

Petition – May 2020 - AGRASS, ACIL, ACERSE, ACCORDER, SSP-GE

We say “Yes to the extension of all fixed-term teaching and research contracts at UNIGE”

The global COVID-19 pandemic is altering our lives and working conditions as researchers: YES, to the extension of all fixed-term teaching and research contracts for members of the intermediary body at UNIGE!

The current pandemic is dramatically changing our lives and work. It is therefore urgent to acknowledge the unprecedented disruptions caused by this crisis. We, members of the intermediary body (assistants, PhD, Postdocs, lecturers, research collaborators, etc.) at the UNIGE, are strongly impacted by this crisis. The rectorate’s decision to privilege online teaching to ensure the continuity of education does not take into account the realities of the intermediary body – work overload due to online teaching, insufficient or even precarious material conditions for working at home, childcare, sick relatives – these aspects in particular prevent us from pursuing our research in an adequate way. Yet, the duration of our fixed-term contracts, which are already short, has not changed.

Our academic and personal trajectories are negatively impacted in various ways. Whether we live alone, in a shared flat, or with our family, our everyday lives have been disrupted: day care facilities have closed, children need to be homeschooled, we worry for our families and ourselves, we need to take care of others, we experience fatigue, we are overworked, we feel depressed, we have to deal with the Covid-19 disease... Moreover, some of our colleagues living on the other side of the boarder or needing to renew their residence or work permits face additional challenges.

Our material conditions do not allow us to carry out our research as we would like: the lack of workspace at home, bad internet connection, the inability to access certain facilities (libraries and labs) as well as data (archives, interviews, etc.) considerably slow down our work as researchers. Also, many among us are unable to conduct their fieldwork in Switzerland or abroad (postponed or canceled) and we cannot participate in scientific conferences where we are normally able to exchange with colleagues. In some cases, this has led to the immediate stop of our research. The multiplicity of our situations reflects the diversity of ways of carrying out research at the UNIGE, but also illustrates the fact that no one is spared by the current situation, whatever the field of research may be.

It is of utmost importance to acknowledge that our lives have been dramatically changed by this pandemic. We are all impacted in some way or another and to varying degrees by this exceptional situation, despite our will and inventiveness to face this pandemic as well as our efforts to reorganize our tasks. Consequently, **we ask:**

- **for the automatic extension of all fixed-term contracts in accordance with the duration of the crisis;**
- **that the extension is implemented quickly in order to reduce the anxiety caused by the uncertainty in which many of us find ourselves;**
- **That the rectorate puts pressure on the FNS and uses private funds to guarantee an extension of all contracts.**

We say YES to the extension of all fixed-term teaching and research contracts!

YES to equal treatment of all members of the intermediary body at the UNIGE, whether they have DIP contracts, are funded by the FNS or other funds or scholarships.