

2015 Spouse Survey Results

In June of 2015, the Welcome Centre conducted a survey to get better insight into the academic and professional backgrounds of spouses or partners of Uni Bielefeld international PhD candidates and researchers. Their responses can help the Welcome Centre improve its current services.

Twenty individuals took part in the survey, of which the majority was female and under 40 years of age. The respondents are all well-educated, all having achieved at least a Bachelor's degree. 55% would like to continue to pursue their studies or professional qualifications during their stay.

Half came to Germany to accompany a spouse who is pursuing doctoral studies at Bielefeld University; 12.5% to do PostDoc work and 12.5% for guest professorships. Almost 70% were planning to stay in Germany at least 3 years.

The largest group of spouses comes from Asia, not including the Near or Middle East, (40%), followed by Western Europe (25%). Prior to arrival in Germany, 24% had permanent working contracts, 16% were students and a further 16% had fixed-term employment contracts.

Parents feel comfortable with the services on offer for their children. Respondents with children reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their childcare provisions or their children's schools.

One significant area of dissatisfaction is employment. Only 17% of respondents reported working in Germany, while almost 90% reported that they would like to. One reason for this may be lack of German skills. Only 17% reported having advanced knowledge of the German language. Respondents reported financial, quality and organizational issues as the main reasons for not learning German.