



# Shaping the future continued education of public health physicians with a PhD

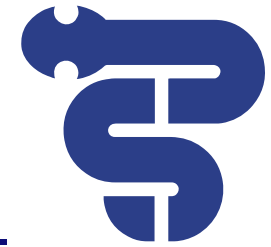
a project funded by the SSPH+  
Julia Dratva/SPHD



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1. Swiss Society of Public Health Doctors (prevention and public health)
  2. Assessment: PhD equivalence
  3. Conclusion

# Society of Public Health Doctors (SPHD)

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## Represents

- public health doctors within the medical society (FMH), the field of public health, and society overall.

## Responsible for

- the continued education of public health doctors (accredited only recently)
- the development of public health in Switzerland on a professional, political and societal level.

# SPHD

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- 205 doctors with a specialisation in public health of which
- 100 are members of the society
- ~40 % work in academia, ~40 % national/cantonal public health institutions, ~20 % other public health bodies or other
- roughly 4 take the exam/year

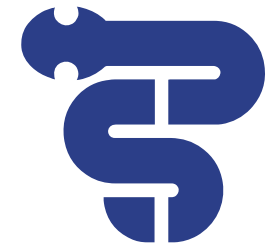
# Medical specialisation/ post-grad. education

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- 3 yrs. public health specific education
  - 1 **year theoretical education** (MPH or equivalent)
  - 2 years practical education
    - of which 1 year in a category A institution.
- 2 yrs. clinical education
  - (patient contact, provided the medical exam is accepted in CH, can have taken place abroad)

<= changing educational landscape



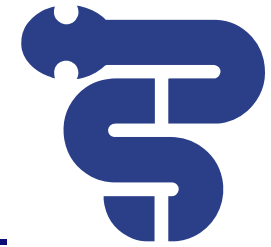
Key facts on the survey

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## 3. SURVEY (FUNDED BY SSPH+)

# Aim of the project

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Asses the equivalence of a PhD education as compared to the default a Master of Public Health (MPH).

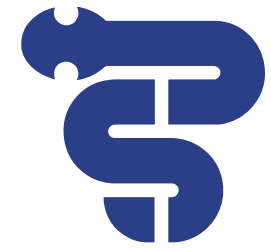


## *Key facts on the survey*

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- A questionnaire (online) to 44 PhD students with a medical background currently employed as PhD
- reported by the cat A institutes: Geneva: 31, Berne: 9, Lausanne: 1, Zurich: 3, Basel: 0
- 19 persons filled out the questionnaire completely





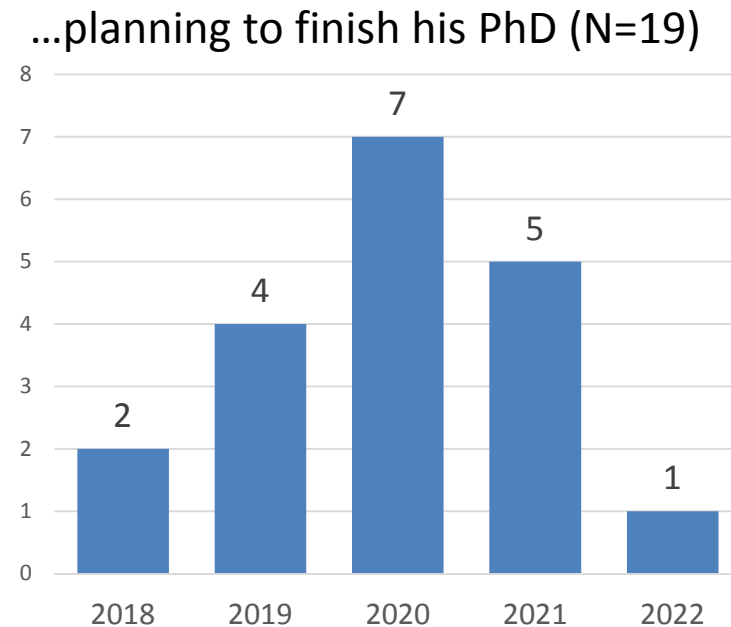
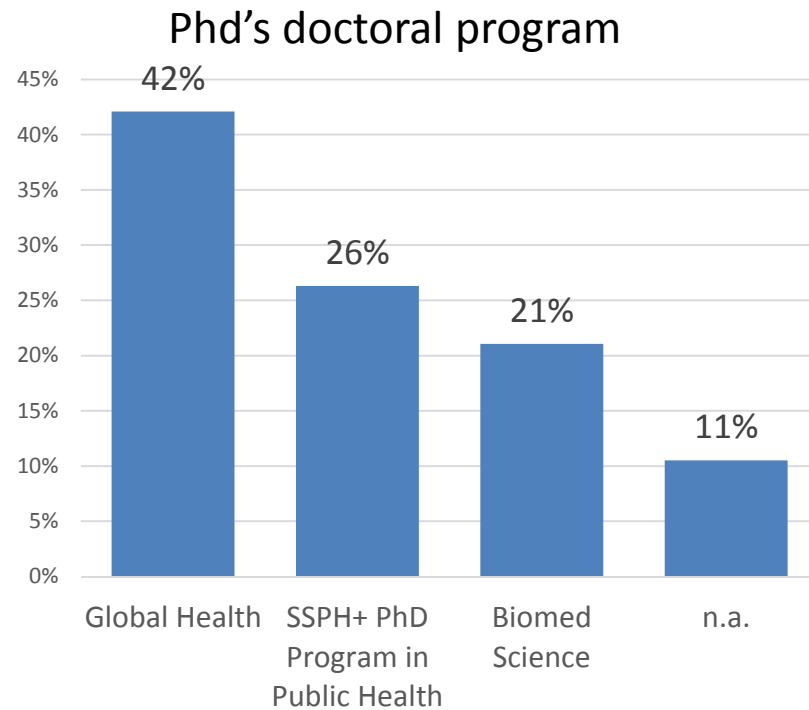
Presentation of the main results

