

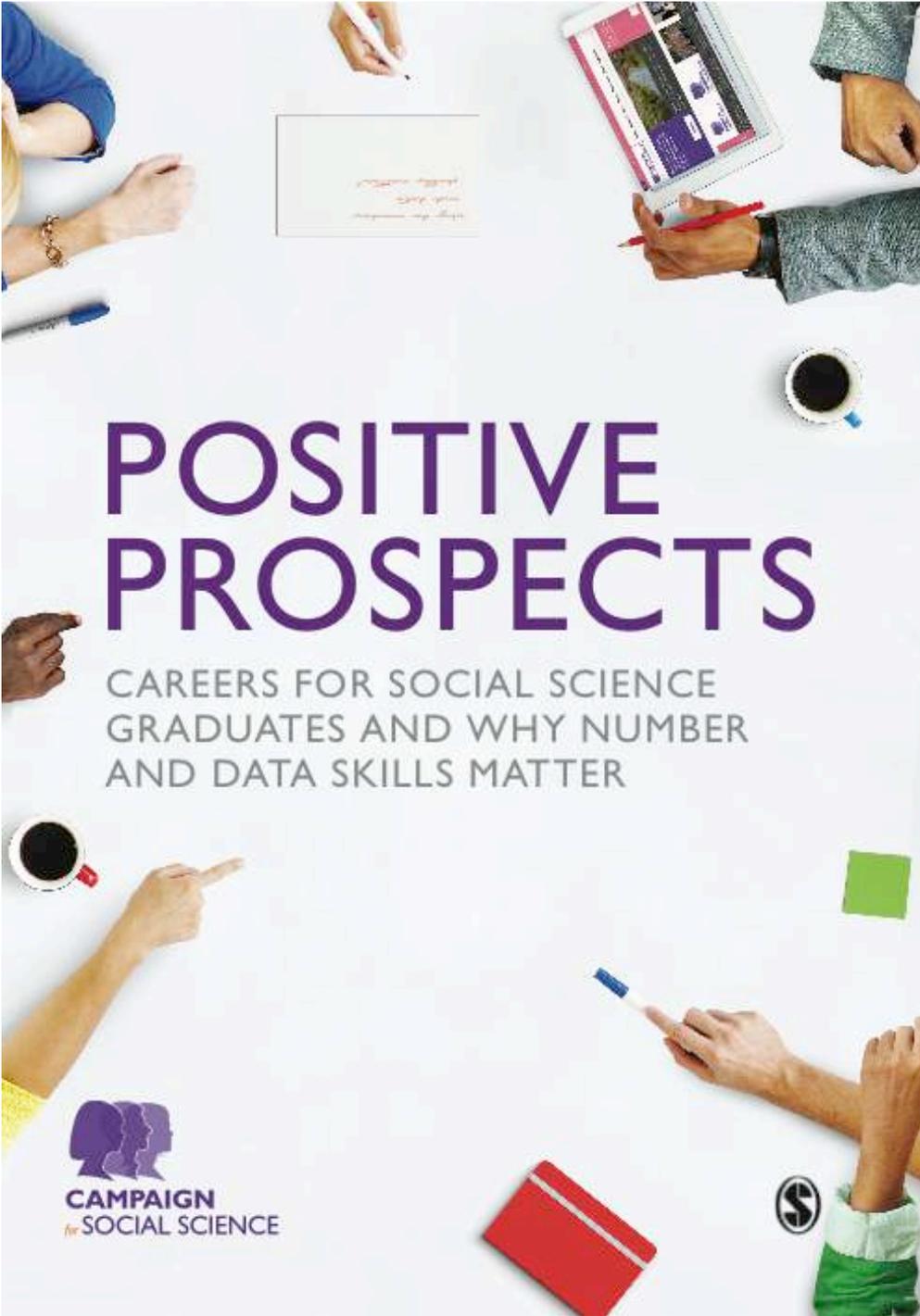


Positive Prospects

Careers for **Sociology Graduates** and Why Number and Data Skills Matter

Dr. Ashley Lenihan and Sharon Witherspoon
Campaign for Social Science

#SocSciCareers
@CfSocialScience



POSITIVE PROSPECTS

CAREERS FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE GRADUATES AND WHY NUMBER AND DATA SKILLS MATTER



 **SAGE** www.sagepublishing.com
Los Angeles | London | New Delhi | Singapore | Washington DC | Melbourne



Overview

- Prospects
 - Employment, sectors & occupations, Earnings, Institutions
- Futures
- Pathways
 - AS/A level maths, impact of number & data skills on earnings
- Conclusions

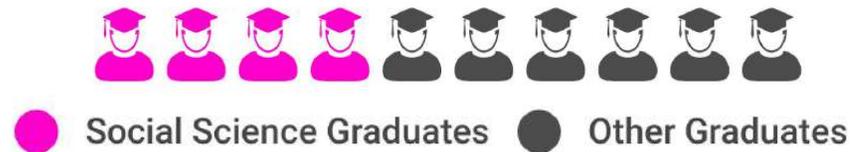


What we're **NOT** saying

- This is **NOT** a full causal analysis
 - Self-selection of students, complex pathways
 - Most important, **IMMEDIATE** employment outcomes
- **NOT** saying all social science studies should be number-based
 - Appreciate sociological theory, small-group studies, other methods, etc.
- **NOT** saying **ALL** students need same level of number and data skills, or that these skills are the same as standard statistical analyses
- But **ARE** saying we need more social science undergraduates with these skills

Population

Almost 4 out of 10 students graduate from university with a **social science** degree.*



With 6.4% of social science graduates, or 2.3% of all graduates receiving sociology degrees.

