to these questions in this study.

With regard to numerous characteristics, the profile of an average temporary worker looks increasingly like the profile of an average Swiss employee. Thus, for example, temporary workers are only slightly younger than other employees. Overall, people from all age groups and with all kinds of qualifications work temporarily in all functions and industries. Therefore, it is hardly possible to conceive of the Swiss labor market without this flexible form of work.

At the same time, most people surveyed are only employed temporarily for a brief time. This poses the challenge for the industry of having to recruit new employees constantly. Conversely, for temporary workers this also means that many of them discover new career possibilities during their temporary employment phase and that temporary staffing was planned as a transition phase from the very beginning.

Happily, temporary workers are very satisfied with temporary employment as a form of work and with the staffing service providers' service. They feel well cared-for – and they are procured for appropriate positions in appropriate teams. Based on this experience, the large majority of temporary workers would recommend this form of work.

Description of methods

In October and November 2024, swissstaffing commissioned the market and social research institute gfs-zürich to survey 5018 temporary workers who worked in Switzerland in 2023 on a temporary basis.

Participants were employees of large and small staffing companies, including five of the largest swissstaffing members. In total, approximately 76,000 employees received letters. The response rate was a good 6.5 percent. The figures and observations were weighted with the response per company. The survey was conducted in German, French, Italian, English, Spanish, and Portuguese.¹

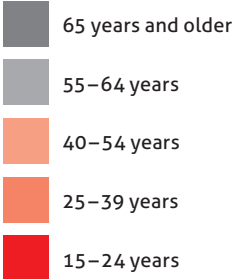
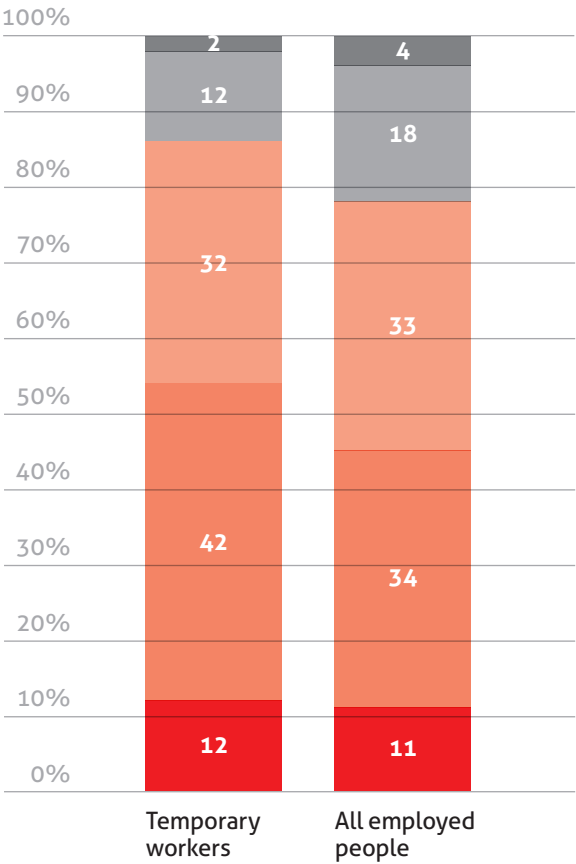
¹ The survey can be regarded as representative of large staffing service providers' temporary workers. Employees of small staffing providers are underrepresented. In recent years, large staffing service providers' activity in construction has declined in favor of small and medium-sized companies. Therefore, the construction sector is underrepresented in the figures.

Age

Temporary workers are traditionally younger than the rest of the labor force. However, the age distribution of temporary workers is increasingly closer to that of the labor force. This is due to the increased employment of

experienced employees, demographic developments, and the increasing need for a better work-life balance. (see swissstaffing, 2018).

Age of temporary workers by comparison



Note: The BFS distinguishes between the employed and employable people, whereby the category employable people includes all employed people and all unemployed people. Here, the category of employable people is used as a benchmark.