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## **4. FINDINGS**



# PhD programs attended

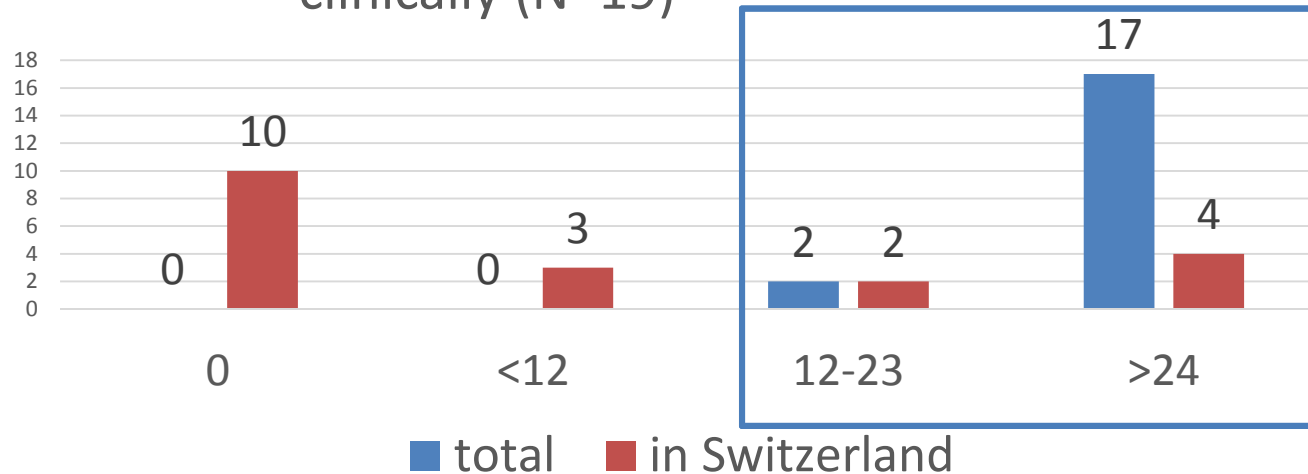


50% of the PhDs investigate a research question in a Swiss setting/context, the other a question relating to global issues.

# Information about the individual clinical experience as a physician



How many months have you worked clinically (N=19)



2 years of clinical experience are mandatory.

Potentially 19 are eligible, 6 are highly plausibly eligible.



