

## Press Release

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# Engineering increasingly popular

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A projected 2,805 students will begin their Bachelor's degrees at ETH Zurich on Monday – the highest number of first-semester students in the institution's history. More and more new students are choosing degree programmes in computer science, electrical engineering and health sciences. Master's programmes have also seen record numbers of applicants and admissions.

This year, 1,939 men and 866 women have accepted places in the 23 undergraduate programmes at ETH Zurich. These preliminary figures represent a 3.7% jump over last year and a new record. The proportion of female students, at 30.8%, is almost unchanged from last year's share of 30.4%. The highest proportion of female students is found in pharmaceutical sciences (70.6%) and health sciences and technology (58%). The share of international students in the incoming class of Bachelor's students has risen slightly to 19.5%.

### **Computer science is back among the most popular programmes**

With 477 students in the incoming class, mechanical engineering remains by far the most popular course of study this year, despite a slight drop from last year's peak. Architecture is again the second most popular programme, with 279 incoming students. Behind the front-runners, another trend is emerging in both computer science and electrical engineering and information technology: these disciplines faded after their initial boom in the 1980s and 1990s, but they have once again grown in popularity among first-semester students. With 238 incoming students, computer science has joined health sciences and technology, which was formed in 2011, as the third most popular programme for new students, followed by electrical engineering and information technology with 205 new students. "Student numbers in the engineering subjects have been rising for years," explains Dieter Wüest, head of the Rectorate. In light of the current and future labour market demand for qualified graduates, he notes, this is a positive development. Wüest adds that the more balanced distribution of students among the different disciplines is also positive in terms of staff/student ratios in the various departments.

### **Applications and admissions to Master's programmes on the rise**

ETH Zurich is prominent at the Master's level, too – not only among internal graduates but also with graduates from other universities. Generally, about two thirds of Master's students have received their first degree from ETH Zurich. This year some 1,400 ETH Bachelor's graduates will continue on to a Master's programme at the university. Precise figures are not yet available since Bachelor's students can also transfer to the consecutive level of their programmes, i.e. the Master's level, after the start of the semester.

ETH Zurich also received 2,489 Master's applications from holders of external Bachelor's degrees, another record. Admission was granted to 1,066 applicants, and some two thirds of that number, about 700, will take up their places at the university – also a new high. As in previous years, most incoming students from external undergraduate programmes will join the architecture, computer science, and electrical engineering and information technology Master's programmes. Due to the high numbers of undergraduates moving up from ETH's ranks, mechanical engineering is the largest programme overall at the Master's level.

Integrated building systems is being offered for the first time as a Master's programme. The four-semester programme for architects and engineers aims to train specialists in the design of more energy- and resource-efficient buildings and cities.

The total number of students at ETH Zurich continues to rise, as the influx of new students outpaces withdrawals and degree completions. Together with doctoral students, of which there are now more than 4,000, some 18,500 people will be studying at ETH Zurich this semester.

### **Further information**

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### **Exchange student numbers remain steady**

This autumn semester will see 135 exchange students visiting ETH Zurich from European partner universities, compared with 150 in autumn semester 2013/14. At the same time, 64 ETH students plan to study at a European university (autumn semester 2013/14: 72). The European student exchange now takes place as part of the SwissEuropean Mobility Programme, which the Swiss government established as an alternative to the Erasmus+ programme since Switzerland can no longer participate. The numbers are thus some 10% lower than the previous year for exchanges within Europe, within the range of normal fluctuation. Partner universities in Sweden, the UK and the Netherlands are the most popular destinations for ETH exchange students staying in Europe. Outside Europe, North America (US/Canada) accounts for the lion's share; semesters in Singapore, Australia and Japan are also popular.