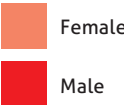
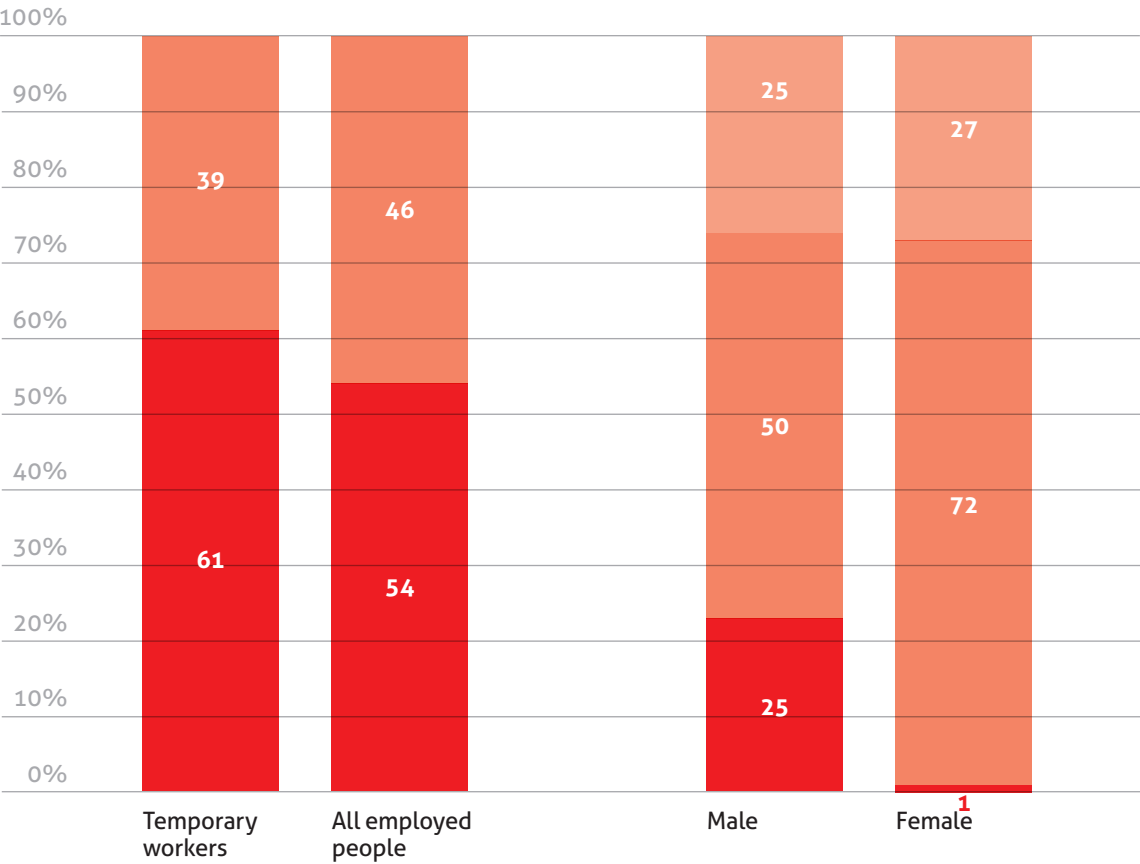
Observations: 4868
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024; FSO, 2023

Sex

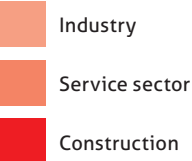
Men are better represented among temporary workers. This is due primarily to the mix of sectors and qualifications. The temporary staffing industry performs a crucial buffer function for order peaks in construction

and industry. In the construction sector in particular, there are significantly more men than women. In the industrial sector, however, both sexes are represented in roughly equal numbers.

Sex of temporary workers by comparison



Observations: 4960
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024; FSO, 2023

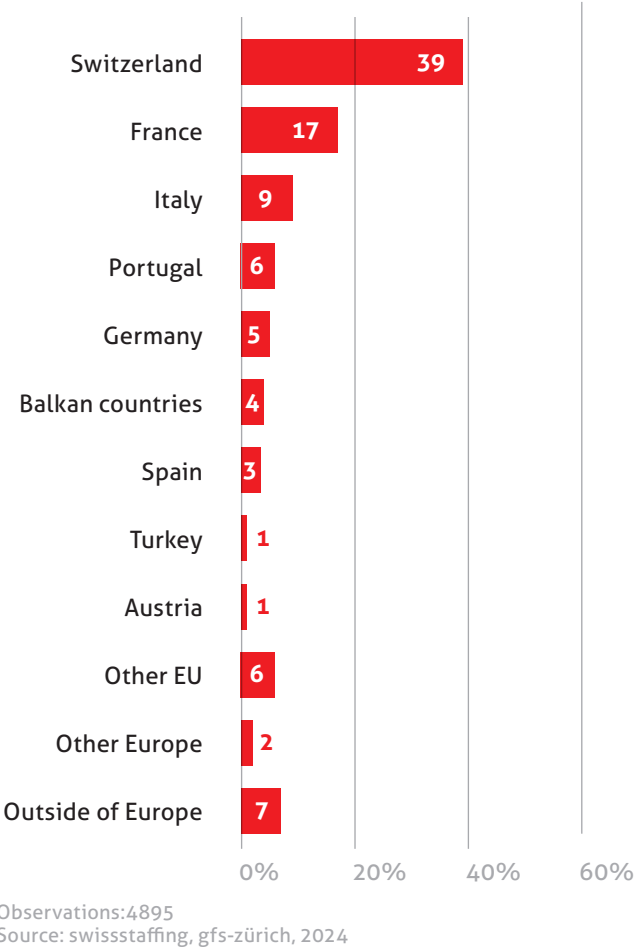


Observations: 4986
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Nationality

