

The Swiss Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme



**Facts & Figures: Positions in
multilateral organisations funded by
the Swiss government**

Introduction to the Swiss JPO Programme

Each year, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) finance around 20 Junior Professional Officer (JPO) positions in different UN organisations and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) across the globe, which results in about 60 Swiss JPOs serving in the multilateral system.

JPOs are professionals with a master's degree and a minimum of 3 years of work experience. They serve the UN for two to three years and IFIs for two to five years.

Through the JPO programme, the Swiss government aims to achieve the following:

- Strengthen the multilateral system: Support the mandate implementation of multilateral organisations through the provision of human resources
- Strengthen the Swiss presence: Offer Swiss nationals entry doors and the prospect of long-term careers in multilateral organisations

cinfo provides the following services for JPO positions funded by the SDC (the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation), PHRD (FDFA's Peace and Human Rights Division) and SECO:

- promotes the JPO programme
- pre-selects candidates
- coordinates the selection process
- provides onboarding support
- monitors the JPOs' assignments
- offers career advice to JPOs
- offers HR advice to donor offices

JPO assignments are one of the best springboards for long-term careers in multilateral organisations. All SDC- and SECO-funded Swiss JPOs who performed competently and wanted to continue working for multilateral organisations got to do so and were retained following their JPO assignment.

Types of positions

Entities

Switzerland finances JPO positions in the following multilateral organisations: [EBRD](#), [IFAD](#), [UNAIDS](#), [UNDP](#), [UNFPA](#), [UNHCR](#), [UNICEF](#), [UN Women](#), [WBG](#), [WFP](#), and [WHO](#), as well as in different entities of the UN Secretariat such as [OHCHR](#), [OCHA](#), [DPPA](#) and the [RC System](#).

Functional areas

JPO positions are negotiated and selected by the FDFA and SECO. Their thematic focus varies enormously depending on the strategic interests of the Swiss government and/or the multilateral organisation. Here is a selection of previously funded Swiss JPO positions:

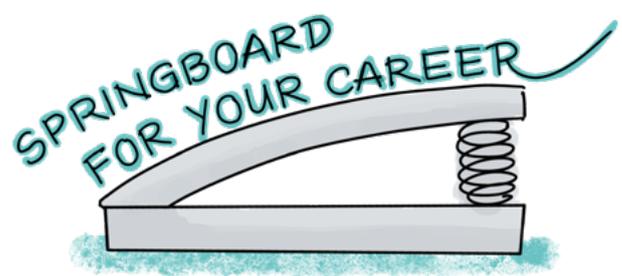
- Programme Analyst (Women's economic empowerment), UN Women, Georgia
- Associate Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA, South Sudan
- Innovative Finance Specialist, UNICEF, New York
- Associate Human Rights Officer, OHCHR, Geneva
- Digital Financial Services Specialist, IFC, Nairobi
- Associate, Climate Resilience Investments, EBRD, London
- Trade Policy Analyst, World Bank, Washington DC

Geographical areas

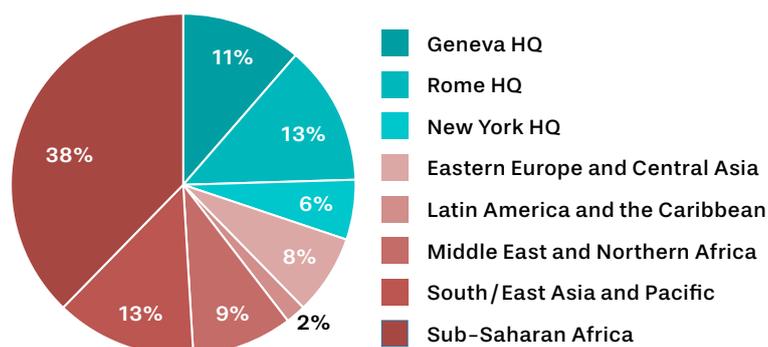
Two-thirds of SDC-funded JPOs start their assignments in a country or regional office, of which the majority are in Sub-Saharan Africa. One re-assignment to a different duty station (mostly from the country office to headquarters or vice-versa) is supported by the SDC to offer additional experience and exposure.

A vast majority of SECO-funded JPO positions are located at headquarters in London (EBRD) and Washington DC (WBG). Short-term assignments of several months to country offices are also possible.

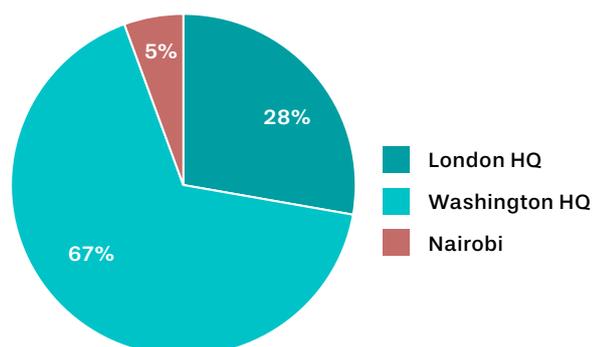
Three-quarters of PHRD-funded JPOs work at headquarters in Geneva or New York. The other assignments are located in European and African countries.