# Concepts and Principles of Public Health

- Public health ethics not covered or not taken

Option	∅	1 (not at all covered)	2	3	4	5 (covered in depth)
Public Health Principles	4.11 Σ: 19		2 10.53%	3 15.79%	5 26.32%	9 47.37%
Health Promotion and Prevention	3.95 Σ: 19		2 10.53%	6 31.58%	2 10.53%	9 47.37%
Public Health History	3.11 Σ: 19	2 10.53%	3 15.79%	6 31.58%	7 36.84%	1 5.26%
Public Health Ethics	3.79 Σ: 19			9 47.37%	5 26.32%	5 26.32%



# Methods

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- Methods are covered very well by most

Option	$\emptyset$	1 (not at all covered)	2	3	4	5 (covered in depth)
Epidemiological Methods	4.63 $\Sigma$ : 19				7 36.84%	12 63.16%
Digital Epidemiology	3.74 $\Sigma$ : 19		1 5.26%	7 36.84%	7 36.84%	4 21.05%
Biostatistics	4.53 $\Sigma$ : 19			2 10.53%	5 26.32%	12 63.16%
Qualitative Methods	3.74 $\Sigma$ : 19		2 10.53%	4 21.05%	10 52.63%	3 15.79%
Systematic Reviews	4.26 $\Sigma$ : 19		1 5.26%	2 10.53%	7 36.84%	9 47.37%



# Determinants of Health

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- Socio-cultural/economic to be increased
- Environmental < 50% covered well

Option	∅	1 (not at all covered)	2	3	4	5 (covered in depth)
Sociodemographic Factors	4.11 Σ: 19		1 5.26%	5 26.32%	4 21.05%	9 47.37%
Sociocultural Factors	3.68 Σ: 19		2 10.53%	7 36.84%	5 26.32%	5 26.32%
Socioeconomic Factors	3.84 Σ: 19		1 5.26%	7 36.84%	5 26.32%	6 31.58%
Physical, Chemical and Biological Environment	3 Σ: 19	2 10.53%	5 26.32%	6 31.58%	3 15.79%	3 15.79%



# Health and Policy and Systems

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- overall ok –  
with exception of **SWISS PH**

Option	∅	1 (not at all covered)	2	3	4	5 (covered in depth)
Health Policy and Politics	3.53 Σ: 19	1 5.26%	3 15.79%	5 26.32%	5 26.32%	5 26.32%
Health Economy	3.53 Σ: 19	1 5.26%	4 21.05%	4 21.05%	4 21.05%	6 31.58%
Swiss Public Health System	3.11 Σ: 19	2 10.53%	6 31.58%	2 10.53%	6 31.58%	3 15.79%
International Health Systems	3.53 Σ: 19	1 5.26%	3 15.79%	4 21.05%	7 36.84%	4 21.05%



# Skills and Competencies

- ok – improvement policy/strategy development and interprofessional skills

Option	∅	1 (not at all covered)	2	3	4	5 (covered in depth)
Project Development and Management	3.89 Σ: 19		1 5.26%	6 31.58%	6 31.58%	6 31.58%
Policy & Strategy Development	3.26 Σ: 19	1 5.26%	2 10.53%	9 47.37%	5 26.32%	2 10.53%
Designing and Evaluating Interventions	3.68 Σ: 19	2 10.53%	2 10.53%	4 21.05%	3 15.79%	8 42.11%
Literature Search	4 Σ: 19		3 15.79%	3 15.79%	4 21.05%	9 47.37%
Interprofessional Cooperation	3.47 Σ: 19	1 5.26%	4 21.05%	4 21.05%	5 26.32%	5 26.32%



# Digital Health

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- Undercovered in the curriculum