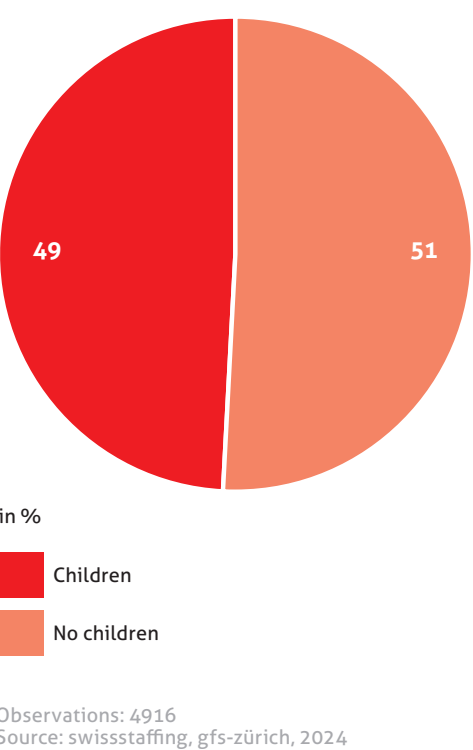
The share of foreigners among temporary workers is higher than the share of foreigners in the Swiss population. Most foreigners come from the EU, especially citizens of neighboring countries are frequently employed temporarily in Switzerland due to geographic and linguistic proximity. The share of foreigners of temporary workers in Switzerland is underestimated slightly here: According to Seco, the share of foreigners in the staffing industry in 2023 was approximately 66.5 percent. The reasons for the high share of foreigners in the staffing industry are on the one hand the mix of industries and qualifications. On the other hand, foreigners are affected more frequently by unemployment and more frequently dependent on the integration function of temporary work in the labor market.

Temporary workers by nationality



Family situation

Family circumstances of temporary workers

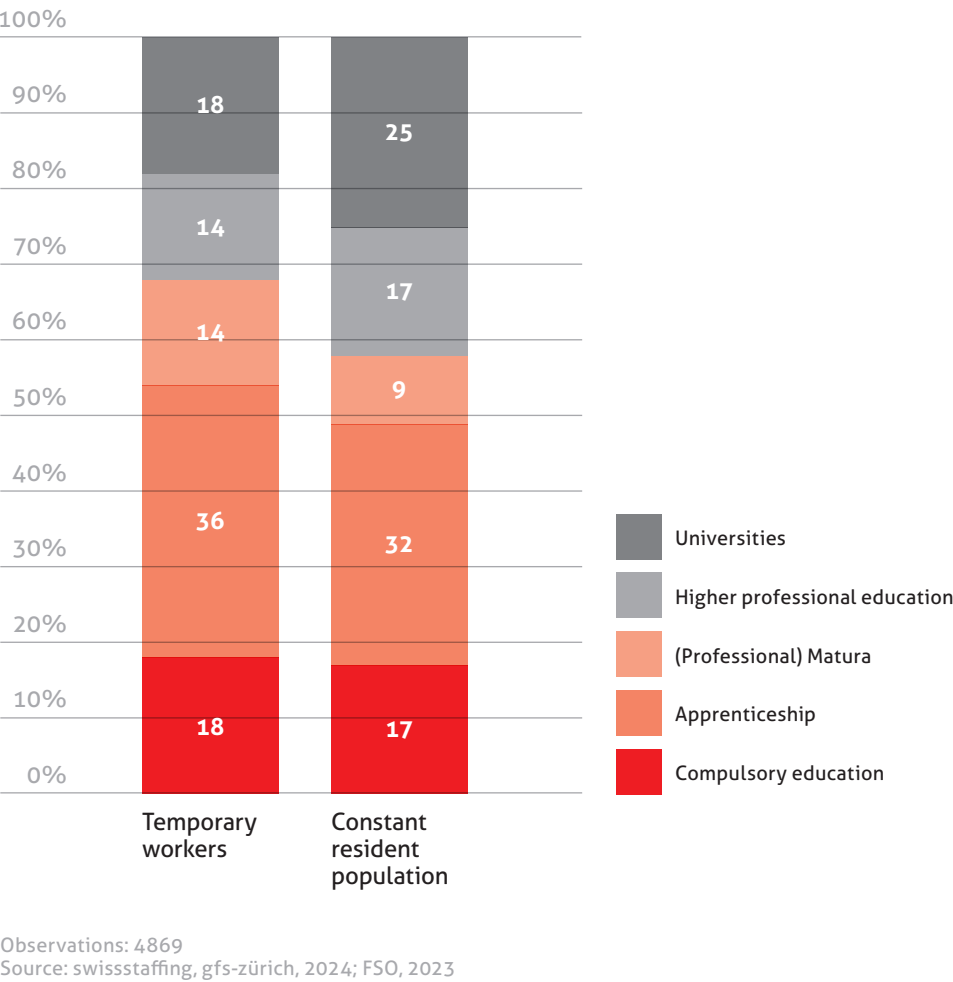


Education and training

The education and training level of temporary workers is comparable to that of the constant resident population, whereby the educational level among the temporary workers is slightly lower. Less qualified people work temporarily more frequently because they profit especially from staffing service providers' assistance and the low threshold level of temporary employment during their (re-)entry into the labor market. Highly-qualified people frequently use temporary employment

because, for example, they can work as much as they wish and at the desired hours during periods of further education and training. Increasingly, very specialized staffers are also deployed via temporary staffing where they, as experts, are most needed. The higher proportion of employees with a university degree in the overall population shows the catch-up potential of the industry in this segment.