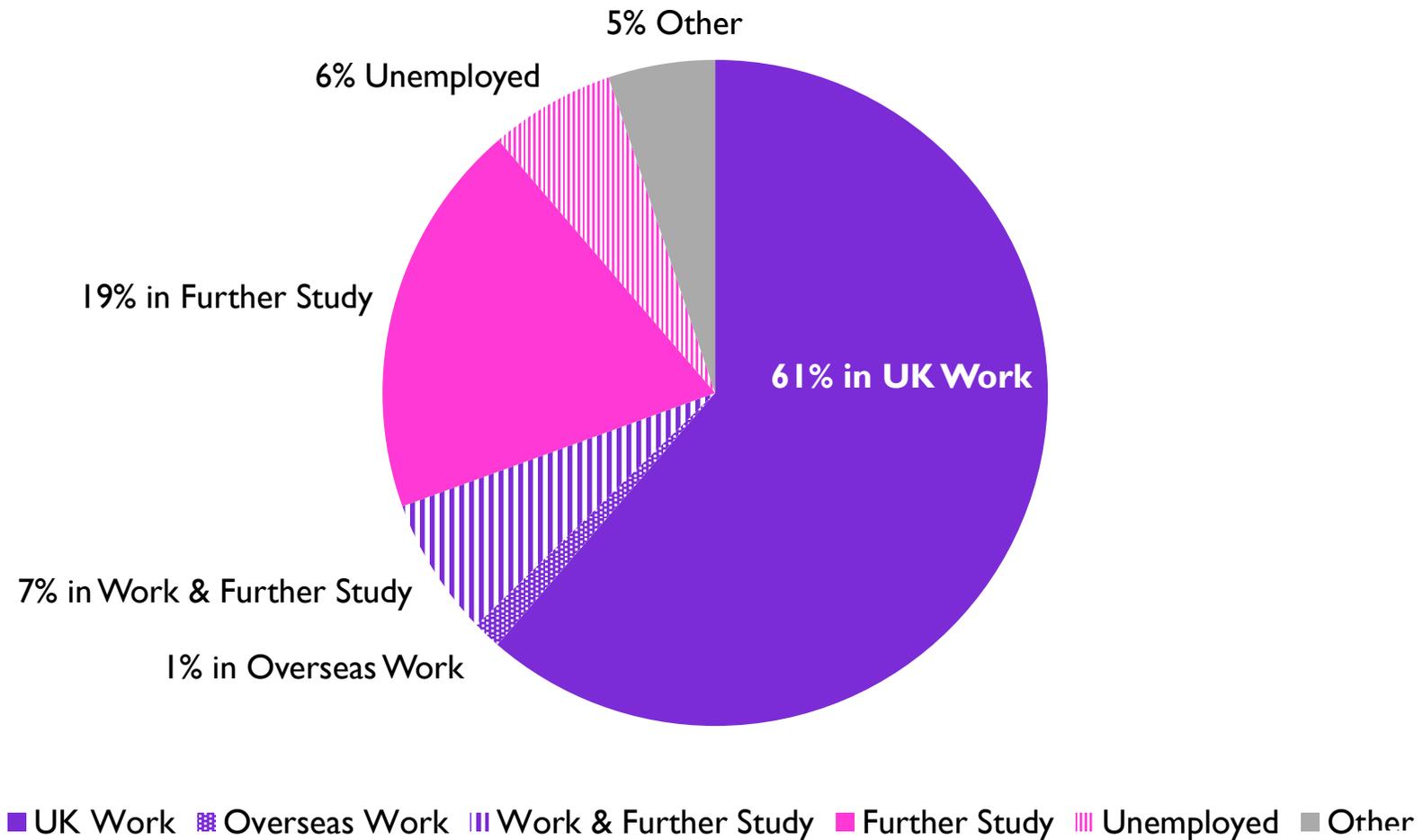




Employment Prospects

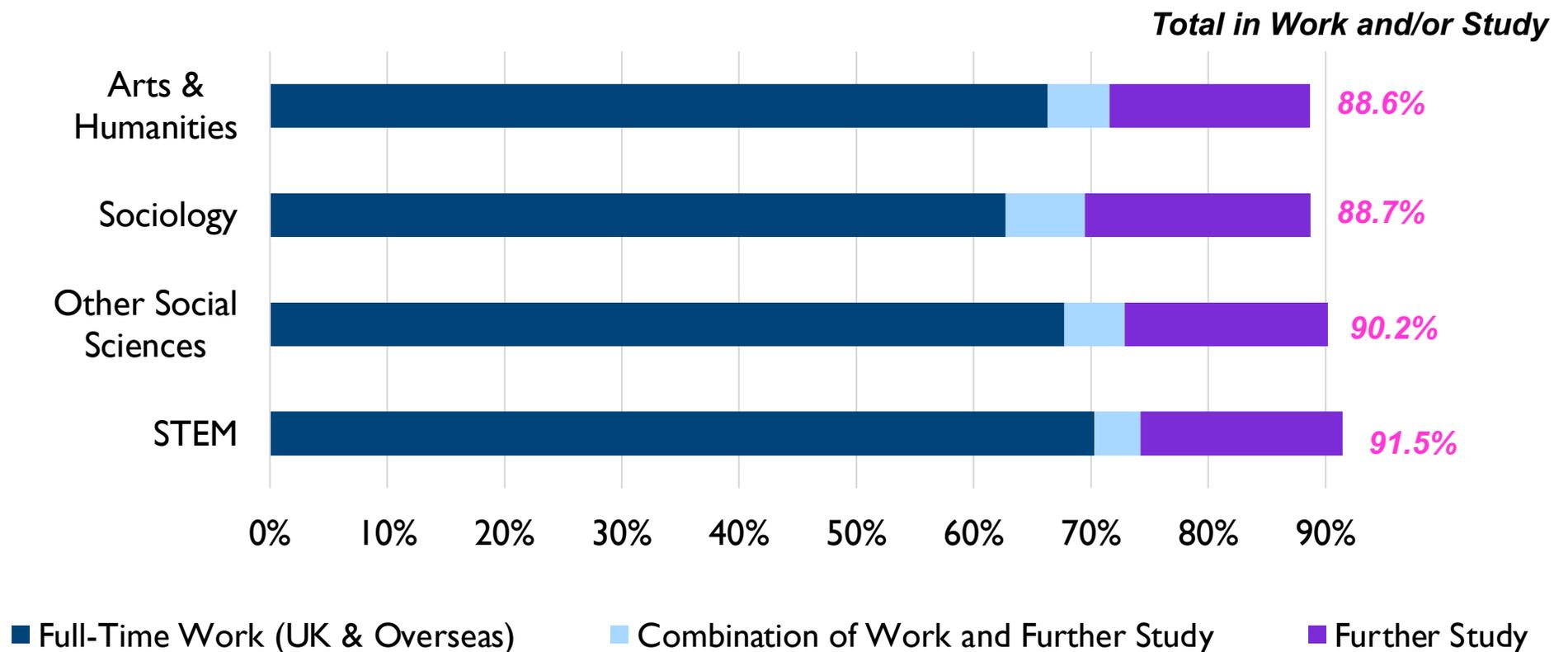
- Sociology graduates have good employment prospects.
- One year after graduation:
 - 63% in work in the UK or abroad
 - An additional 7% in a combination of work & study
 - An additional 19% in further study alone