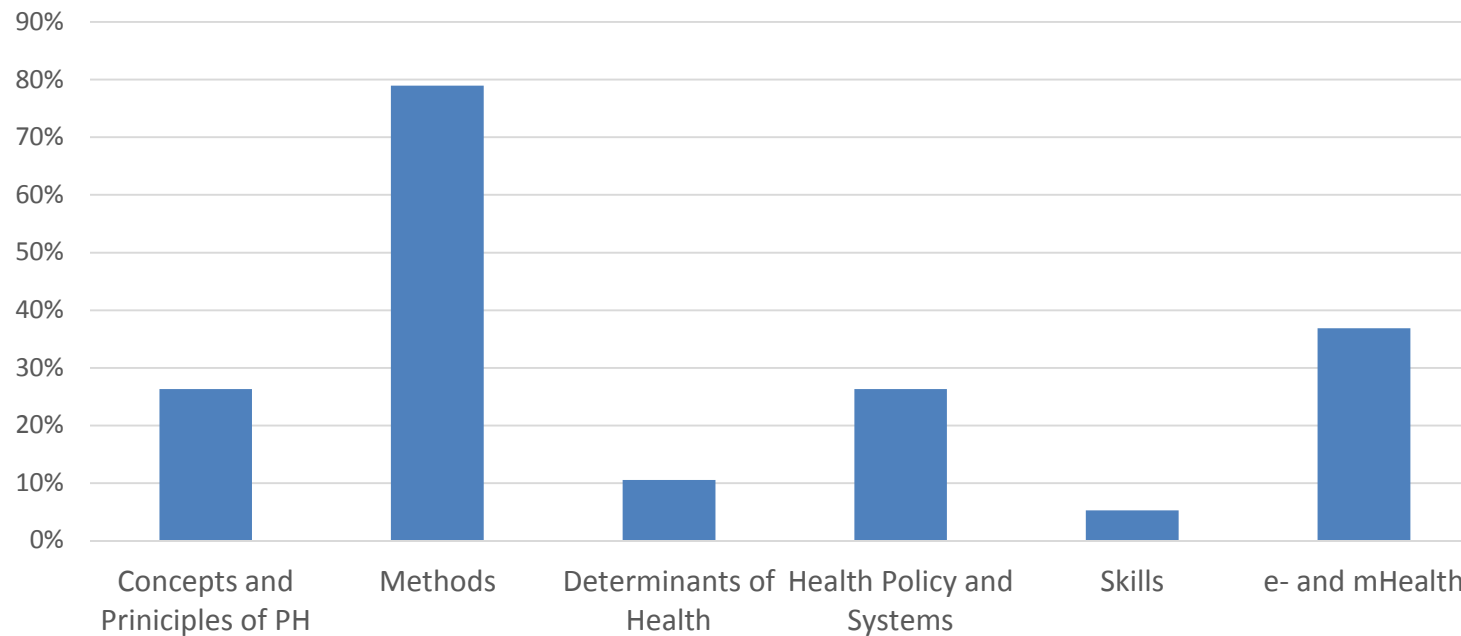
Option	∅	1 (not at all covered)	2	3	4	5 (covered in depth)
e- and mHealth	3.53 Σ: 19	3 15.79%		6 31.58%	4 21.05%	6 31.58%

# SPHD evaluation based on ETCS portfolio

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Percentage of students having covered topics "in depth"



Course descriptions may not allow a fair evaluation of content.

PhD may not be able to differentiate where they learnt a competence



# Career Aspiration

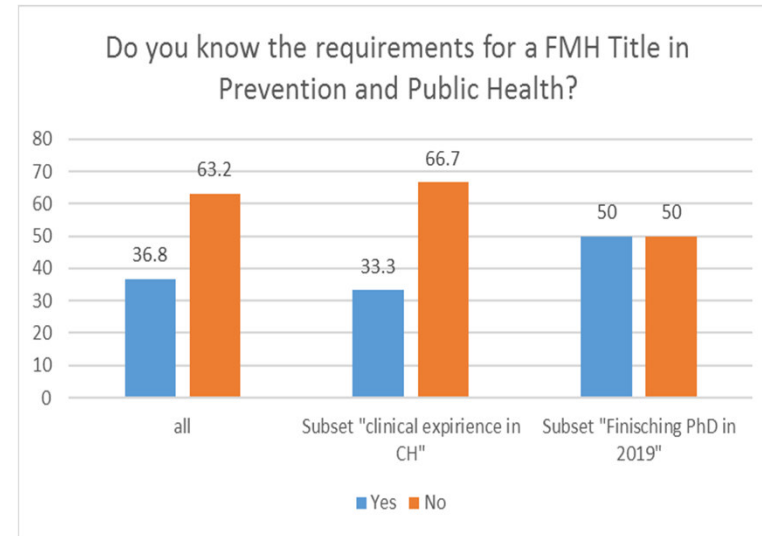
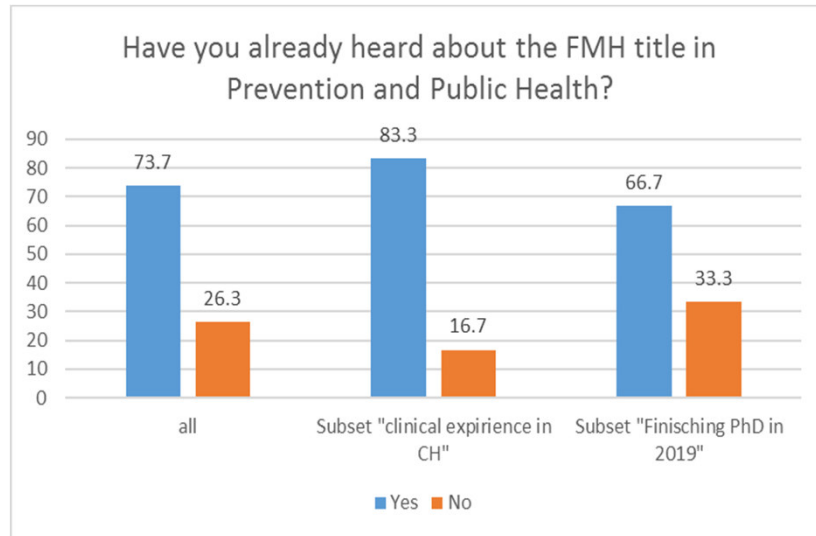
- ***What is your career aspiration? On a scale of 5 which of the following career options do you wish to pursue after your PhD?***

