

An aerial photograph of Yerevan, Armenia, showing a dense urban landscape with various buildings and a prominent circular structure in the foreground. In the background, a range of mountains is covered in snow under a clear sky.

# Higher Education in Armenia

## Employability of Students

**Karine Harutyunyan**

# Higher Education System

- 
- **HE is provided by public and private HEIs .**
  - **The HE system is structured in accordance with the Bologna process, with Bachelor's Degree (1<sup>st</sup> cycle), Master's Degree (2<sup>nd</sup> cycle) and Doctoral degrees (3<sup>rd</sup> cycle).**
  - **HE is provided through full-time and part-time courses on free or paid basis.**
  - **HEIs offer more than 450 Educational Programs in 26 broad fields and in about 220 specialities.**



# Higher Education Institutions

## Number of HEIs in Armenia is 70

- **27 state HEIs, including**
  - **16 (with 13 branches) HEIs under the Ministry of Education and Science subordination**
  - **5 HEIs established under Inter-Governmental Agreements**
  - **6 under subordination of other state bodies**
- **35 private HEIs, including**
  - **31 accredited by the state**
  - **4 non-accredited by the state**
- **8 branches of foreign Universities**

# Students and Staff

(2012-2013 Academic Year)

<b>Cycle</b>	<b>Number of students</b>	<b>Enrollment (%)</b>	<b>Full time students (%)</b>	<b>Part-time students (%)</b>	<b>Students paying tuition fee (%)</b>	<b>Number of the teaching staff</b>	<b>Teaching staff/student ratio</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> cycle</b>	<b>90145</b>	<b>44.9</b>	<b>63.8</b>	<b>36.2</b>	<b>86.9</b>		
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> cycle</b>	<b>12105</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>82.2</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>72.9</b>		
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> cycle</b>	<b>1155</b>				<b>2.2</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>103405</b>				<b>84.3 (average)</b>	<b>11 967</b>	<b>8.6 (average)</b>