- *In other words: 89% are in some form of work and/or study*

Destinations of full-time sociology graduates 2015/16



Employment Prospects

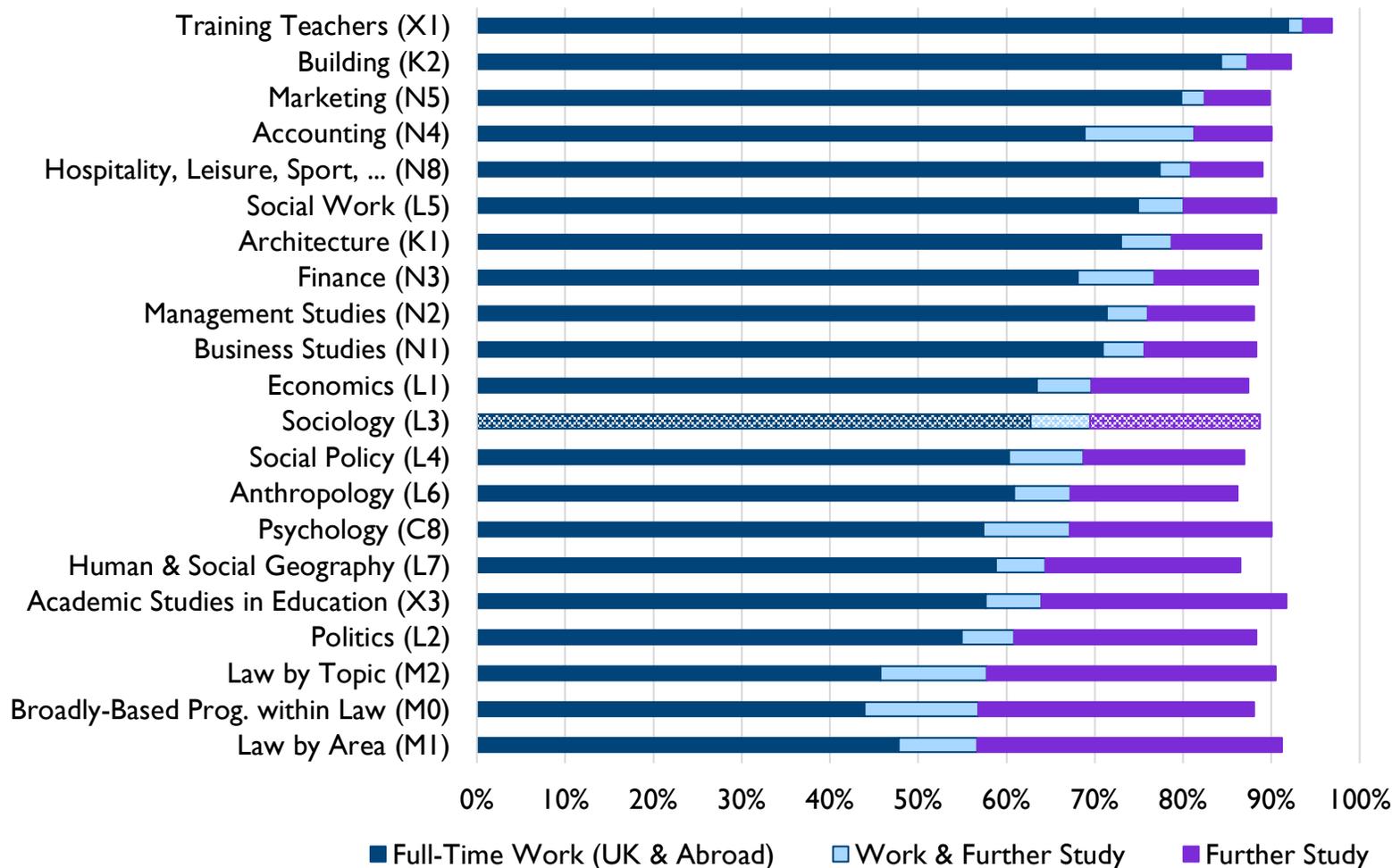
However, sociology graduates' immediate employment rates are slightly lower than those of the other social sciences combined.



