



Positive Prospects

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

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#SocialScienceCareers
@CfSocialScience



Overview

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

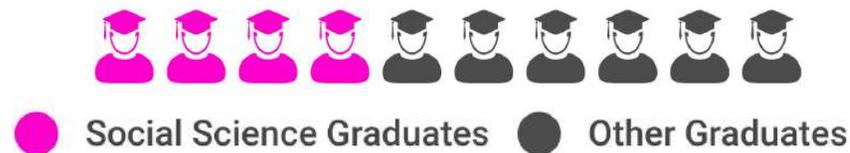


What we're NOT saying

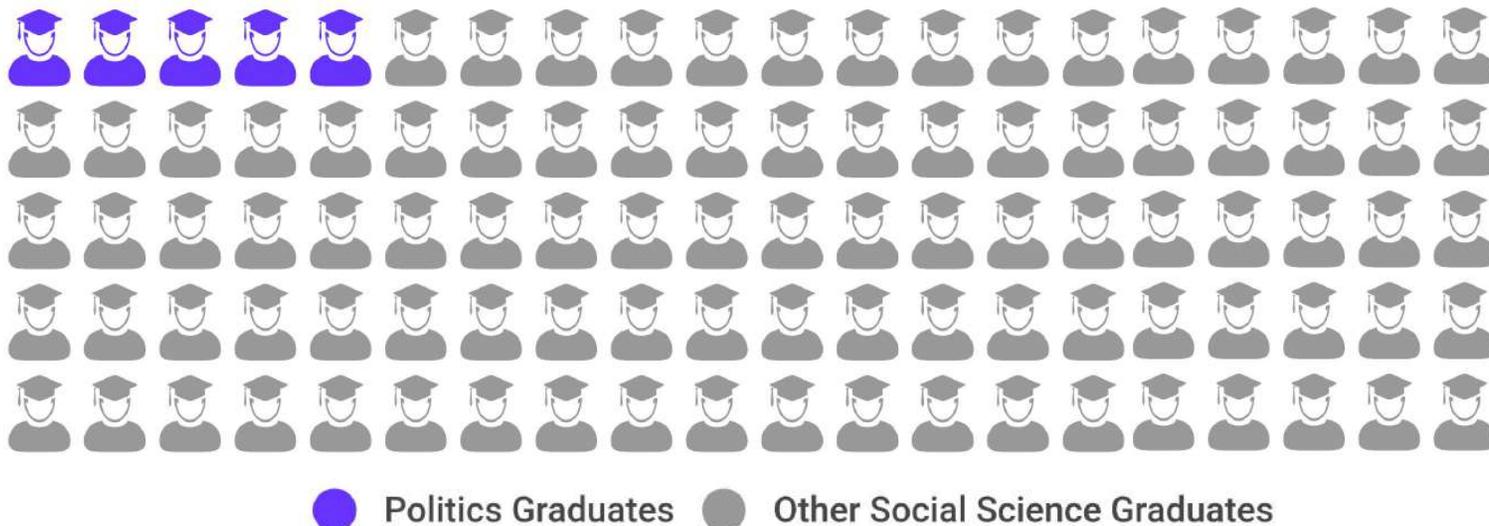
- This is NOT a full causal analysis
 - Self-selection of students, complex pathways
 - Most important, IMMEDIATE employment outcomes
- NOT saying all social science studies should be number-based
 - Appreciate political theory, international comparisons, elite studies, etc.
- NOT saying ALL students need same level of number and data skills
- 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.*



Just 5% of social science graduates, or 2% of all graduates receive **politics** degrees.*