Last educational achievement by comparison

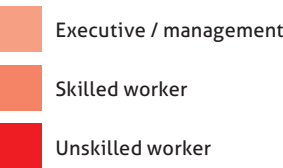
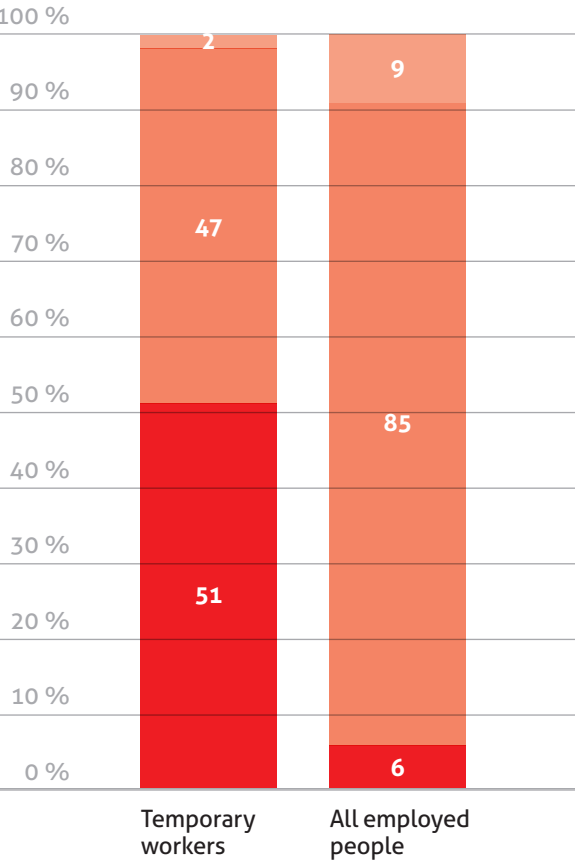


Function

The temporary staffing industry also assumes an important employment and integration function for people who have a low level of education, who work as unskilled workers or who are seeking an auxiliary source of income. On average, unskilled workers remain in temporary staffing for less time than skilled workers and managers. For them, temporary work is frequently

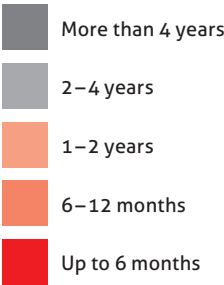
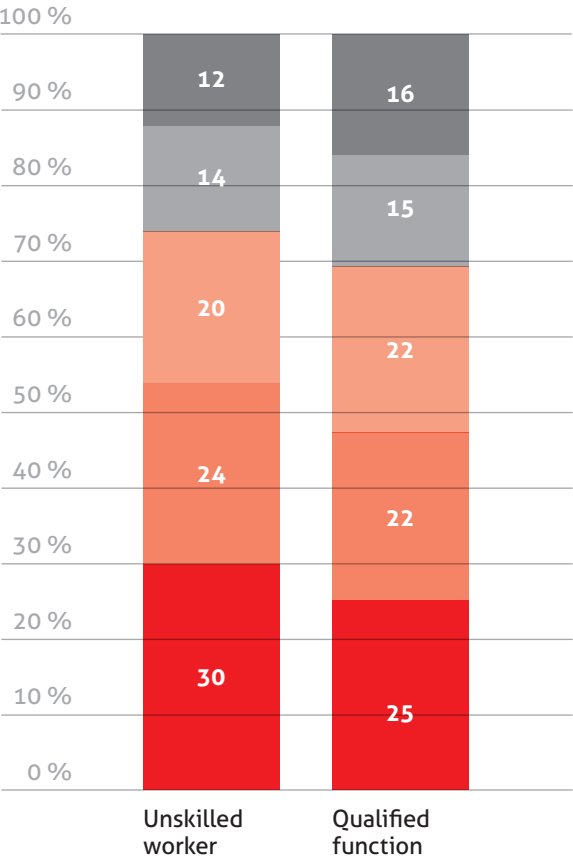
a source of auxiliary income or a brief transition phase. For temporary workers in qualified functions, long-term deployments are more frequent since they are often specialists who work on projects. Accordingly, unskilled workers form the largest group among temporary workers. The second largest group is made up of qualified professionals.