Employment Prospects

Sociology graduates' immediate employment rates are average relative to the rest of the social sciences disciplines

- though this can be explained by the higher number that go on to further study
- notably social work graduates have higher immediate employment rates



Sectors

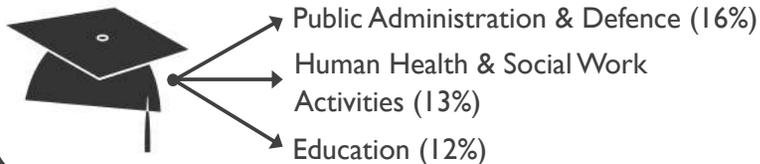
Sociology graduates go on to work in a wide range of sectors and occupations, confirming that their skills are useful in a range of fields.



Sectors

Sociology graduates go on to work in a wider range of sectors than many other social science fields, where graduates tend to concentrate on specific industries

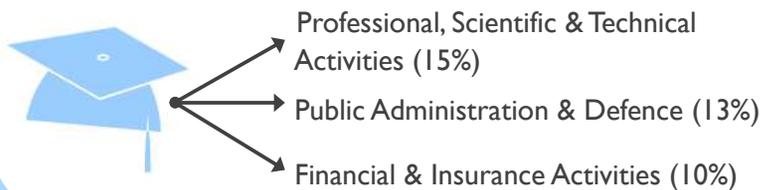
Sociology Graduates



Finance Graduates



Politics Graduates



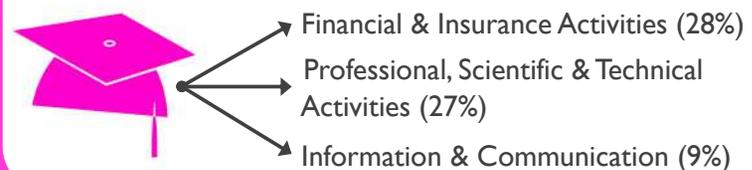
Accounting Graduates



Human & Social Geography Graduates



Economics Graduates



Occupations

Sociology graduates also go on to a range of occupations, with 58% of them going on to work in professional occupations.

- The most popular professions are:

24% Business and public service associate professionals

10% Health and social care associate professionals

6% Business, media and public service professionals

- The most popular non-professional occupations are:

13% Administrative occupations

8% Caring personal service occupations

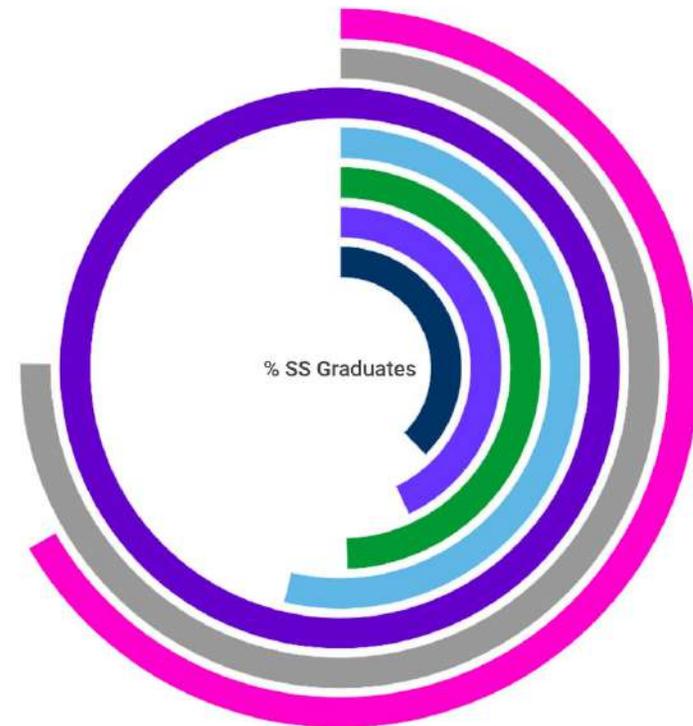
6% Sales occupations



Social Science Leadership

60% of global leaders have undergraduate degrees in social science.

Social science graduates as a whole account for large percentages of those in leadership positions in many career fields.