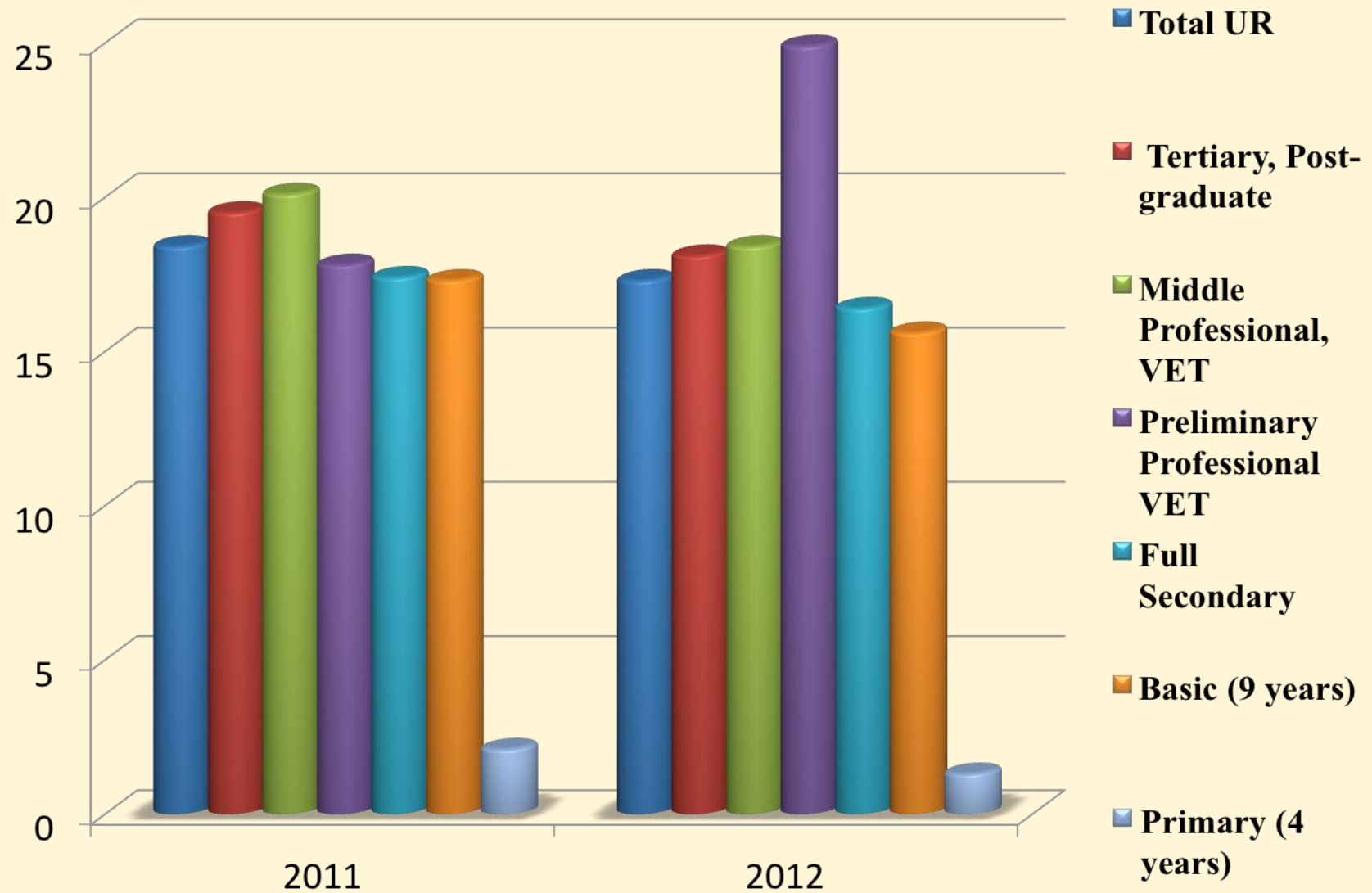
# Definitions

- *Labour resources* (working age population) are the sum of all economically active and non-active population.
- *Unemployment rate* is the share of unemployed among the economically active population.
- *Economically active population* (labour force) includes all employed and unemployed population who develop labour market for production of goods and services.

