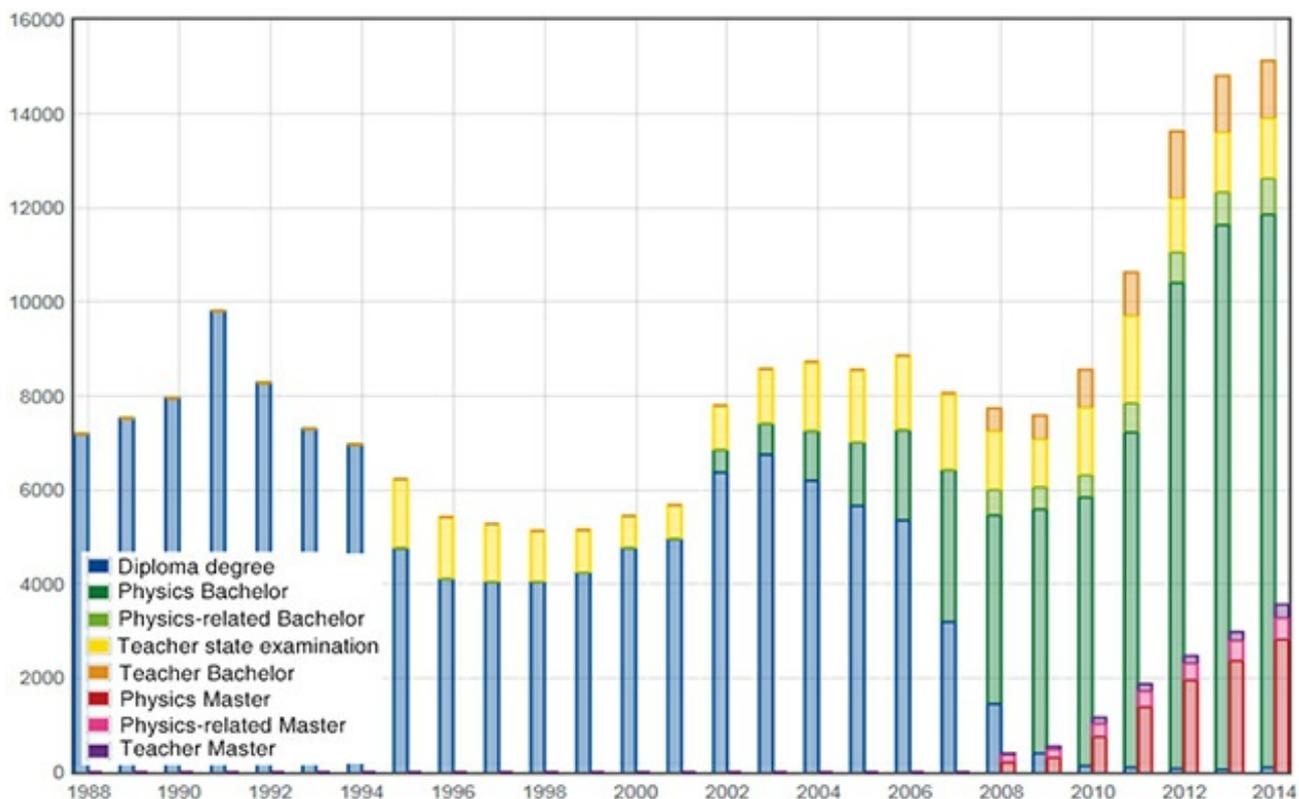


Physics students in Germany: more than ever before

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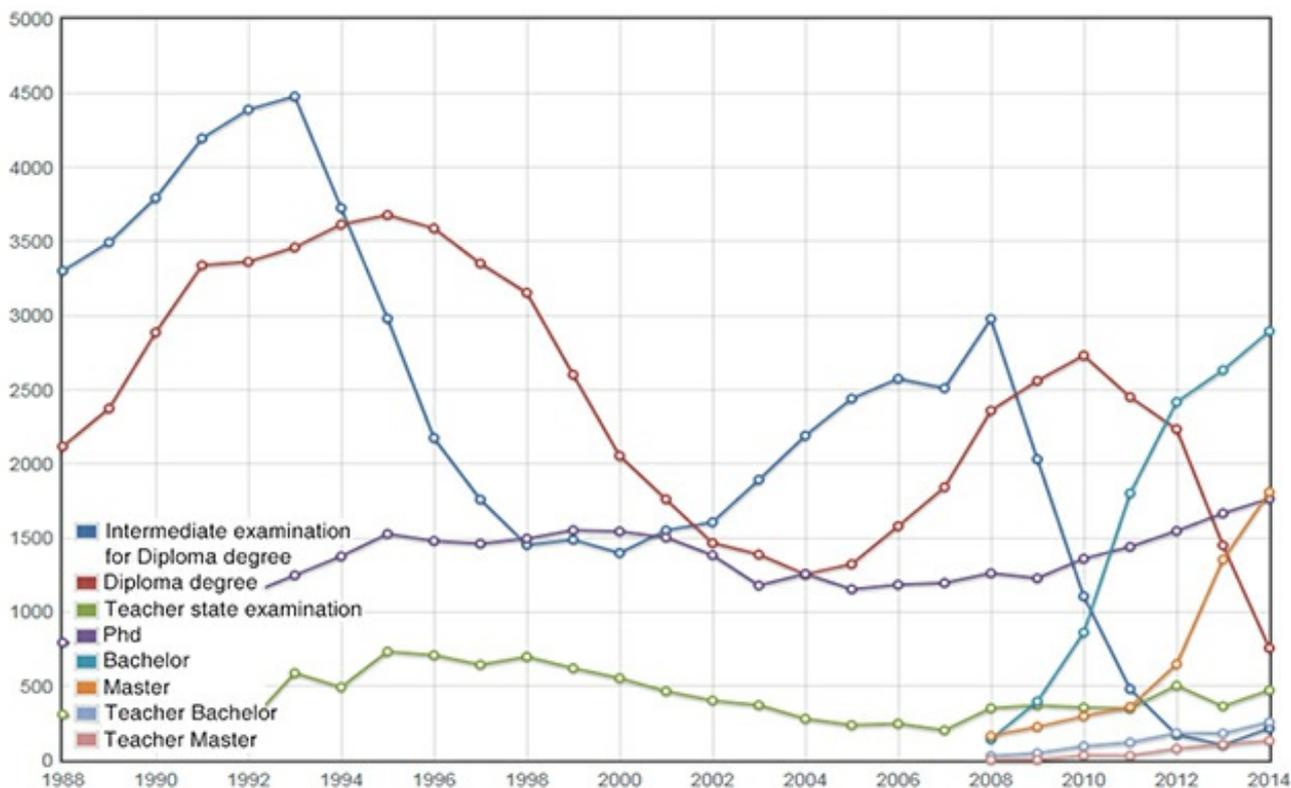
The annual statistics of the German Conference of Physics Faculties (*Konferenz der Fachbereiche Physik, KFP*) provides some interesting insight in the situation of physics students in Germany. In the winter term 2013/14, over 47,000 students were enrolled in one of the 58 physics faculties at German universities – more than ever before. In fact, the number of first-year students has doubled within the last six years (2008: 7,583, 2014: 15,131) while the number of high-school graduates has only grown by a factor of 1.2. However, the drop-out rate in the first year of a physics Bachelor is fair above 50% , partly due to nominal students who matriculate in physics but do not show up in courses. The success rates in Master courses and in the latter years of Bachelor courses are in the order of about 95%.



Number of first-year students in different kinds of physics courses from 1988 to 2014.

The Bologna-triggered transition to a system of Bachelor/Master courses is now fully implemented. Only few students are still on the track for the former Diploma degree ("Physik-Diplom"). After a

Bachelor degree (3,112 awarded in 2013/14) virtually all physics students in Germany continue in a Master course. 2,568 Master/Diploma degrees were conferred last year. This is the lowest figure since 2008 but within the next years it is expected to increase significantly. During the last years, about every second physicist left academia after the Master/Diploma degree to get a job, the other half stayed at university to earn a Doctorate.



Number of physics graduates from 1988 to 2014.

Even if German physics faculties consider the doctoral phase not as a "third cycle of education" but as a phase of early professional activity in science, its statistics comprise some data on this topic. In 2013/14, 1,765 Doctorate degrees were awarded after, on average, 4.2 years of research. 21% of the new doctors were non-German, indicating that for most working groups at German universities it is just normal to be international.

The share of women among all graduates and students in physics is of about 20% on all levels. On the one hand, this figure is significantly higher than it used to be until about 15 years ago, on the other hand, despite many activities to motivate girls for studying natural science, there is no obvious trend to a further enhancement over the last three or four years.

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