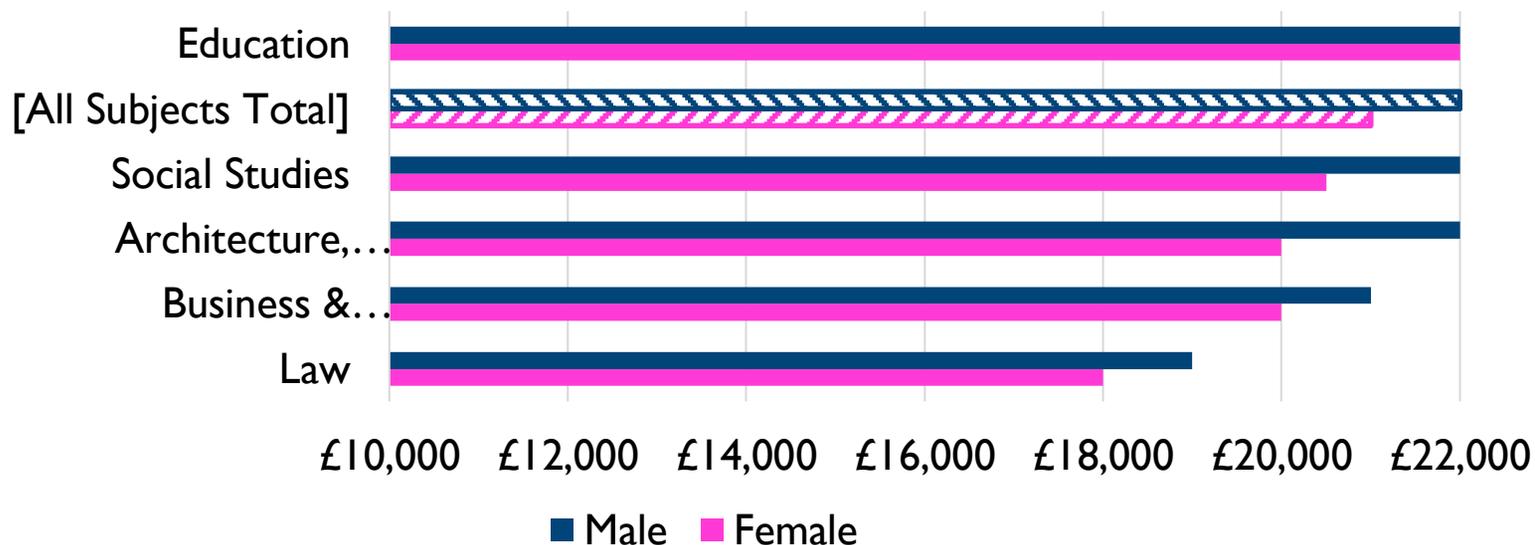


- in civil servant leadership: 62%
- in financial services & consulting leadership: 70%
- in law & legal services leadership: 93%
- in energy & environment leadership: 50%
- in technology & innovation leadership: 46%
- in health leadership: 40%
- in defence & security leadership: 35%

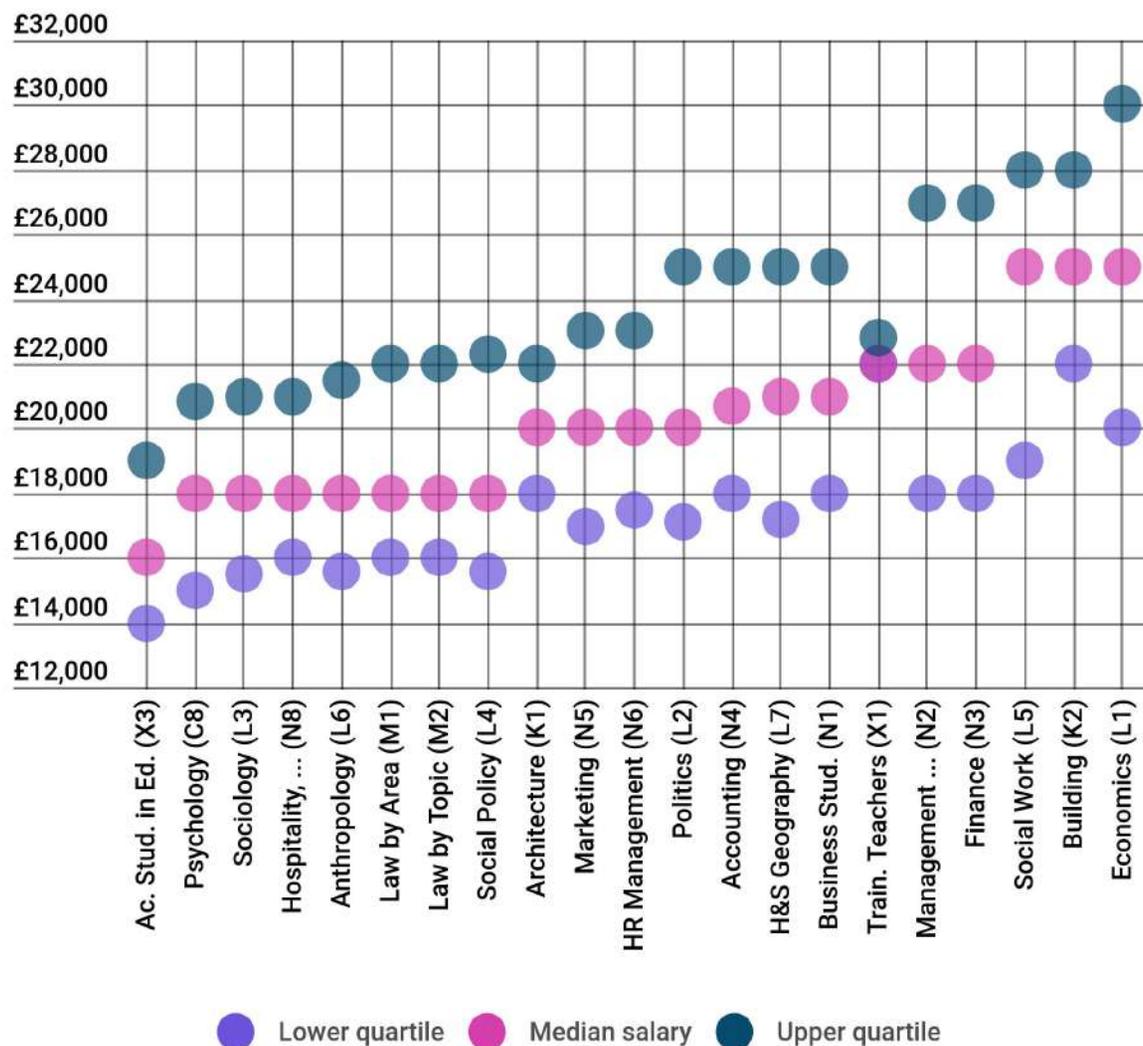
Earnings

Social scientists generally do well in terms of earnings.