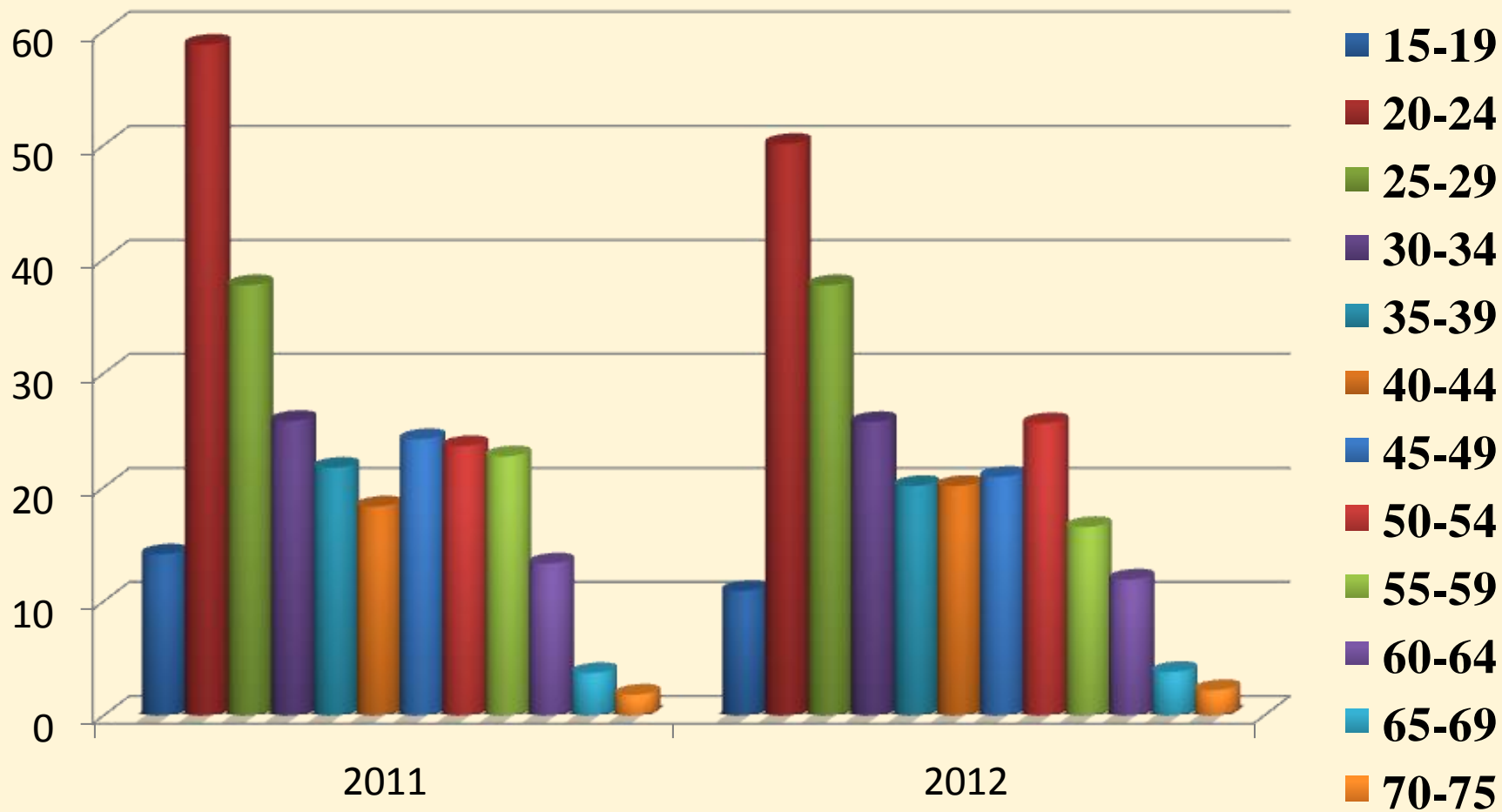
# Data on Labour Resources in Armenia

<b>Labour resources (1 000 persons)</b>	<b>Economically active population</b>	<b>Employed Population</b>	<b>Unemployed population</b>	<b>Year</b>
<b>2 376.9</b>	<b>1 414.6</b>	<b>1 183.1</b>	<b>231.6</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>2 397.6</b>	<b>1 418.8</b>	<b>1 152.8</b>	<b>265.9</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>2 389.7</b>	<b>1 463.3</b>	<b>1 185.2</b>	<b>278.2</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>2 286.3</b>	<b>1 440.9</b>	<b>1 175.1</b>	<b>265.7</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>2 260.8</b>	<b>1 418.3</b>	<b>1 172.8</b>	<b>245.5</b>	<b>2012</b>

# Unemployment Rate (UR) in % by Education Level



# Unemployed Population by Age (1000 person)





# Labour Market Situation

## January-December, 2013

<b>Total Number of Vacancies</b>	<b>Require High Educational Level</b>	<b>Require Low Educational Level</b>	<b>Number of People who Found Job</b>
<b>9847</b>	<b>3606</b>	<b>6241</b>	<b>12659</b>