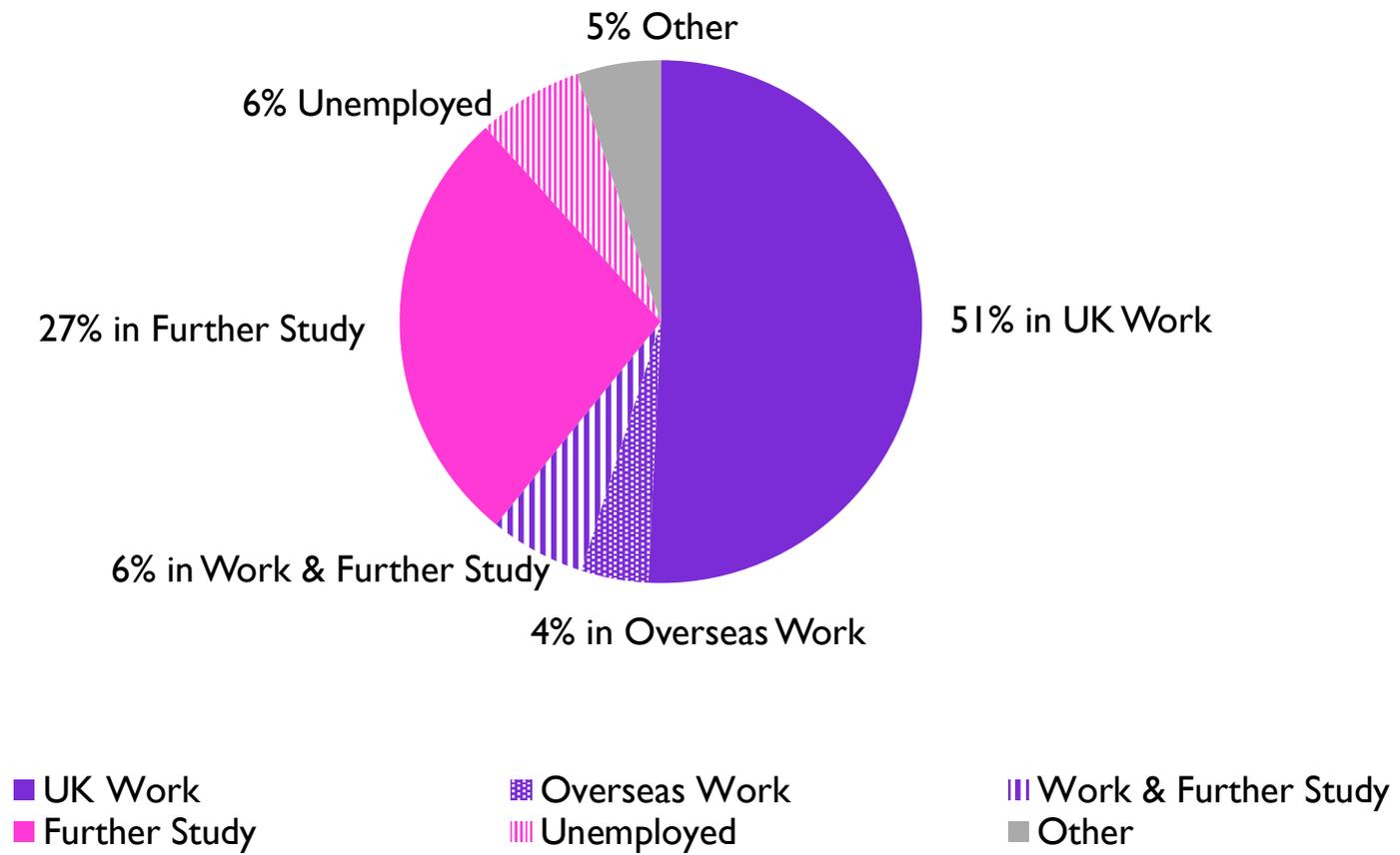




Employment Prospects

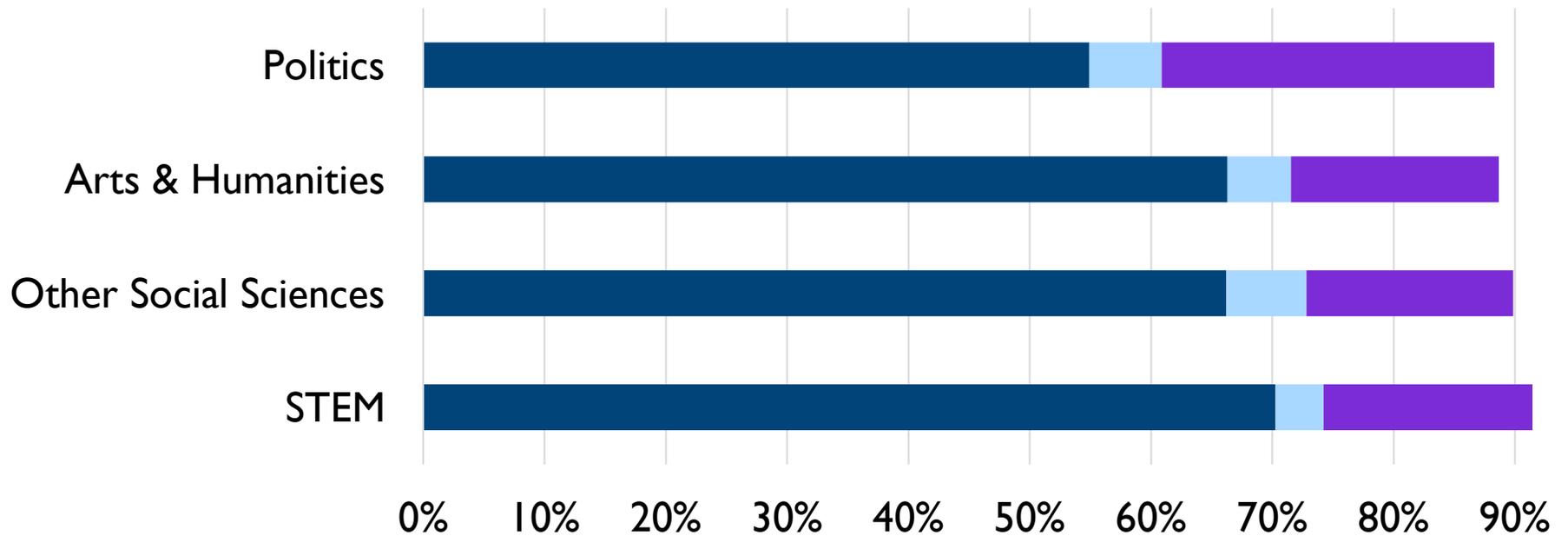
- Politics graduates have generally good employment prospects.
- One year after graduation:
 - 55% in work in the UK or abroad
 - An additional 6% in a combination of work & study
 - An additional 27% in further study alone
- *In other words: 88% are in some form of work and/or study*