- One year after graduation, the median salary of all UK domiciled full-time graduates in the social sciences was broadly similar to the median salary of all subjects combined.



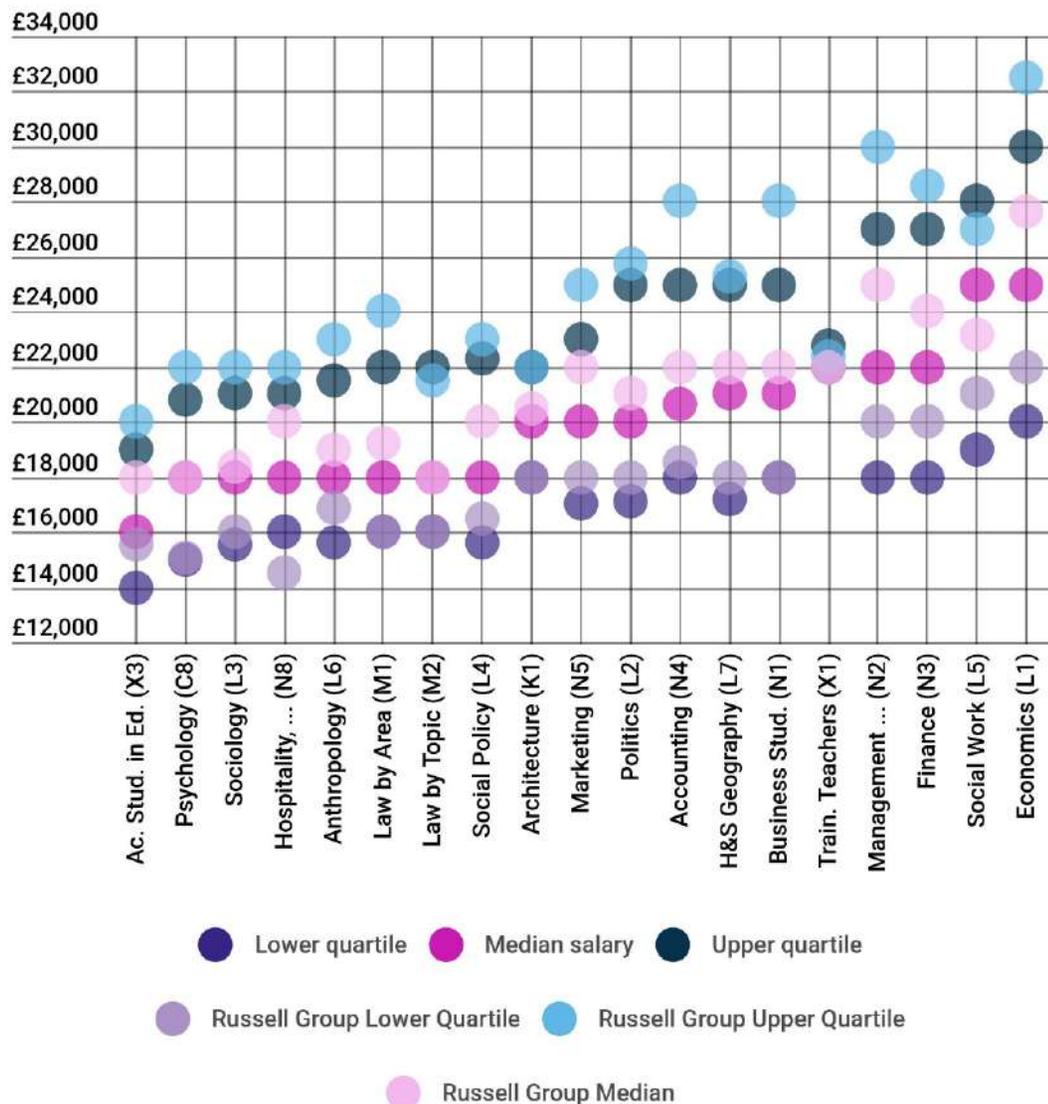
Earnings



Sociology graduates do less well in terms of earnings – ranking in the bottom third of social science disciplines for salaries in the median range, and for salaries in the upper and lower quartiles.

Social science degrees that are more professionalised,/vocational or whose graduates are more likely to have number and data skills, tend to have higher earnings one year after graduation.

Institutions Matter Too



Sociology students graduating from Russell Group universities *do better* on average – and at the lower and upper quartiles – than others in terms of reported earnings one year after graduation.

However, this effect is not as big for sociology graduates as it is for students in some other social science disciplines where students are expected to have number and data skills – like economics, finance, and accounting.



