

Press release

Autumn semester 2016/17

Rising number of students

Zurich, 15 September 2016

On Monday, 2,843 undergraduates are expected to start their studies at ETH Zurich. The total number of students at the university and the number of applications for master's degrees will both reach a record high in the new semester.

This year, 2,843 young people enrolled in the 23 bachelor's programmes at ETH Zurich – a comparable number to last year, according to preliminary figures. 33.7% of these students are female – an increase of more than 1% on the previous year. Only 11.7% of new students are foreign (previous year: 10.9%); they qualified for university entry in another country but have chosen to study for a degree in Switzerland.

Computer Science continues to gain popularity

As in the past few years, Mechanical Engineering is indisputably the most popular bachelor's programme with 428 new students, although this is slightly fewer than the previous year (468 new students). Confirming last year's trend, Computer Science now takes second place in terms of popularity, with 282 new students. 254 students chose to study Architecture this year, closely followed by Health Sciences and Technology with 240 new bachelor's students, and Electrical Engineering and Information Technology with 227.

High demand for master's programmes

Around 95% of ETH bachelor's students remain at ETH for their master's degree, making up around two-thirds of the total number of master's students. The other third have gained their bachelor's from a different institution, usually in another country. This autumn, some 900 new students from other universities will begin a master's degree at ETH Zurich. Overall, more than 3,300 young people applied for master's programmes – a new record. 'ETH master's courses are very popular and the number of applicants is constantly rising,' says Dieter Wüest, Head of Academic Services. 'ETH is becoming increasingly visible internationally as a first-class educational institution; this is due in no small part to our leading position in the international rankings.'

Even more students in the new semester

The total number of students – including doctoral students – will rise to nearly 20,000: another new record (previous year: 19,230). ETH Rector Sarah Springman is delighted that so many young people show a keen interest in ETH and have applied to study this year. ‘However, this means that ETH Zurich’s financial resources must sooner or later grow in line with student numbers.’ According to Springman, this is the only way to ensure that ETH can maintain its high quality standards and faculty-to-student ratio.

Further information

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Accommodation for students

When the autumn semester begins at ETH Zurich next Monday, around 4,000 new students – bachelor’s, master’s, visiting and exchange students – are expected to join, most of whom will require affordable accommodation in Zurich. Since the beginning of the month, around 900 students have obtained rooms in the new student residences on ETH’s Hönggerberg campus. These buildings are intended to relieve the shortage of student accommodation in Zurich while offering the best possible learning conditions for students. They were built by the Luzerner Pensionskasse (Lucerne Pension Fund) and Swiss Life.