Destinations of full-time politics graduates, 2015/16



Employment Prospects

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

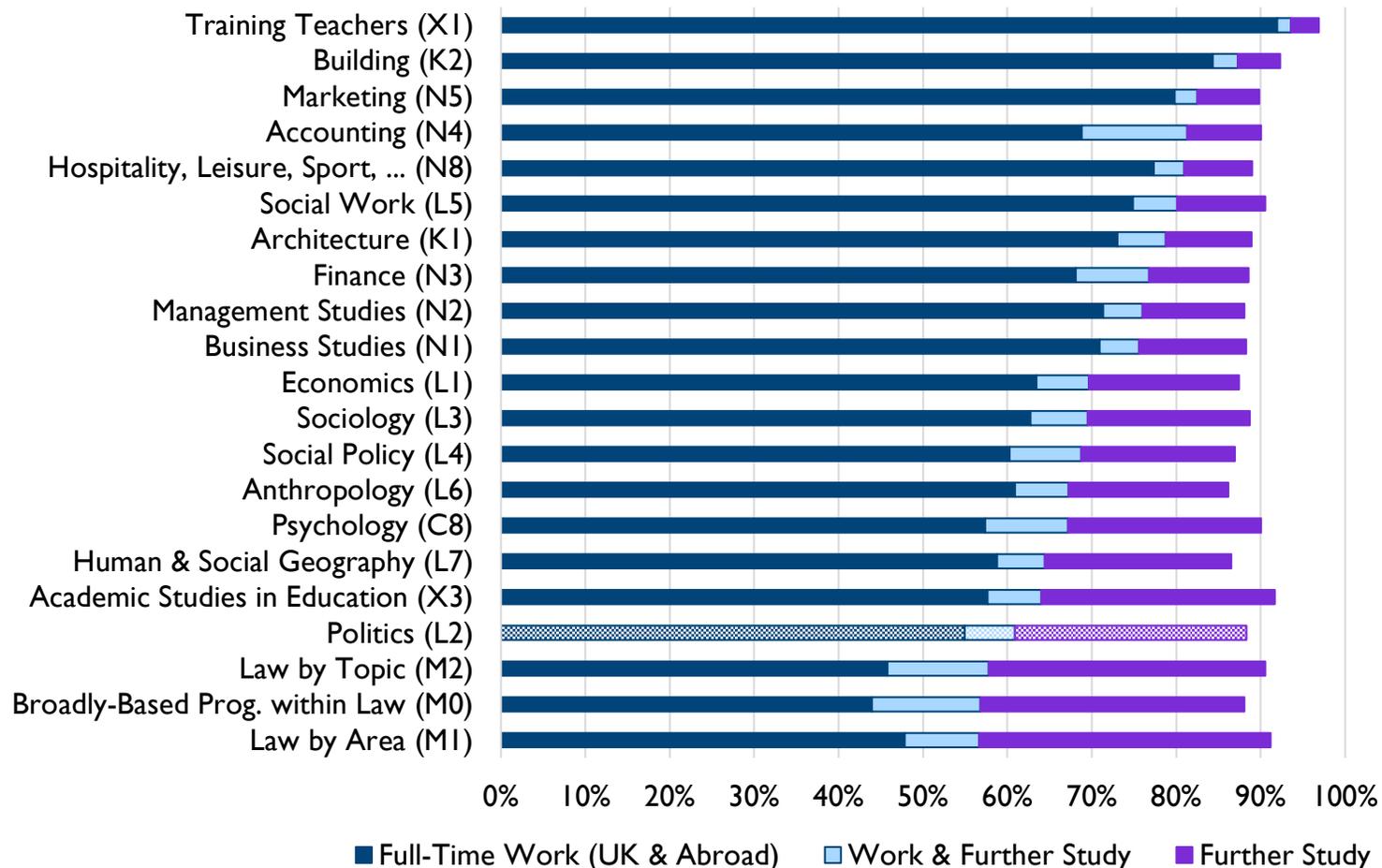


■ Full-Time Work (UK & Overseas) ■ Combination of Work and Further Study ■ Further Study

Employment Prospects

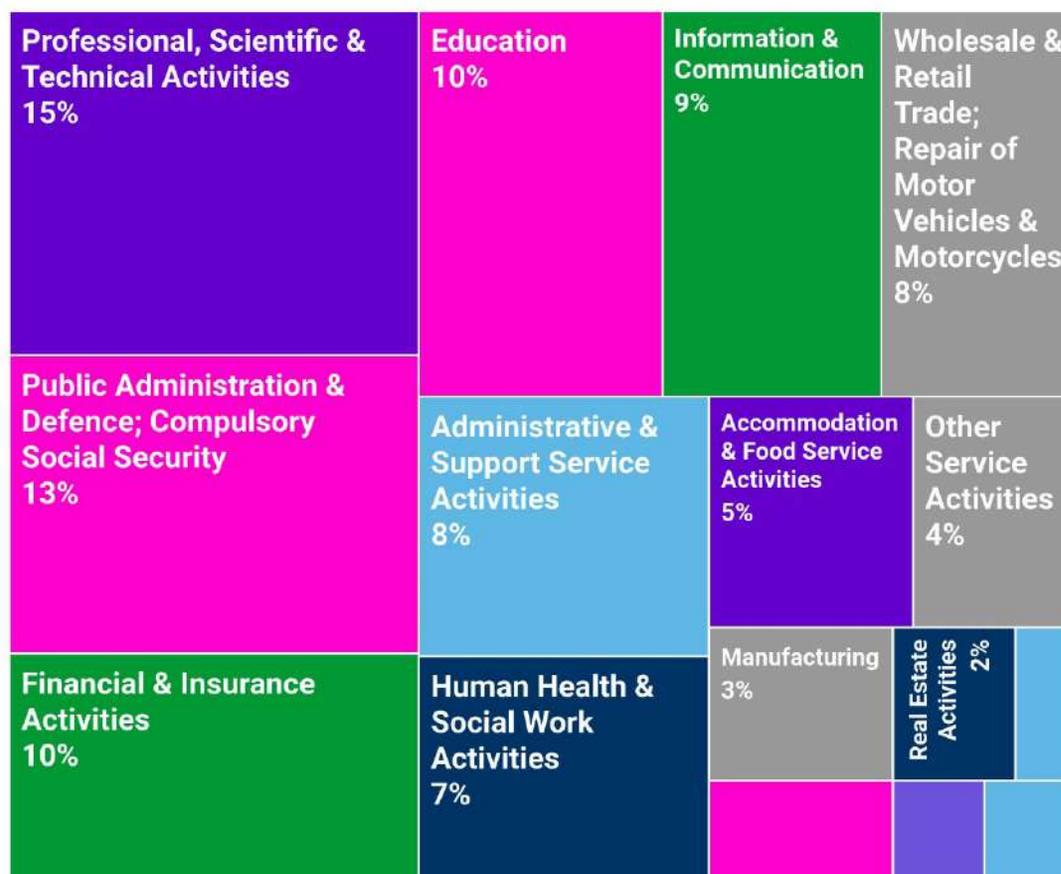
Politics graduates' immediate employment rates are also low in comparison to the rest of the social sciences disciplines