Temporary workers by professional function by comparison



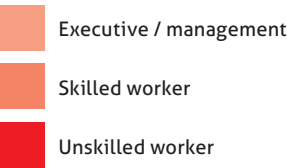
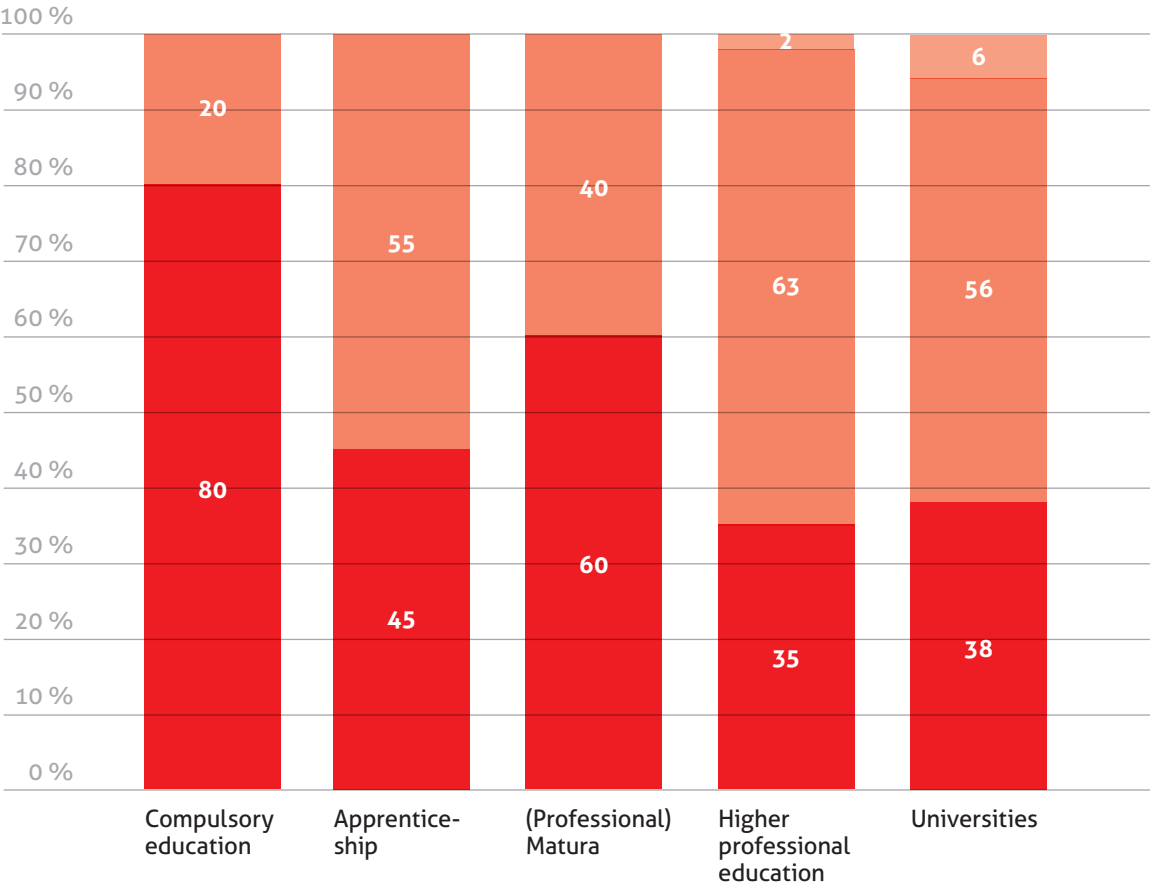
Observations: 4699
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024; FSO, 2023

Duration of the temporary employment by function



Observations: 4034
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Highest educational qualification and function



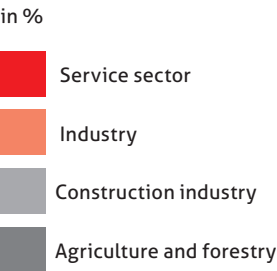
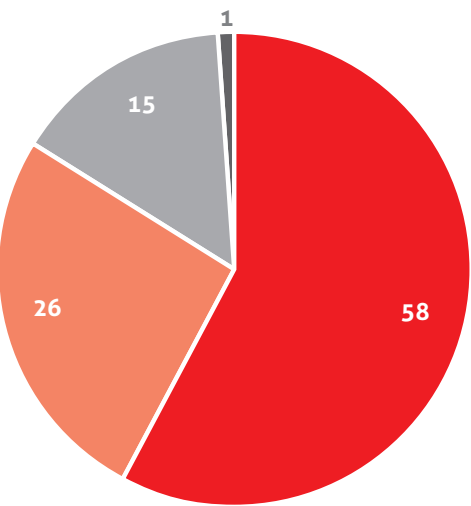
Observations: 4699
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Industry

The temporary staffing industry is active in all economic sectors and an important partner for the recruiting and management of workers. The flexibility of temporary employment helps companies remain competitive in