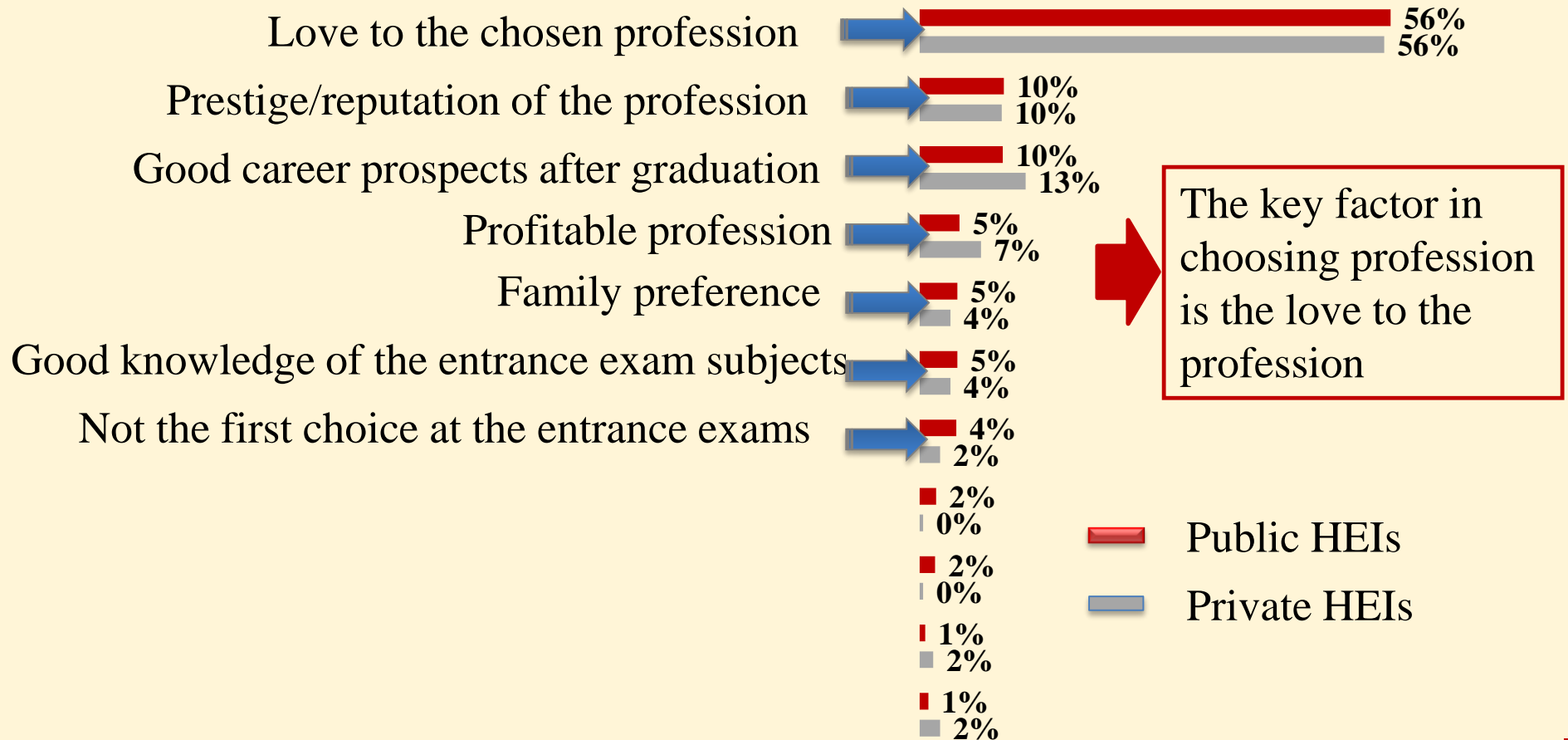
# Why Students in Armenia Work?

<b>Working Students</b>	<b>% of Full-time Students</b>
<b>Worked in the formal sector before</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Worked in the informal sector before</b>	<b>27.4</b>
<b>Work in the formal sector currently</b>	<b>9.6</b>