- though this can be explained by the higher number that go on to further study



Sectors and Occupations

Politics 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

Politics 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

Psychology Graduates



Economics Graduates



Human & Social Geography Graduates



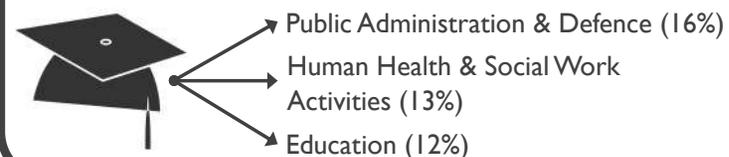
Politics Graduates



Finance Graduates



Sociology Graduates



Occupations

Politics graduates also go on to a range of occupations.

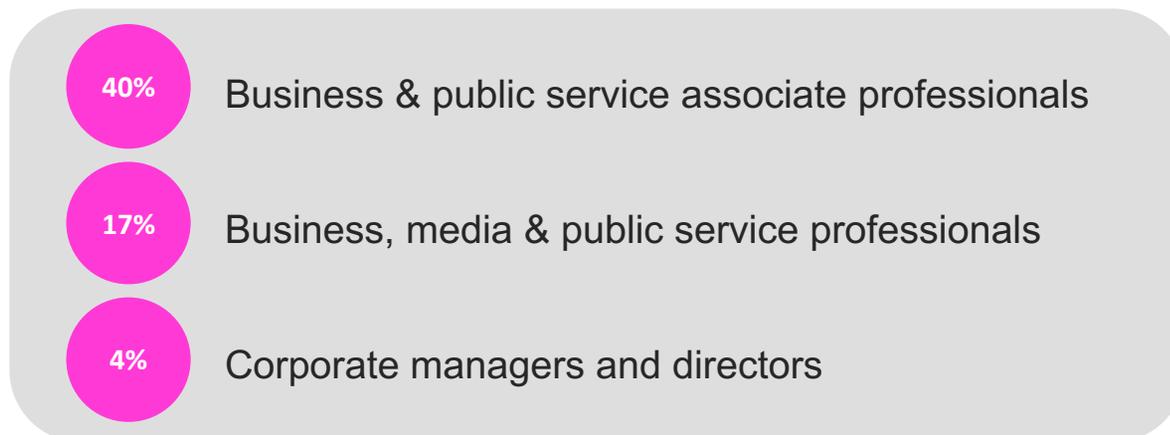




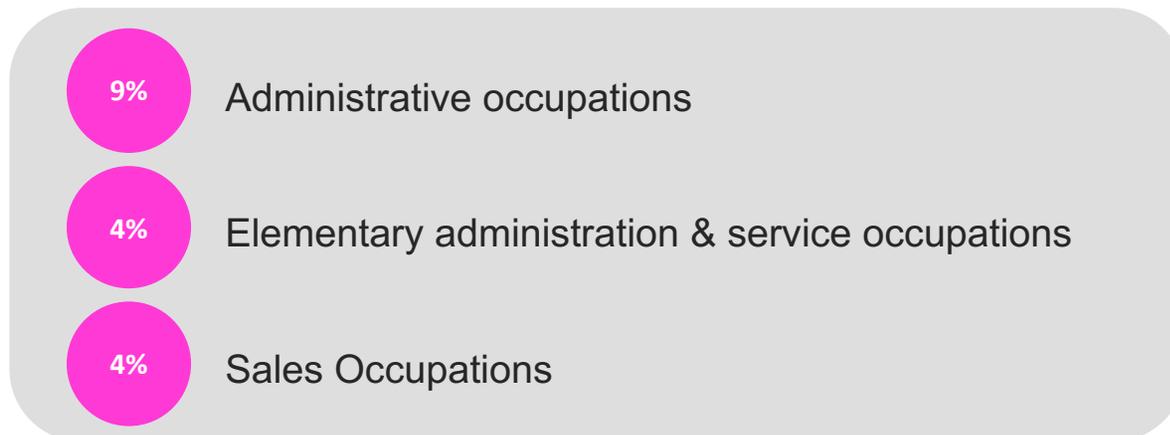
Occupations

76% of politics graduates go on to work in professional occupations.

