Employment status of non-academic geoscientists during the COVID-19 pandemic

Over the past year, most non-academic geoscientists remained employed. A few respondents reported switching jobs and employers, while most of those who remained employed over the past year reported keeping the same job with the same company. New graduates and previously unemployed geoscientists who gained employment within the geosciences comprised 7% of non-academic geoscientists participating in the study over this time period. Those leaving the non-academic workforce either retired (1.2%), returned to school (1.4%), entered the academic workforce (1%), or became unemployed (2.4%).

Between February 2020 and February 2021, 88% to 93% of non-academic geoscientists were employed full-time, 4% to 7% were employed part-time, and 1% to 3% were employed on a contract-basis. Furloughs were reported by 1% to 3% of respondents, with partial furloughs of 2 days per month the most common furlough duration.

Eighty-eight percent of non-academic geoscientists reported working within core geoscience occupations, as geoscientists (66%), geoscience managers (17%), geoscience engineers (4%), or geoscience technicians (1%). Twelve percent of non-academic geoscientists reported working in other occupations, such as management (2%) other STEM occupations (3%) and other occupations.
For non-academic geoscientists, workplace safety continues to be the top concern moderately to extremely driven by the pandemic. Since August 2020, an increasing percentage of respondents have reported concerns with the academic rigor of higher education programs and the availability of educational opportunities (16% to 22% and 16% to 21%, respectively). Concerns over employment opportunities, job security, and ability to meet financial obligations declined over the same period.

Credit: AGI; data from AGI’s Geoscience COVID-19 Survey

We will continue to provide current snapshots on the impacts of COVID-19 on the geoscience enterprise throughout the year. For more information, and to participate in the study, please visit: [https://www.americangeosciences.org/workforce/covid19](https://www.americangeosciences.org/workforce/covid19)

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