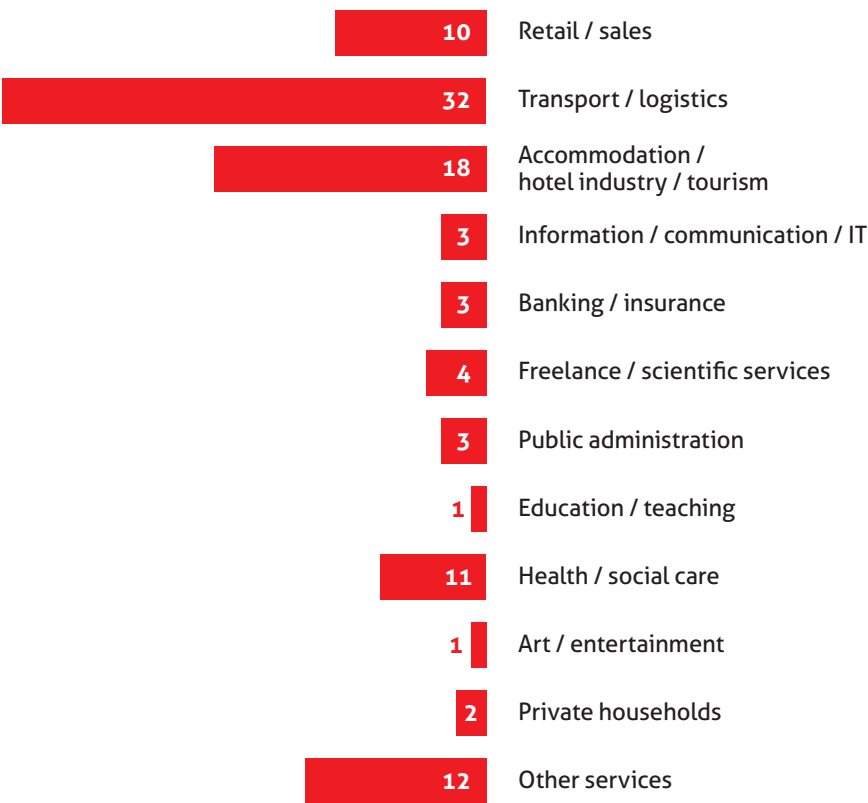
an (inter)national environment. The industry plays an especially important role when companies need staff on short notice, whether due to an order peak or an illness at the company.

Deployment industries



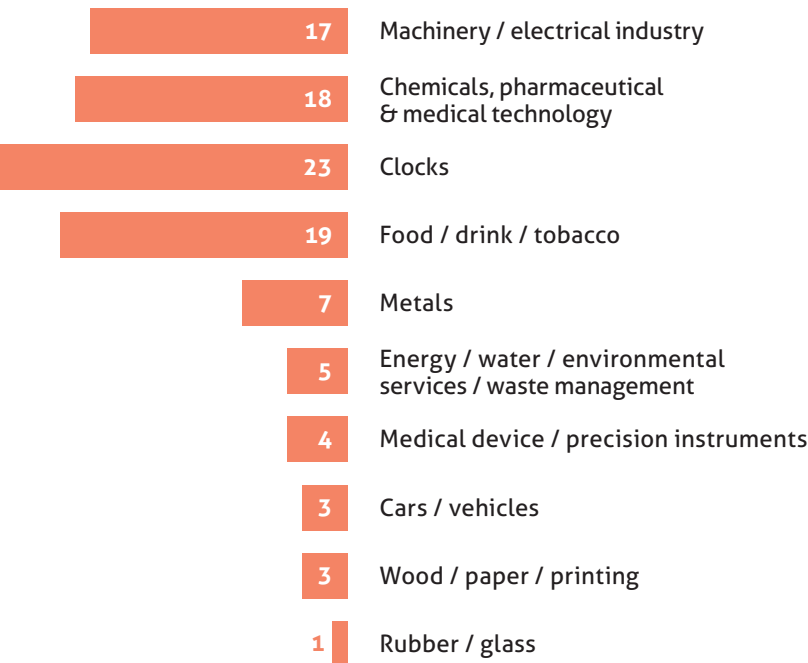
Observations: 4986
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Service sector (total 100%)



Observations: 3091
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

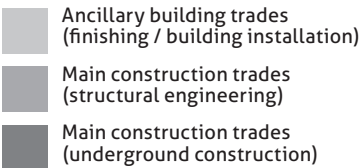
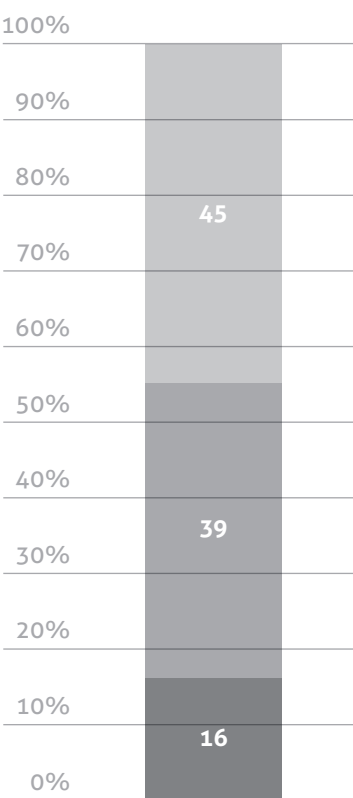
Industry (total 100%)



Note: The share of the construction sector is probably underestimated since many small staffing service providers are active in this sector. Employees of large staffing service providers were taken into special consideration in the survey.