The most popular professions are:



The most popular non-professional occupations are:

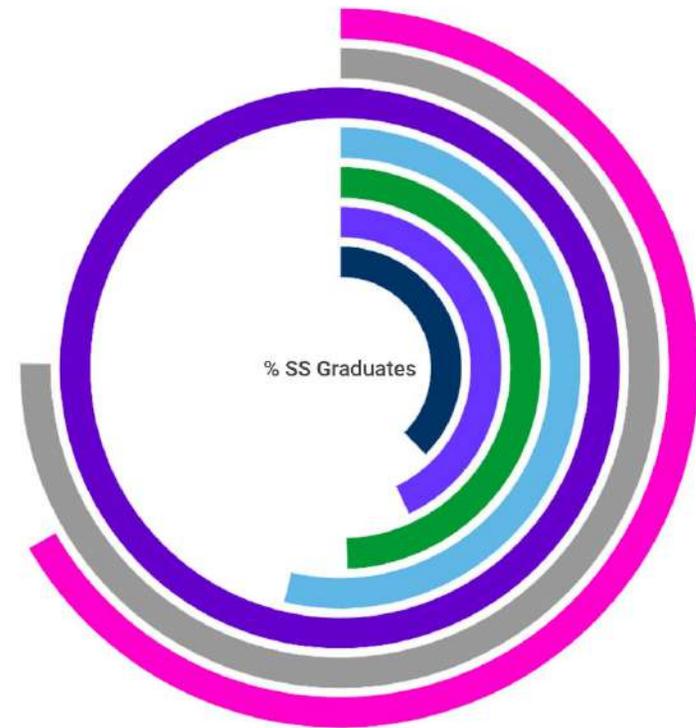




Leadership

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

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

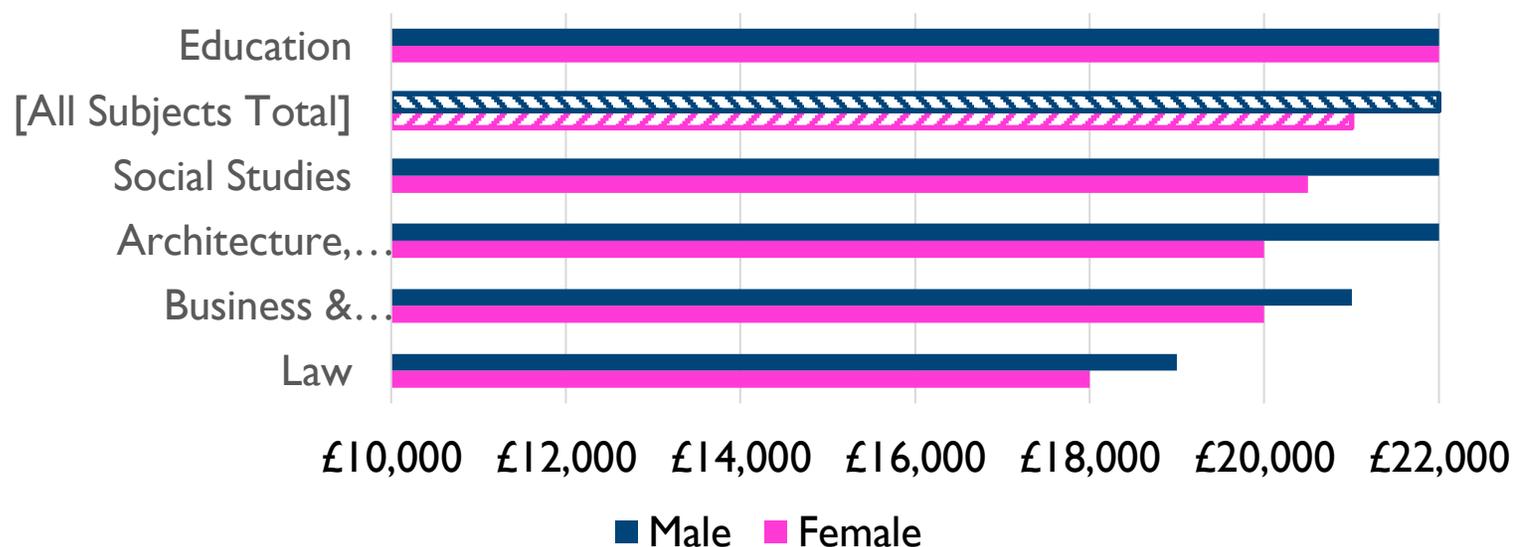


- in civil servant leadership: 62%
- in financial services & consulting leadership: 70%
- in law & legal services leadership: 93%
- in energy & environment leadership: 50%
- in technology & innovation leadership: 46%
- in health leadership: 40%
- in defence & security leadership: 35%