<b>Work in the informal sector currently</b>	<b>10.2</b>
<b>Worked on a volunteer basis before</b>	<b>19.8</b>
<b>Work on a volunteer basis currently</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>Students that have ever worked</i>	<i>58.7</i>
<i>Students that have never worked</i>	<i>41.3</i>

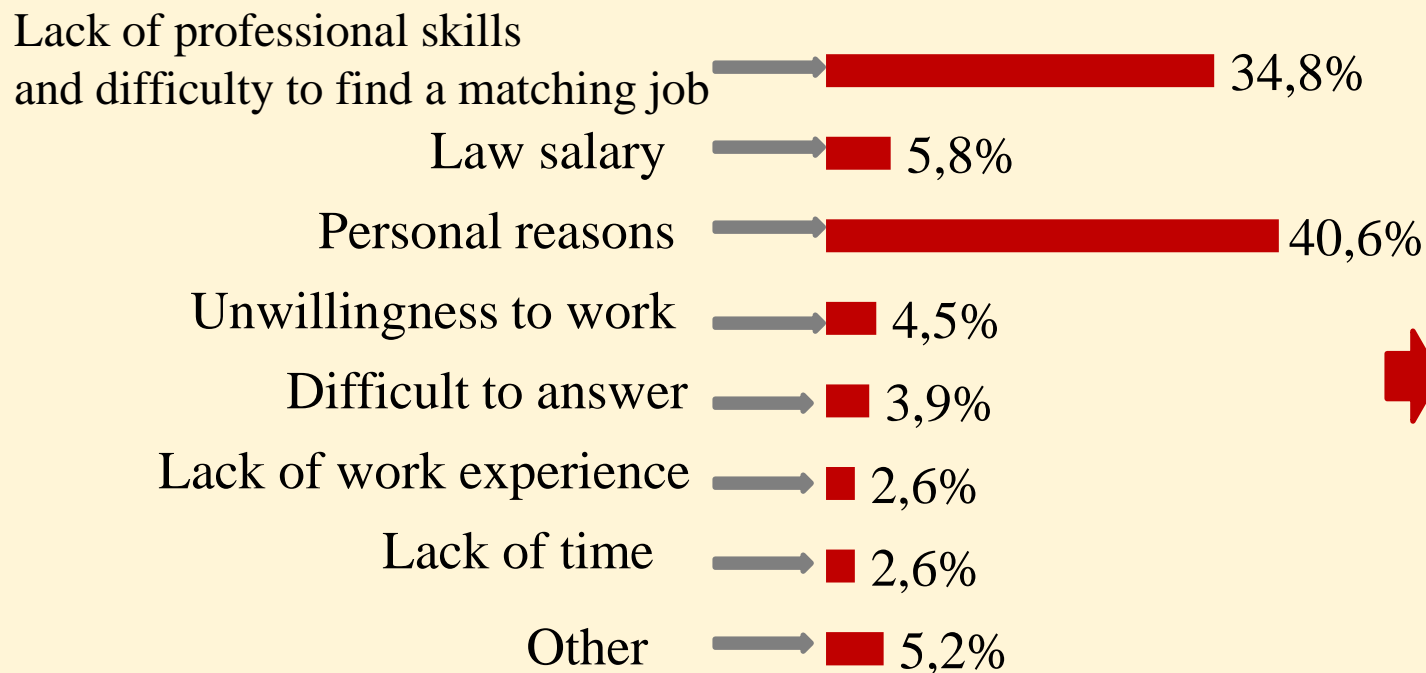
# Why Students in Armenia Work?