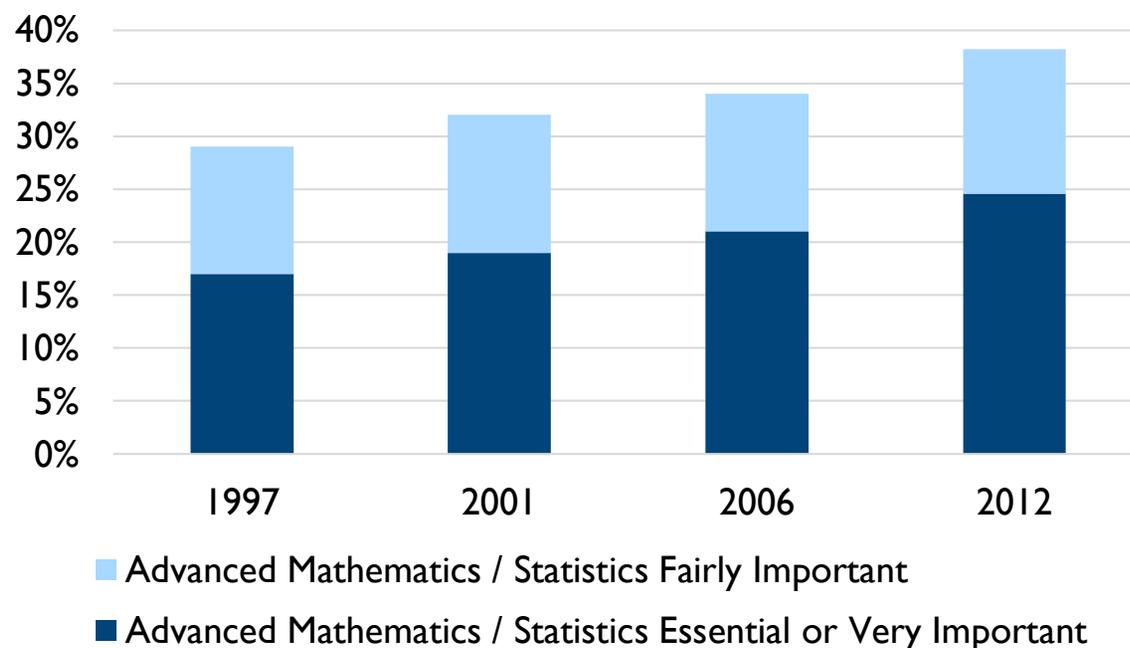
Futures

- Social science graduates have analytical skills making them valuable to employers.
- But as the nature of work changes, social scientists are likely to need to enhance their number and data skills in the context of the digital revolution.
 - This will help them successfully compete in tomorrow's job market
 - It will also allow them to play their part in solving the society's grand challenges.
- This is especially true for sociology students, who have great potential to combine big data with an astute understanding of society to help address critical challenges facing the UK today.

Futures

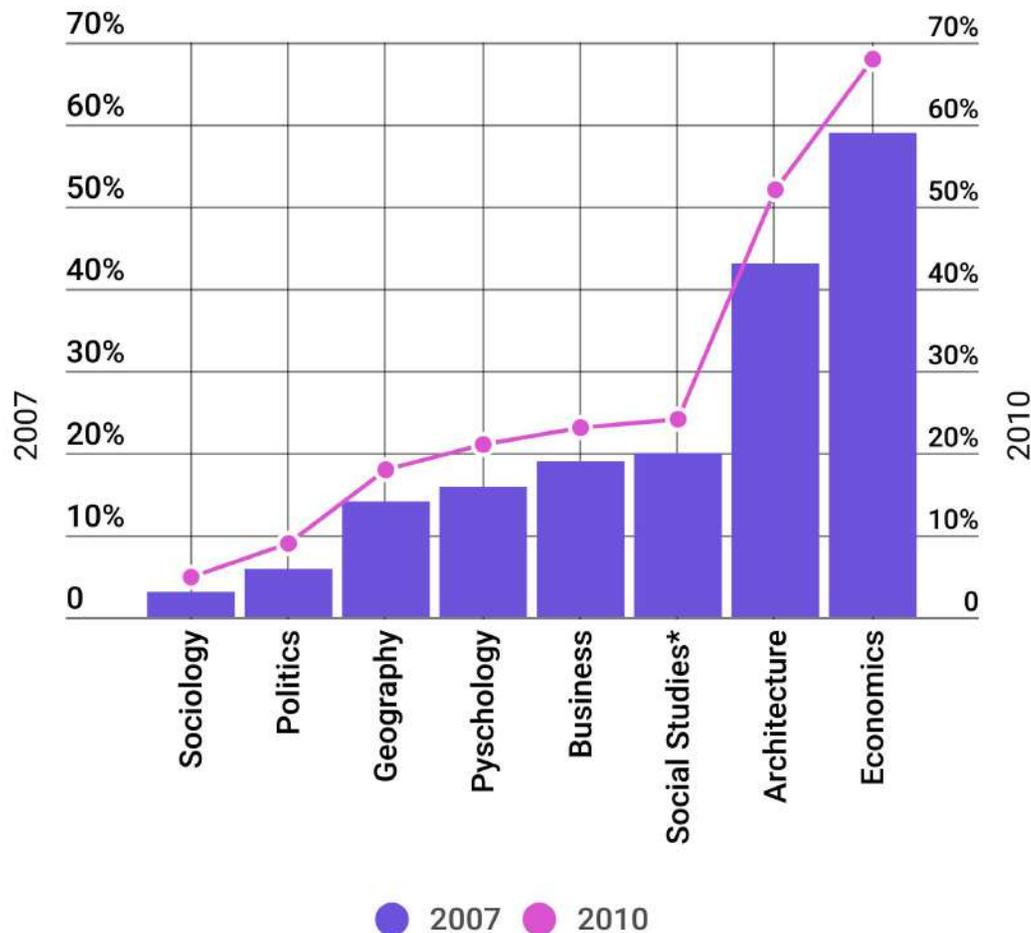
Recall: *Sociology graduates often go into professional occupations across an array of industries.*

- Mason et al. have found that an increasing percentage of 20-60 year-olds feel that advanced mathematical and statistical skills were important to their work
- And that advanced mathematical and statistical skills are ‘essential or very important’ for managers and professionals.