Option	Ø	1 (not at all)	2	3	4	5 (I definitely aim at)
Academic: public health research	4.58 Σ: 19			1 5.26%	6 31.58%	12 63.16%
Academic: clinical research	3.95 Σ: 19	1 5.26%	1 5.26%	3 15.79%	7 36.84%	7 36.84%
Non-academic: Practice, in clinical medicine	3.05 Σ: 19	3 15.79%	2 10.53%	8 42.11%	3 15.79%	3 15.79%
Non-academic: Practice, in public health	2.95 Σ: 19	5 26.32%	2 10.53%	5 26.32%	3 15.79%	4 21.05%
Non-academic: private sector	1.79 Σ: 19	11 57.89%	3 15.79%	3 15.79%	2 10.53%	



# Is the FMH Title known?

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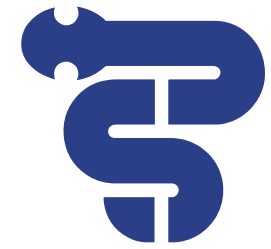
Most PhD students who have worked clinically in CH know of the title:  
A third do not know the requirements for the title.  
Half would be interested in gaining the FMH title in PH.



# Conclusion

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- There are no formal reasons (SIWF) against acceptance of the PhD as a topic specific theoretical education (1 year).
  - The doctoral programs in Switzerland offering courses for PhDs offer the opportunity to cover the expected topics.
  - Not all PhD fulfill the expected coverage of topics and depth.
- => The PhD can be accepted as theoretical post-graduate year under specific conditions.



Suggestions about a possible procedures

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## **6. CONDITIONS**

# Conditions of acceptance of the theoretical year

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The PhD's applying for the FMH exam

- must have passed their PhD exam
- can evidence sufficient Public Health education during their PhD theoretical education

**Sufficient:**

**20 ECTS credits – 18 (2/ listed PH topic area\*)  
– 2 Swiss Public health focus**

- **Must submit a short summary including a discussion on the public health relevance of the chosen topic in general and in the Swiss context.**

\* Based on ASPHER competencies

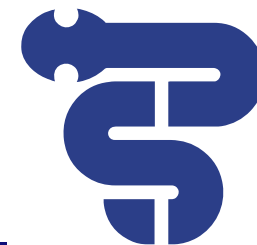
# further

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- A revision of the post-grad educational program has been submitted to the SIWF (FMH-body for educational issues)
- SPHD will prepare information leaflet and organize information events.
- SSPH+ will provide courses on Swiss Public Health.
- All programmes are encouraged to better indicate with competencies are taught in the different courses.
- Cat. A institutes to inform PhD about career opportunity and support early contact with SPHD