Observations: 1235
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Construction industry (total 100%)



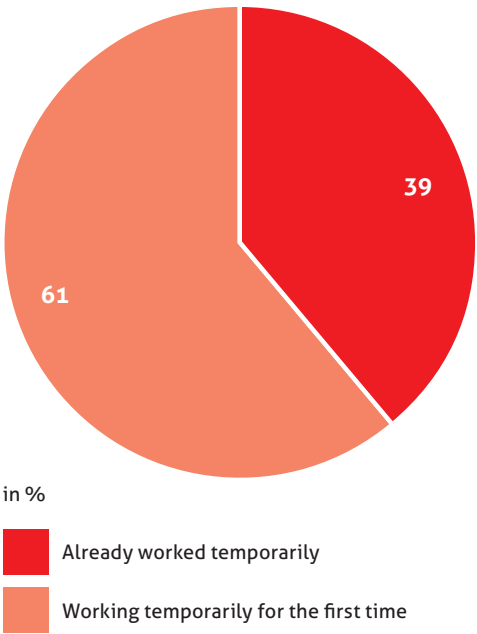
Observations: 660
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

The temporary deployment

The majority of the temporary workers surveyed were working temporarily for the first time when they were surveyed. This demonstrates the constant change of employees in the industry, associated with the challenge for the staffing service providers of always recruiting new employees. At the same time, the large majority of temporary workers work a single deployment. Brief deployments and temporary employment phases are the rule. This indicates that temporary employment is

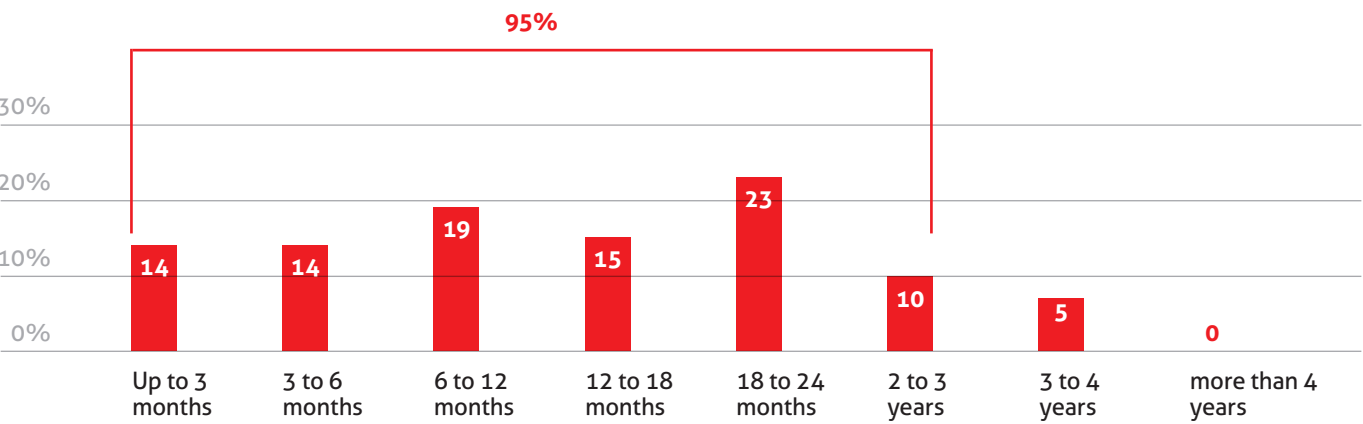
truly temporary for many people and that it is used in transition phases as well as a bridge to the labor market. Longer deployments are frequently part of a payrolling. In the course of this service, employees are legally temporary workers who are de facto permanently employed by a company that outsources its HR tasks; or they work like freelancers, find their own assignments and are employed by the staffing service provider.

Experience with temporary employment



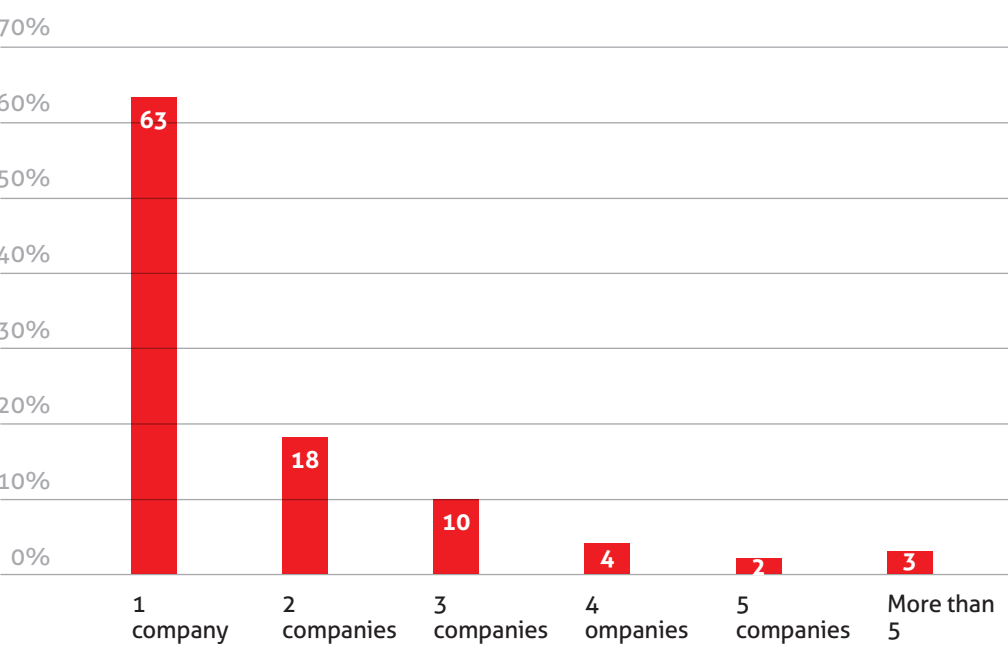
Observations: 4985
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Duration of a temporary employment phase