Pathways

*Undergraduates with A level mathematics,
by subject of study at University (Hillman 2014)*

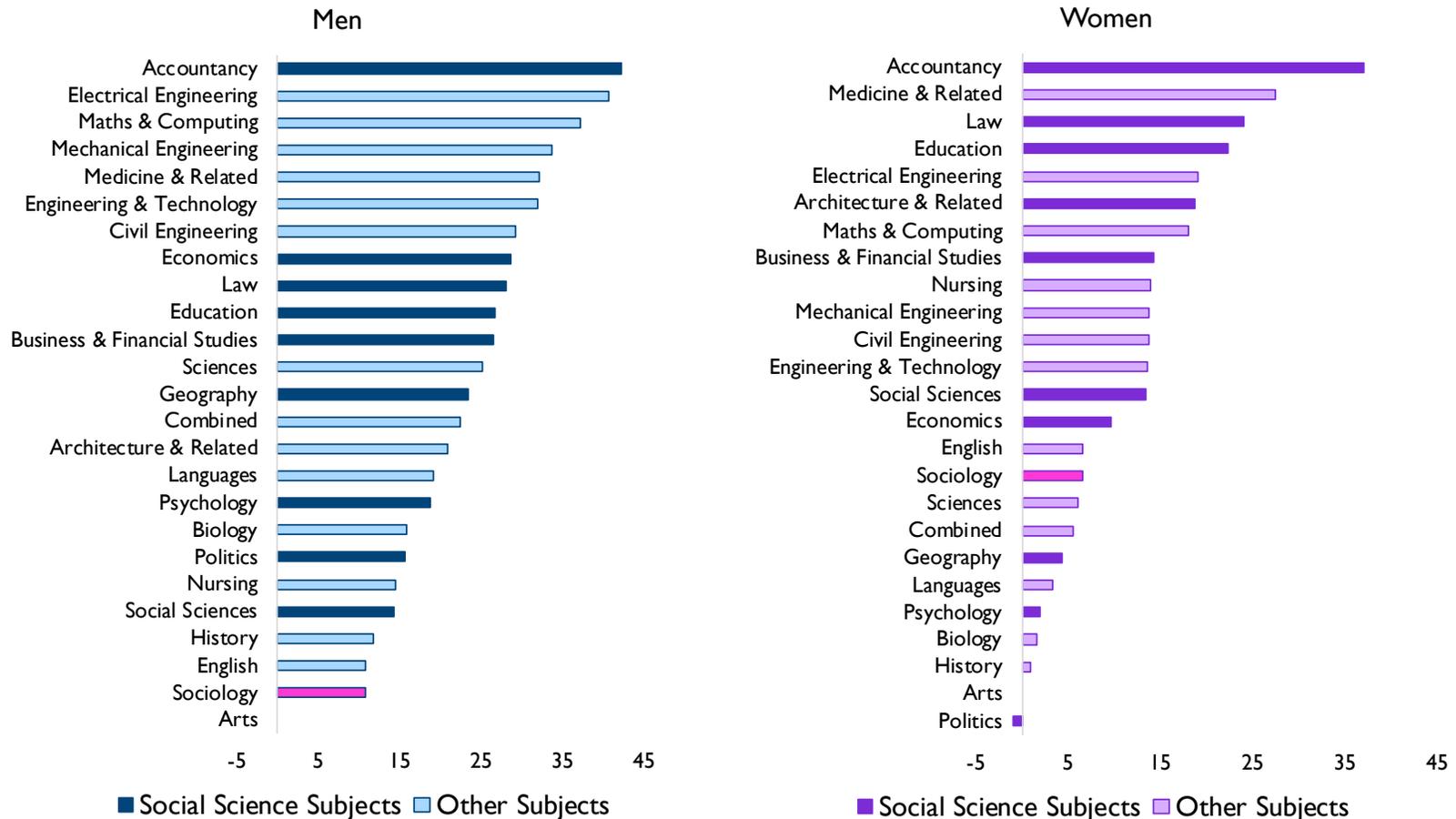


- The numbers of social science undergraduates who have completed AS or A levels in mathematics varies by the subject of their degree
- **Fewer than one in twenty** sociology students in the UK had an A level in mathematics in 2007 or 2010.

Impact on Earnings

- Social science graduates who are more likely to have number and data skills, and to have A level mathematics, do particularly well in terms of earnings.
- Sociology students' earnings may be affected by lower levels of these skills.

Estimate earning returns to university degrees by subject (Index by Sloane and O'Leary 2004)





Conclusions

- There is about as much variation in STEM employment and earnings as there is in social sciences.
- Sociology students have good prospects
- These will be enhanced if students can show number and data skills
- This is an issue for undergraduate teaching
- **BUT ALSO** schools policy could help make continuing engagement with number more common
 - Early specialisation, multiple pathways, clear signalling