<b>Reasons for Working</b>	<b>% of Full-time Students</b>
<b>To be independent</b>	<b>52.9</b>
<b>To help family</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>To acquire a range of professional skills</b>	<b>37.4</b>
<b>To have an occupation/job</b>	<b>20.5</b>
<b>To pay the tuition fee</b>	<b>18.9</b>
<i>Some students work for more than one reason</i>	

## Decisive Factors in Choosing Specialty



## Unemployed Graduates

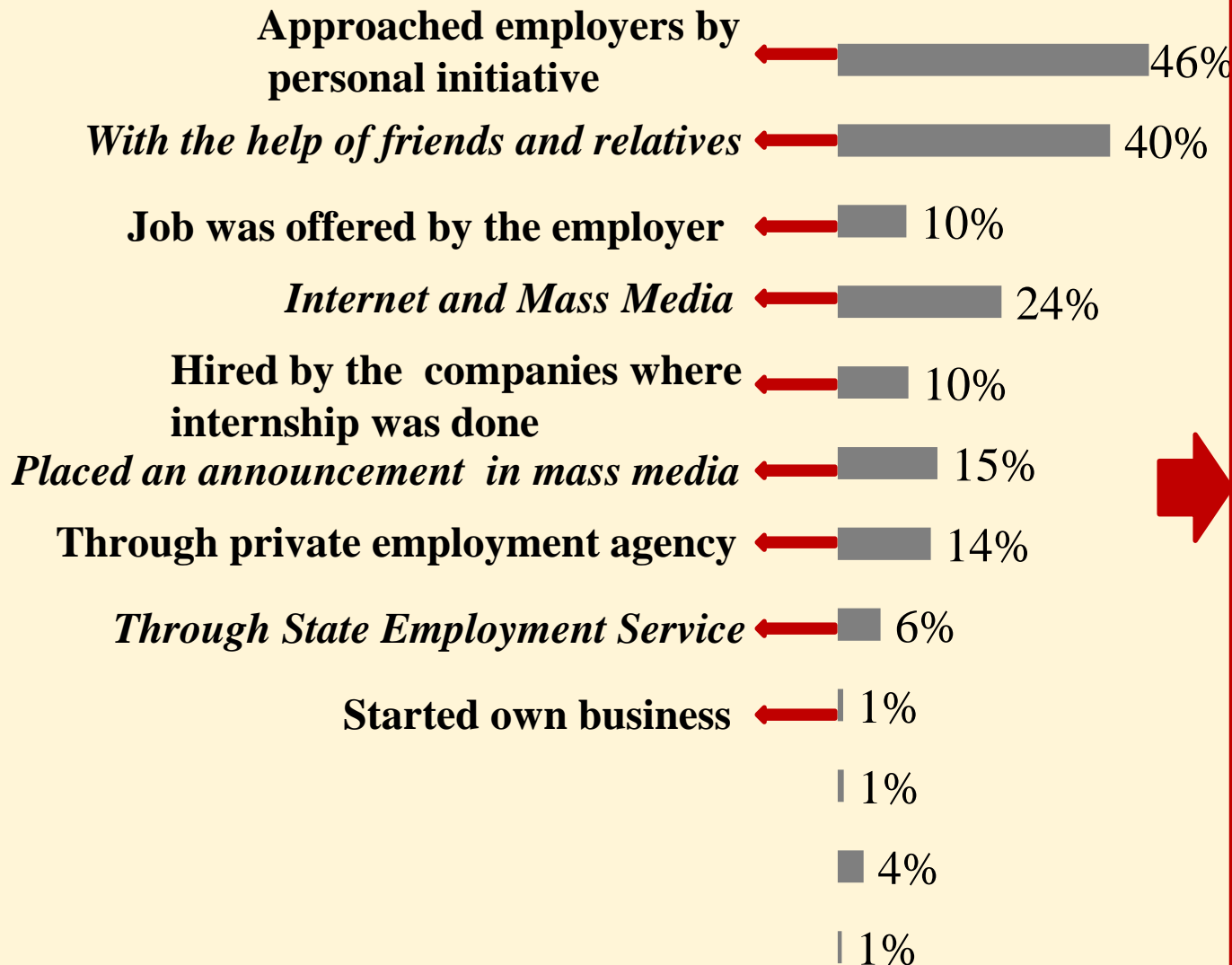


**The main reasons for graduates' unemployment are lack of the relevant professional skills, difficulty to find a job in the area of expertise as specified in the diploma and various personal reasons**

**Difficulty to find a job in the area of expertize is most common for the graduates with degrees in Sciences, Mathematics and Cultural Studies.**



## Ways to Find Job



- Most often graduates find job when they approach employers by the personal initiative
- The smallest number of graduates found job through State Employment Service and almost no one through HEIs career centers

