



PNN PhD Survey

Asking the relevant questions

Non-standard PhD arrangements

Promovendi Netwerk Nederland

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Summary

This PNN PhD Survey report focuses on types of PhD arrangements that deviate from the 'standard' type of PhD arrangement, which in the Netherlands is the employee PhD position.

Scholarship PhDs

225 scholarship PhDs responded to our survey. They were asked about their experiences as scholarship PhDs. These are the main findings.

- The most important reasons for doing a PhD specifically as a scholarship PhD are that there were no employed positions available and that scholarship PhDs could not obtain an employed position. On average, they agreed significantly less often with reasons related to the assumed merits of scholarship PhD position, such as freedom or designing one's own project.
- In total, 80.4% of the externally financed scholarship PhDs earn less than first-year employee PhDs. Although university-funded PhDs generally receive scholarships between €1750 and €2000 monthly, 40.6% of the externally financed scholarship PhDs only receive a scholarship between €1000 and €1250 monthly, and 7% have a scholarship of less than €1000 monthly.
- 14.6% of the scholarship PhDs indicate that they cannot make ends meet from their scholarship alone. Another 19.5% indicate that they can just make ends meet. The higher the scholarship, the better PhDs are able to make ends meet from their scholarship.
- 56.3% of the scholarship PhDs have not been informed properly about both the conditions of the scholarship position and the differences between scholarship PhDs and employee PhDs. Externally financed scholarship PhDs are better informed about these topics (21%) than university-funded scholarship PhDs (5.6%).
- When asked which type of PhD arrangement they would prefer to have, 74.4% of the scholarship PhDs indicate to prefer to be an employee PhD. Only 8.8% prefer a scholarship PhD. Most scholarship PhDs are thus not scholarship PhDs out of choice.

Employees pursuing a PhD

33 employees pursuing a PhD responded to the survey. Due to this relatively small number, the results should be interpreted with caution.

- Only less than half of the employees pursuing a PhD indicated they experienced that they had sufficient time to work on their PhD project (42.9%). This indicates that for more than half of the employees pursuing a PhD structurally too little time is provided to successfully obtain a PhD.
- The most frequently mentioned reasons for not having sufficient time to work on their PhD projects are teaching, other research and project management. Especially teaching is commonly known to often take more time than prescribed.

Externally financed PhDs

64 externally financed PhDs responded to the survey. These are the main findings:

- Less than half of the externally financed PhDs feel they mostly have sufficient time to work on their PhD project (40.4%).
- The most frequently mentioned reason for not having sufficient time to work on their PhD was the other job often being prioritized over their research. Importantly, time itself was not always the main problem, but dividing energy between the PhD project, the other job and family life was said to be the biggest challenge.

External PhDs

74 external PhDs responded to the PNN PhD survey. These are the main findings:

- The most frequently mentioned reason for doing a PhD as an external PhD is that there were no other PhD arrangements available and that they wanted to choose their own subject.
- 77% of the external PhDs have a job next to their PhD project. A large number of external PhDs indicate that they have this job to support themselves financially during their PhD project (52.8%), rather than stating their job is the main job to which the PhD project is a side project (39.6%). The traditional image of external PhDs being senior experts who condense their working experience into a dissertation therefore seems to apply only to a minority of external PhDs.

Facilities

- Most 'non-standard' PhDs have access to the university library (95.9%), free printing (85.3%) and free coffee (84.5%). 25.2% of the PhDs does not have an institutional email address, and 33.7% does not have an institutional account. Only 51.6% of the non-standard PhDs gets a formal Christmas gift, and 44% can borrow a laptop from their institution.
- External PhDs have access to facilities less often than scholarship PhDs and externally financed PhDs.

Fees for pursuing a PhD

- 23.9% of the non-standard PhDs encountered a fee, varying between less than €1,000 per year to more than €10,000 per year. 73% of them however did not have to pay the fee themselves: their fee was paid their employer or financing organisation
- 73.0% did not answer the question on whether regulations were in place for fees to be waived. The high number of respondents not answering this question might represent the unfamiliarity of PhDs with such regulations.