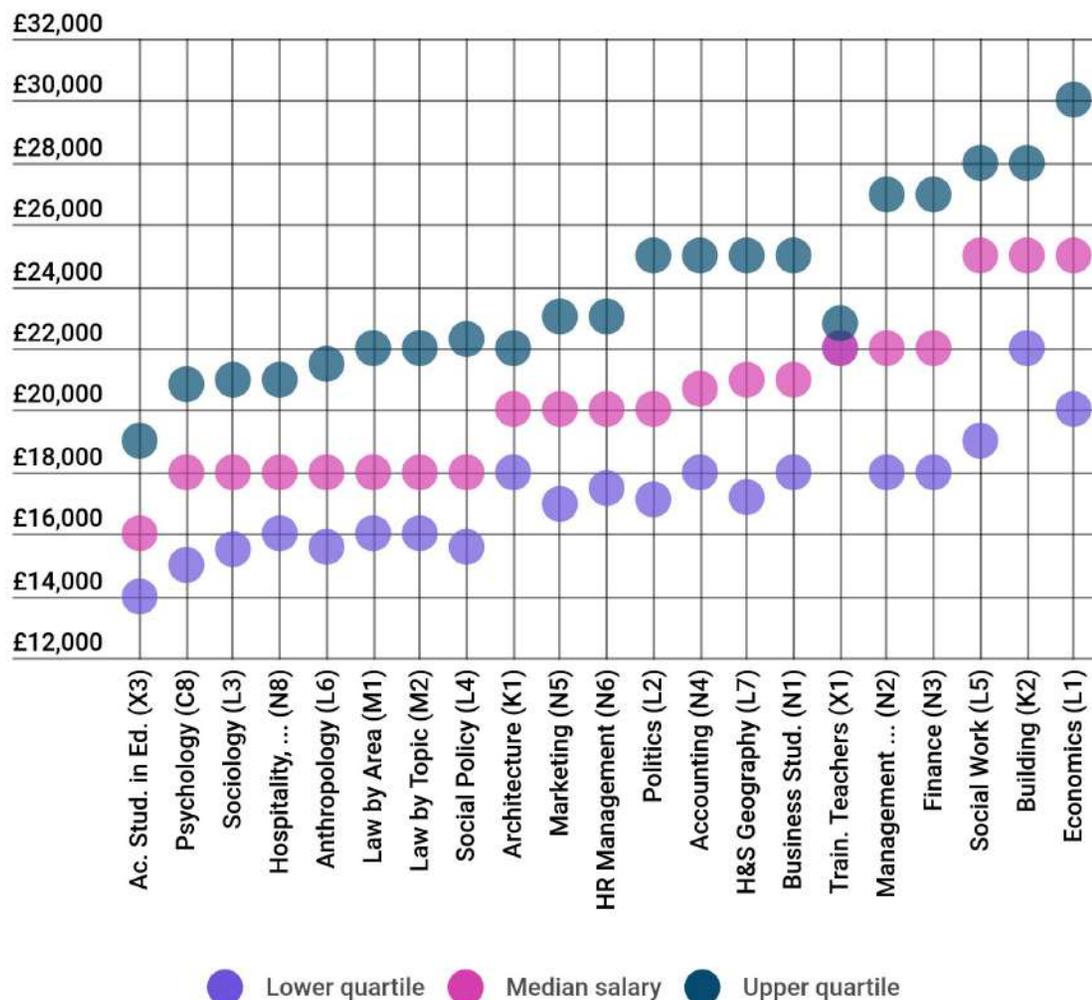
Earnings

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.