Observations: 4034
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Number of deployment companies for temporary workers



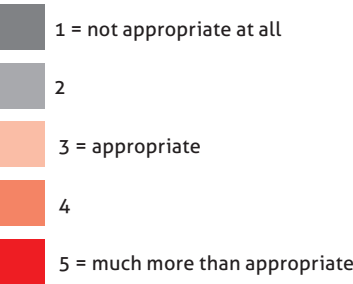
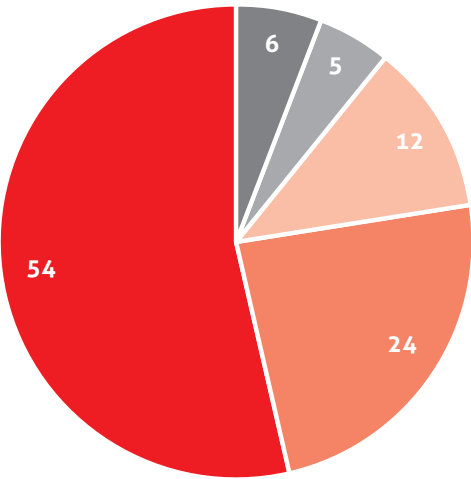
Observations: 4643
Sources: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Satisfaction

Temporary workers are generally very satisfied with their staffing service provider. The majority of respondents would recommend working through the staffing Service provider to a friend or relative These values vary slightly depending on the industry. Temporary workers in construction are the most satisfied. Temporary workers are especially satisfied with those factors that are under

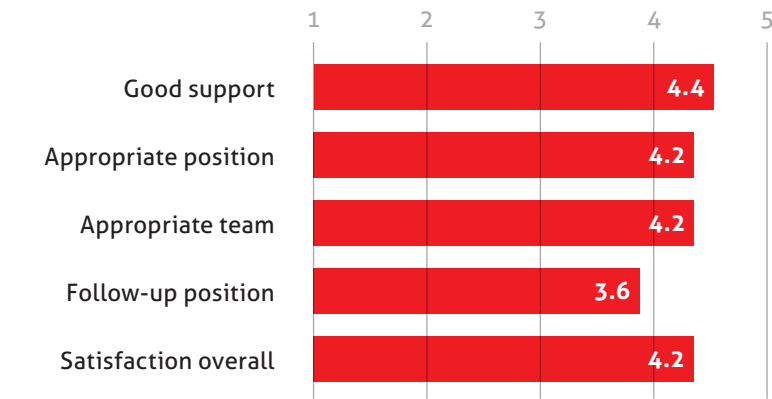
the direct control of the staffing service provider. Temporary workers are the most satisfied with the quality of support. This is followed by placement in an appropriate professional environment and an appropriate team. The satisfaction with placement in a follow-up position is somewhat lower. Staffing service providers have less control over this aspect.

Temporary workers and their satisfaction with wages



Observations: 4957
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Satisfaction with various aspects of temporary staffing experience



Note: The figure shows the average of the satisfaction values for the various aspects. The aspects could be rated on a scale from 1 «very dissatisfied» to 5 «very satisfied.»

Observations: 4927
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Recommendation of temporary employment

Scale values	1 to 6	7 to 8	9 to 10	Net Promoter Score
Construction	16%	12%	73%	57%
Service sector	17%	17%	66%	49%
Industry	16%	15%	69%	53%
Total	17%	16%	68%	51%

Note: The table shows, by industry, how the temporary workers answered the question about whether they would recommend temporary staffing on a scale from 0 «no, absolutely not» to 10 «yes, absolutely»; and the Net Promoter Score. The Net Promoter Score is the difference between the promoters (scale values 9 and 10) and the detractors (scale values 0 to 6).

Observations: 4954
Source: swissstaffing, gfs-zürich, 2024

Legal notices

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Survey

Online survey conducted by the gfs-zürich research institute.

Bibliography

Temporary Workers in Switzerland 2018, swissstaffing, 2019

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