# Graduate Tracer Study

## Success Factors in Finding Job

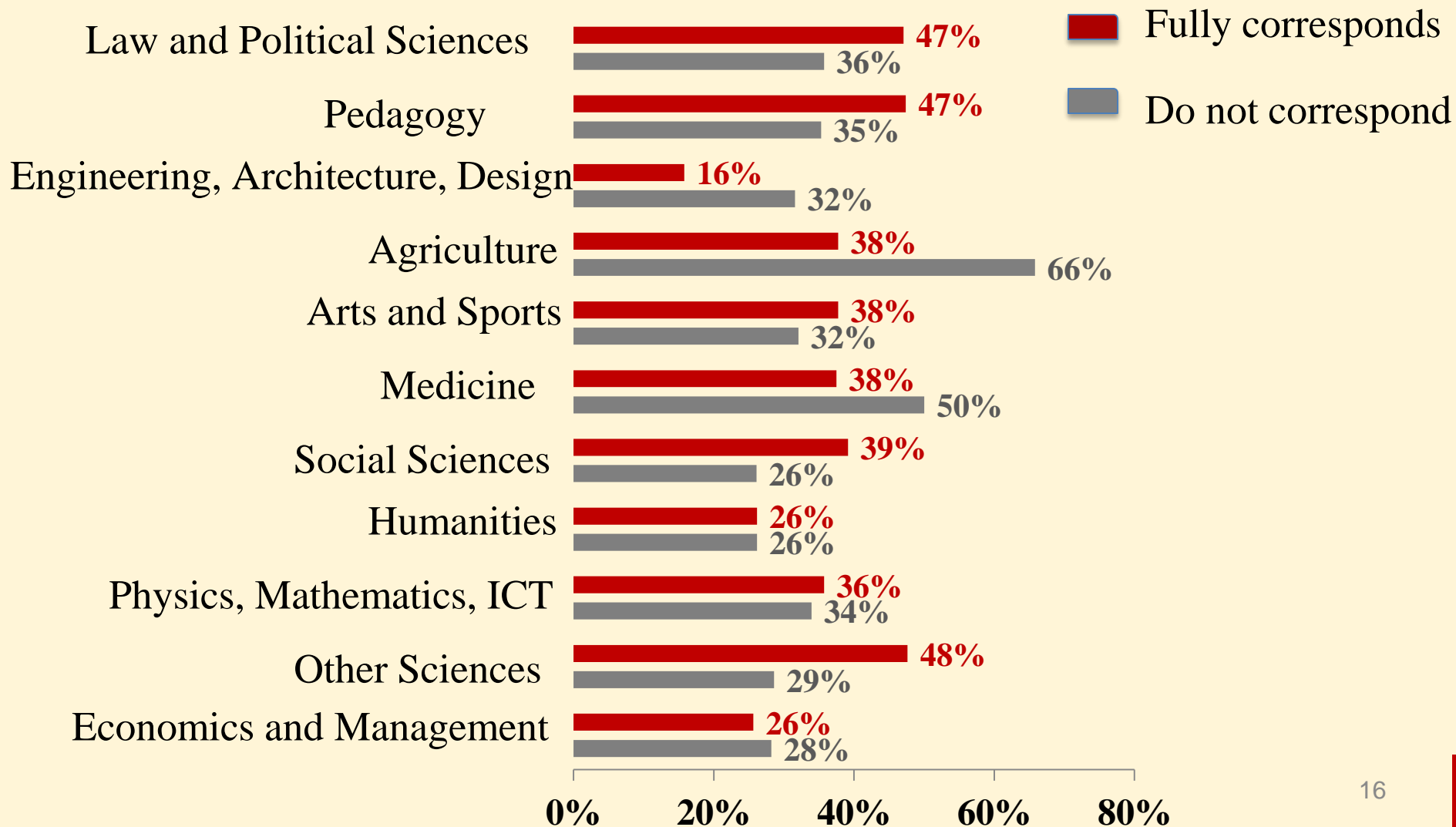


**1- No  
influence of  
the factor**

**5- High  
influence of  
the factor**

# Graduate Tracer Study

## Correspondence of the Graduates 1<sup>st</sup> Job to their Qualification



# Issues

- ***Unemployment rate*** in Armenia is high (**about 18%** = 265,700.0 person), especially among young people (**34.8%** =50,100.0 person **among 20-24 year olds** and **23.1%** =37,700.0 person among **25-29 year olds** in 2012), and it coexists with **9847** official vacancies.
  - “HEIs can do numerous things to increase the *employability* of its graduates, but it cannot guarantee their employment, as employment prospects also depend on factors that are beyond the control of the individual university (the economic situation, the structure of the labour market, wage levels, etc.) ”
- 58.7 % of full-time students are working or have worked during their studies in HEIs mainly for the reasons *to be independent* or *to acquire a range of professional skills*.
- The main reasons for graduates’ unemployment are: *lack of the relevant professional skills and difficulty to find a job in the area of expertise as specified in the diploma* (34.8% of unemployed graduates) and various *personal reasons* (40,6% of unemployed graduates).

# Issues

- Most often graduates find job when they approach employers by the *personal initiative (46%)*, the smallest number of graduates find job *through State Employment Service (6%) and almost no one through HEIs career centers.*
- According to the employers opinion the HEIs in Armenia still fail to meet the labour market requirements, thus there is a shortage of graduates with the right skills and capabilities (for employability).
  - *Professional expertise: i.e. subject-specific knowledge and expert thinking is remaining the most important skills set that affects graduates' employability.*
  - *Interpersonal skills: i.e. communication skills, teamwork skills, critical thinking, creativity and collaboration, etc. are becoming more and more important;*
- The employers:
  - prefer to hire people with sufficient work experience but not new graduates, as far as work experience signals work-readiness, knowing work-life, and to some extent that the knowledge and skills certified by the diploma have been applied successfully in practice;
  - in reality, by and large reluctant to collaborate with HEIs;
  - enable to offer a competitive starting salary.



# Policies to Enhance Employability

- Implement Bologna structural reforms, including:
  - National Qualification Framework and Sectoral Frameworks;
  - Learning Outcome based curricula;
  - relevance of the curricula to labor market;
  - more flexible structure of study programmes;
  - increasing number of part-time students and possibilities for students to work.
- Include sector specific work placements as an integral part of the study programme. As a start state included mandatory practical periods and internships as well as practice-based teaching/learning and practice-oriented papers or theses in the education programmes.

# Policies to Enhance Employability

- Develop close cooperation between employers and HEIs:
  - include employers in the HEIs governing boards and graduates' final exam boards
  - involve employers in the design of curriculum and study programmes in order to make courses more relevant to their needs;
  - provide better post-graduation support (facilitate relations between graduates and companies);
  - promote direct recruitment from HEIs;
  - promote employers participation in debates or seminars organised by HEIs.
- Develop HEIs' Career Centers and encourage cooperation of employers with the Career Centers.
- Conduct studies and analyse information about the career paths of graduates.