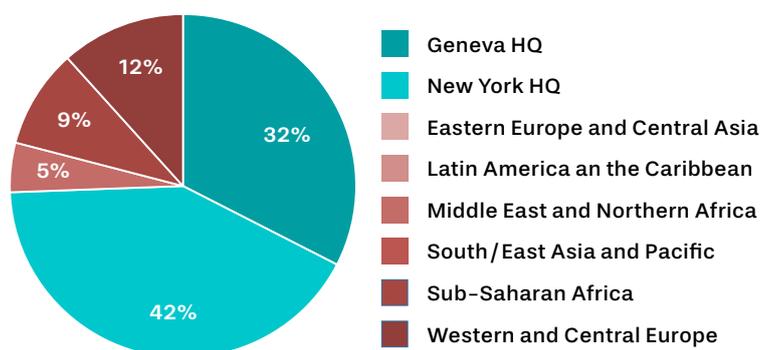
First duty station – UN JPOs (financed by SDC)



First duty station – IFI JPOs (financed by SECO)



First duty station – UN JPOs (financed by PHRD)



“I strongly believe that two years in a UNAIDS country office were extremely beneficial in terms of experience and credibility for future applications. I have enjoyed and learned extensively from both the field and HQ.”

(Former UNAIDS JPO)

Where former JPOs work following their assignment

65% of SDC-funded JPOs and 72% of SECO-funded JPOs continued working in the multilateral system following their JPO assignment.

Out of the 35% of SDC-funded JPOs that did not continue working in multilateral organisations, more than a third found employment with the government.

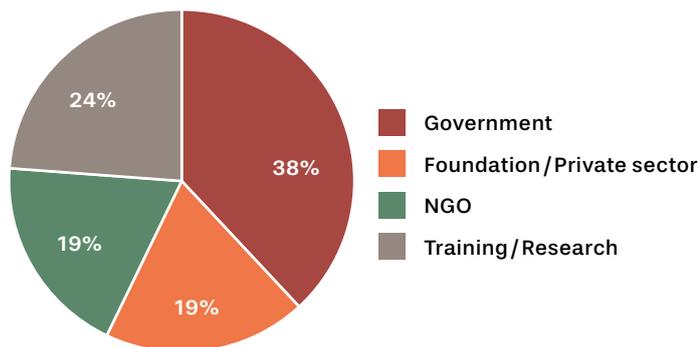
Most of the 28% of SECO-funded JPOs that did not continue working in multilateral organisations found employment with the government, at foundations or in the private sector.



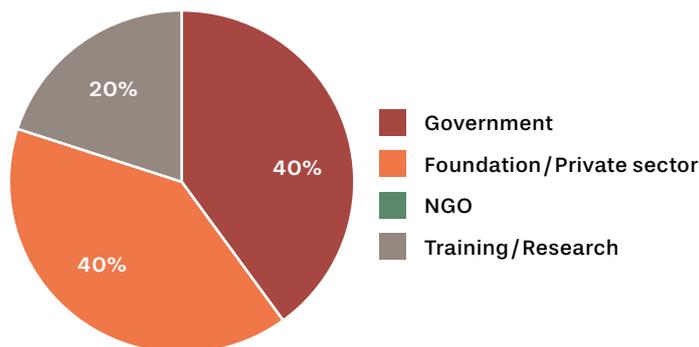
“The JPO assignment has been a unique opportunity to experience three offices in two duty stations. It's provided me with a great outlook on the agency's work and paved the way for my career at UNFPA.”

(Former UNFPA JPO)

Type of employer (if not retained) UN JPOs (financed by SDC)



Type of employer (if not retained) IFI JPOs (financed by SECO)



“As contracts with the UN are usually agreed upon for a year at the most, one must be prepared to engage in continuous resource mobilisation, look for new opportunities and to extensively network. Regarding my private life, possible future challenges could include finding opportunities for my partner in the duty stations I may be assigned to.”

(Former RCO JPO)

More information on the Swiss JPO Programme

All you need to know about your application and the recruitment process: www.cinfo.ch/JPO

Don't miss the announcement of new JPO positions financed by the FDFA (around 20 every year): create your profile on cinfoPoste and receive job alerts directly to your inbox.

Any questions?

Get in touch: recruitment@cinfo.ch / +41 32 365 80 02

Methodology and data

The analyses are based on cinfo's monitoring of the Swiss JPO Programme as of November 2022.

Sample:

- SDC: 65 former JPOs (since 2014)
- SECO: 17 former JPOs + 1 current JPO whose retention has been confirmed (since 2015)
- PHRD: 43 former JPOs (since 2014)

“During my JPO assignment, I was gradually assigned more and more responsibilities and became an indispensable team member of larger and more complex projects.”

(Former WBG JPO)



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with the main organisations in the sector.