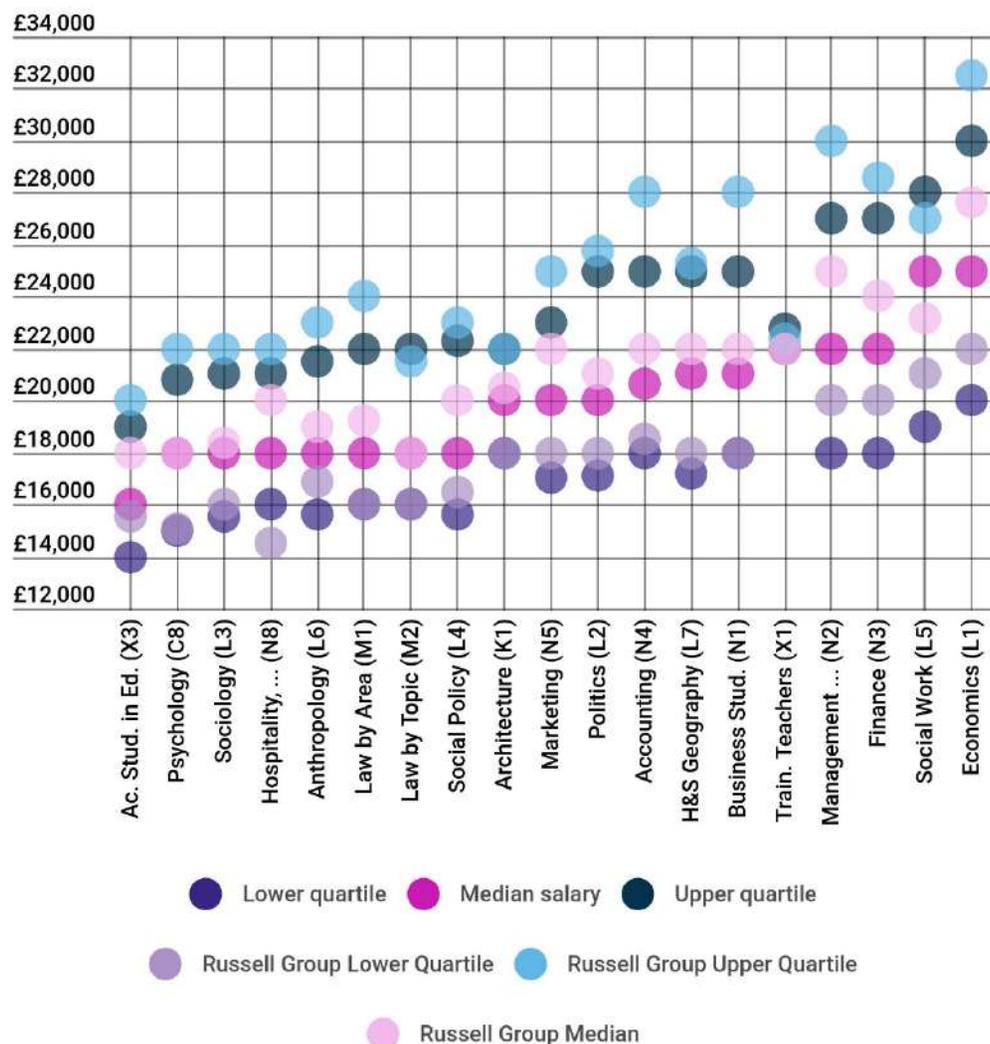
Earnings



Politics graduates do well in terms of earnings relative to many other social science disciplines.

Yet, they do not do *as well* as those with social science degrees that are either more professionalized or more likely to have number and data skills.

Institutions Matter Too



Politics 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.

Notably, this effect is not as big for politics 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

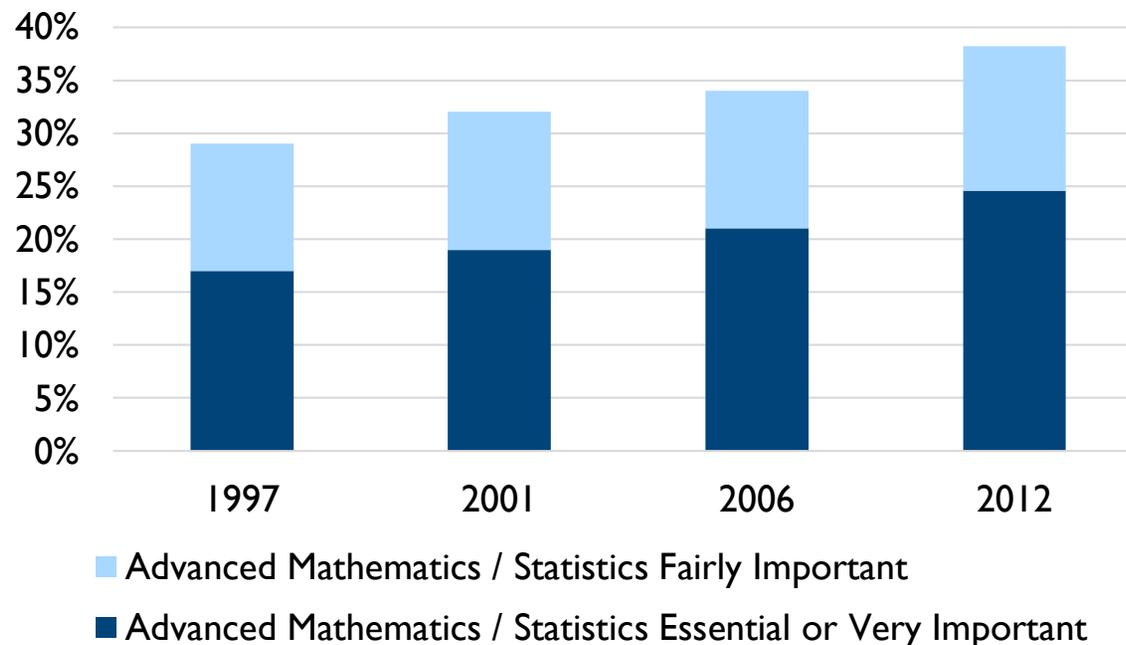
- Social science graduates have analytical skills making them valuable to employers.
- But as the nature of work changes, social scientists are likely to need to enhance their number and data skills in the context of the digital revolution.
 - This will help them successfully compete in tomorrow's job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



Futures

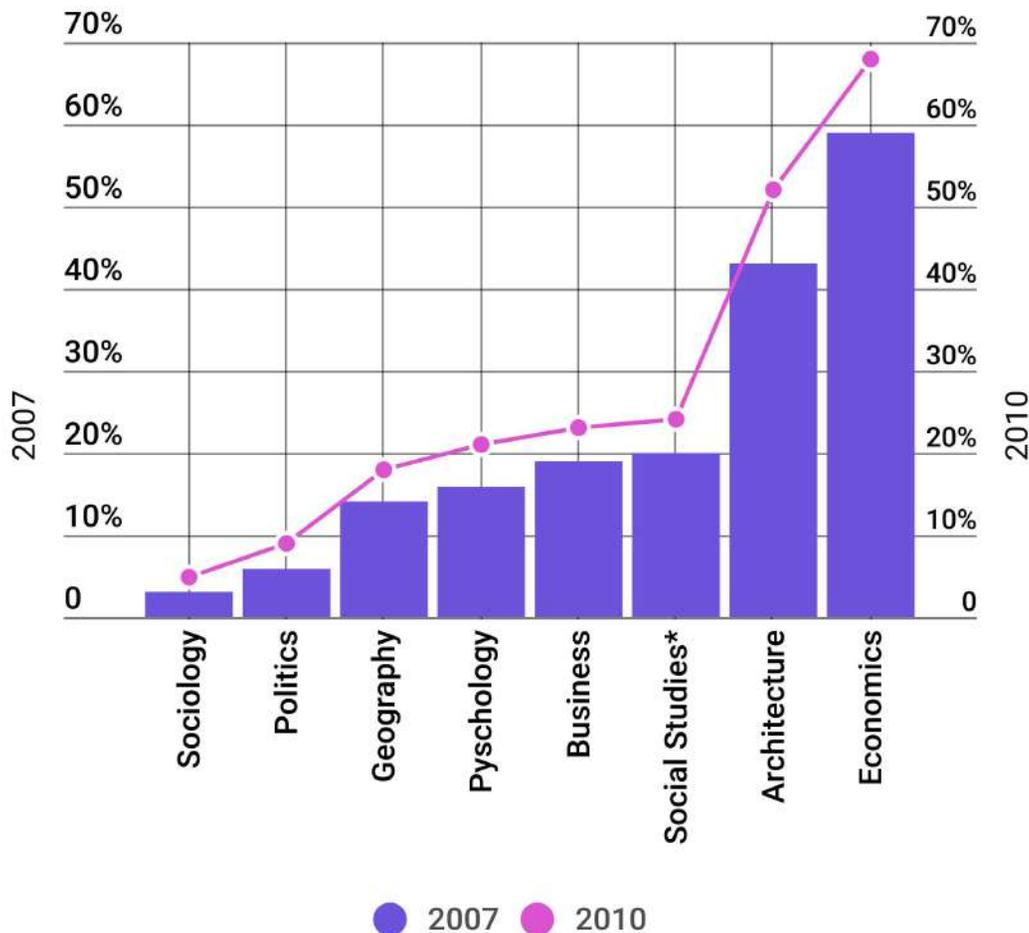
Recall: *Politics graduates often go into professional occupations across an array of industries.*