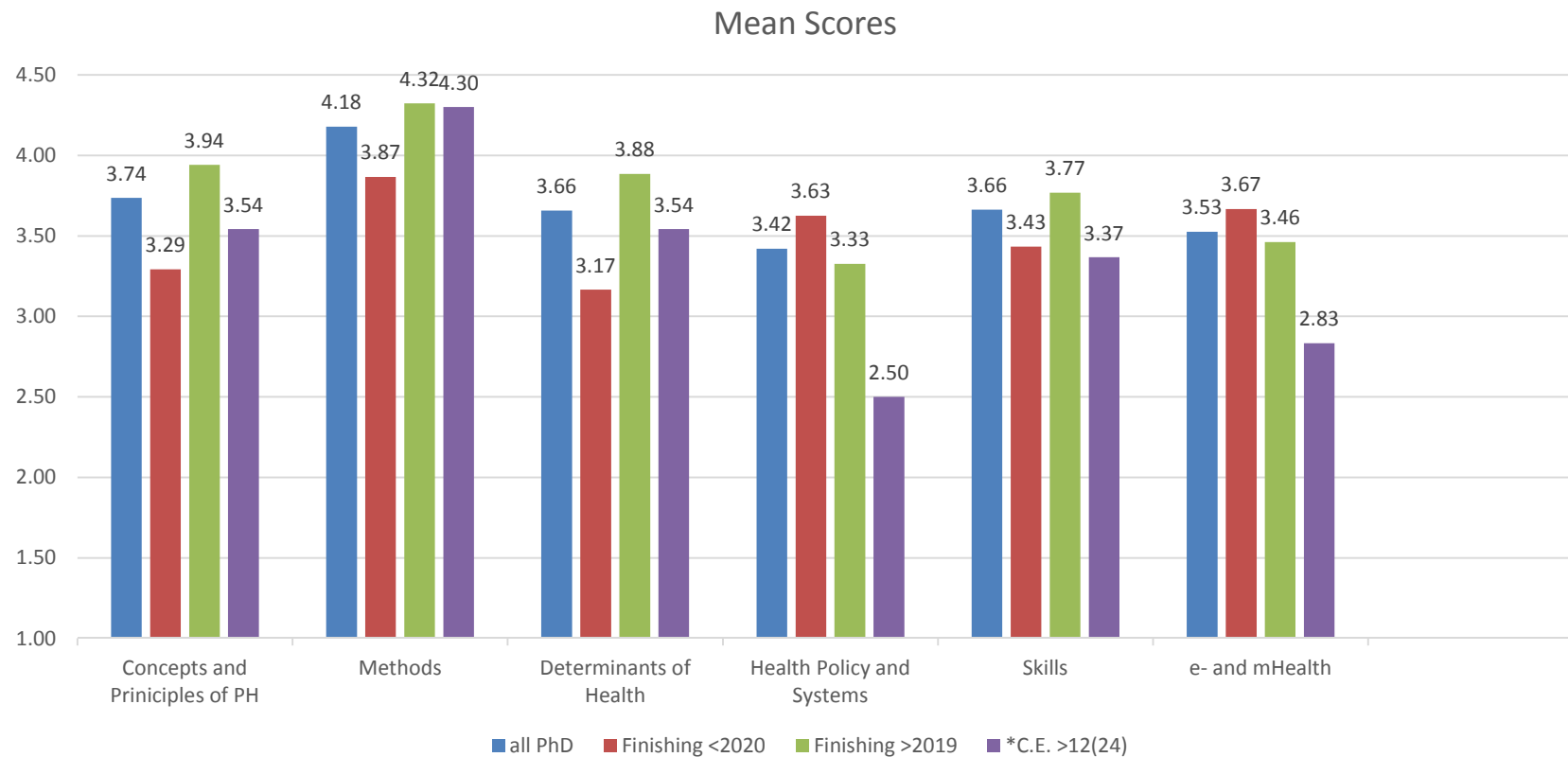


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Thank you – any questions?



# Mean scores by different strata



- A mean score of 3.5 or 4 was viewed as cut-off – 11 did not reach 4, 6 not 3.5
- As expected those who finish their PhD in 2019 report a higher coverage of topics overall.



# Learning aims (WBP 2019)

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- **Konzepte und Prinzipien von PH**
- Public Health Konzepte
- Gesundheitsförderung
- Prävention
- Public Health Ethik
- **Methoden in Public Health:**
- Epidemiologie, einschliesslich Forschungsmethoden und Studien
- Biostatistik und Demographie
- Sozialwissenschaftliche Methoden (z.B. qualitative Methoden, mixed-methods)
- **Gesundheitspolitik und -system**
- Gesundheitsrecht
- Gesundheitsökonomie
- Gesundheitspolitik (vormals Politologie)
- Gesundheitssystem
- **Soziale Gesundheitsdeterminanten**
- Gesundheit, soziale und kulturelle Umwelt
- **Umweltdeterminanten der Gesundheit**
- Gesundheit und physische, chemische und biologische Umwelt
- **Public Health Skills (u.a folgende)**
- Projekt Management
- Policy brief
- Kommunikationstechniken