- 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)

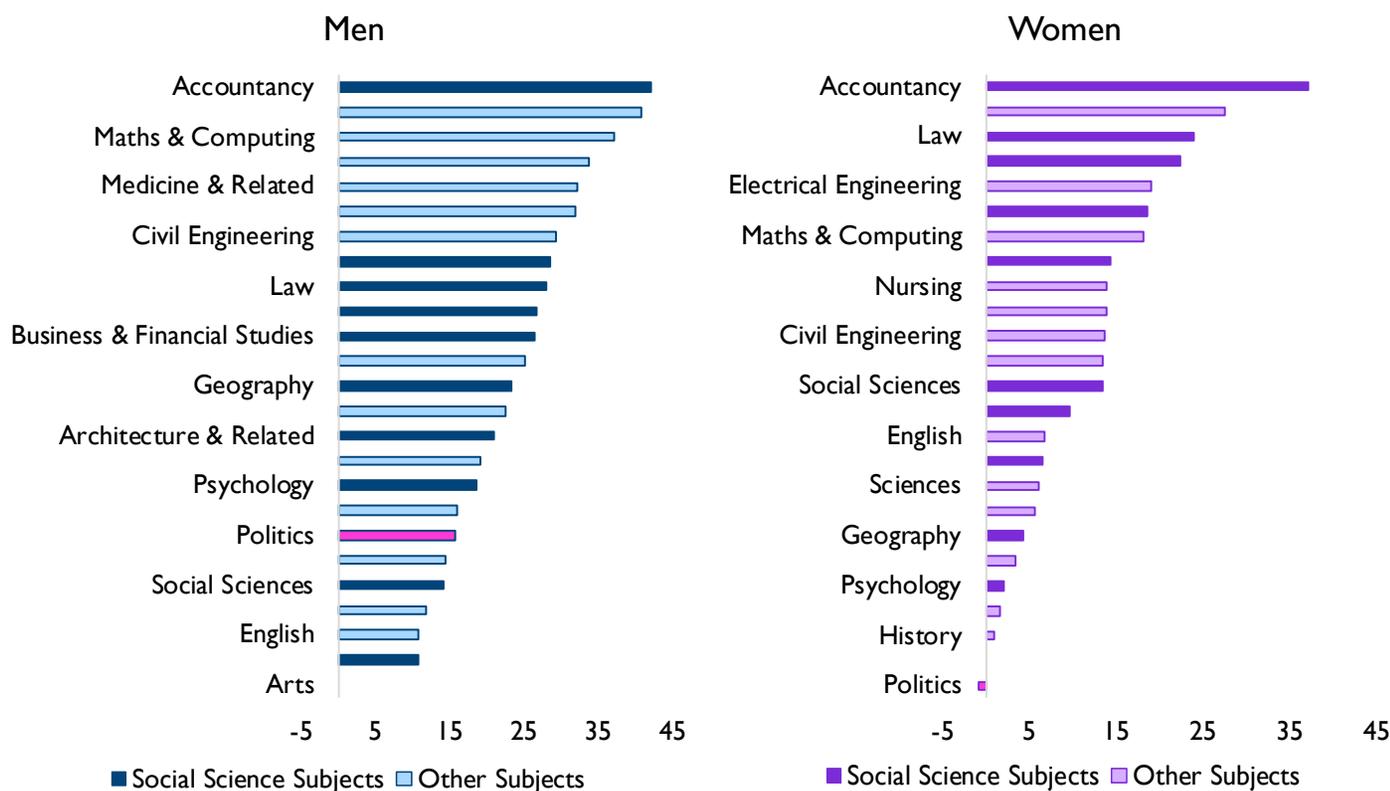


- The numbers of social science undergraduates who have completed AS or A levels in mathematics varies by the subject of their degree
- **Fewer than one in ten** politics students in the UK had an A level in mathematics in 2007 or 2010.

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.
- Politics 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.
- Politics 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