Recommendations

- End the experiment with PhD scholarship students. The experiment does not result in more freedom for scholarship PhDs¹, and moreover, the large majority of scholarship PhDs is not in this position by choice and would instead prefer to be employee PhDs. The experiment or the implementation of a scholarship system are therefore in no way in the interest of PhDs.
- Inform all scholarship PhDs explicitly about the conditions of working as a scholarship PhD and how this differs from working as an employee PhD *at the very start of the recruitment process*. PhDs should be properly informed to be able to make an informed decision on whether they want to apply for and eventually accept a scholarship position. Ideally, this information is explicitly provided in vacancies or recruitment websites of the institution, and repeated during recruitment interviews. Informing PhDs only when they already have been told to be allowed to pursue a PhD makes it much more difficult for PhDs to reject the inferior working conditions.
- Scholarship PhDs should have an income that is equal to the net income of employee PhDs. PNN calls for a situation in which all external scholarship PhDs receive a top-up on their scholarship. It is unacceptable that highly educated individuals are carrying out research that directly benefits the institution for such a low income. Dutch institutions could follow the example set by Sweden, where a similar system is already implemented.²
- Universities, UMCs and research institutions should ensure that employees pursuing a PhD have sufficient time to work on their PhD projects. This means that the PhD agreement should provide sufficient time to begin with, and that this time should be maintained by realistically calculating the time spent on other tasks than the PhD project (teaching, clinical tasks, employee or PhD representation, etc.), leaving enough room to work on the PhD project.
- Though universities, UMCs and research institutions cannot directly control the work that externally financed PhDs need to do at their own employers, they can support externally financed PhDs when they indicate that they do not have sufficient time to work on their PhD projects. It can be helpful for externally financed PhDs to have support from the university/UMC/research institution when addressing these issues with their own employers.
- Though external PhDs are doing their PhD project voluntarily, universities, UMCs and research institutions should really consider whether it is desirable to have PhDs who are working in other precarious jobs to be able to support themselves while producing research that directly benefits the institution.
- Waiver fees if the PhD has to pay for the fee all by him/herself. Charging fees for PhDs who produce research for the institution and result in a promotion premium of €82,000³ for the institution creates a perverse stimulus to turn the PhD trajectory into a business model at the expense of the PhDs themselves.
- All PhDs, regardless of type of arrangement, should at least have the following facilities, as these are indispensable for successfully completing the PhD trajectory:

¹ PNN (2020). PNN PhD Survey report on Supervision and Freedom.

² Swedish Council for Higher Education. The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100). Chapter 7, section 36.

<https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/Laws-and-regulations/The-Higher-Education-Ordinance/#chapter7>

³ Rijksoverheid, 2020. Regeling financiën Hoger onderwijs, article 4.6

<https://wetten.overheid.nl/jci1.3:c:BWBR0024005¶graaf=3&artikel=4&z=2020-07-01&g=2020-07-01>

- An institutional account and email address
 - University library and journal access
 - Free coffee and printing
 - (If available to employee PhDs) Option to borrow a laptop from work
- Give all PhDs, regardless of type of arrangement, the same Christmas gift as all other employees. Many of these 'non-standard' PhDs structurally work at the institutions, producing research that directly benefits the institution while already working under inferior employment conditions. Seeing all employee colleagues receive a Christmas gift while they do not get anything can be incredibly hurtful and make these PhDs feel like they actually do not belong, even though they are working full-time.

Samenvatting

Het PNN PhD survey rapport richt zich op typen promotietrajecten die afwijken van het 'standaard' promotietraject, in Nederland het promotietraject van werknemerpromovendi.

Beurspromovendi

225 beurspromovendi hebben de PNN PhD survey ingevuld. Hen werd gevraagd naar hun ervaringen als beurspromovendi. Dit zijn de belangrijkste bevindingen.

- De belangrijkste redenen om te promoveren als beurspromovendus zijn dat er geen vacatures voor werknemerpromovendi beschikbaar waren en dat het niet gelukt is om een baan als werknemerpromovendus te krijgen. Gemiddeld gaven de beurspromovendi significant minder vaak aan dat hun reden om als beurspromovendus te promoveren te maken had met de beloofde voordelen van een aanstelling als beurspromovendus, zoals vrijheid of het kunnen ontwerpen van een eigen project.
- In totaal verdient 80,4% van de extern gefinancierde beurspromovendi minder dan een eerstejaars werknemerpromovendus. Hoewel beurspromovendi met een universiteitsbeurs in het algemeen een beurs ontvangen tussen de €1.750 en €2.000 per maand, ontvangt 40,6% van de extern gefinancierde beurspromovendi maandelijks slechts een beurs tussen €1.000 en €1.250 per maand en krijgt 7% zelfs een maandelijks beurs van minder dan €1.000.
- 14,6% van de beurspromovendi kan van hun beurs alleen niet goed rondkomen, en nog eens 19,5% geeft aan dat ze net aan rond kunnen komen. Vanzelfsprekend kunnen beurspromovendi beter rondkomen naarmate de beurs hoger is.
- 56,3% van de beurspromovendi is niet goed geïnformeerd over zowel de voorwaarden van de beurspositie als de verschillen tussen beurspromovendi en werknemerpromovendi. Extern gefinancierde beurspromovendi zijn beter geïnformeerd over deze onderwerpen (21%) dan universitair gefinancierde beurspromovendi (5,6%).
- Als beurspromovendi wordt gevraagd welk type promotietraject ze het liefst zouden hebben, kiest 74,4% van de beurspromovendi voor een positie als werknemerpromovendus. Slechts 8,8% zou kiezen voor een positie als beurspromovendus. De meeste beurspromovendi zijn dus geen beurspromovendi omdat dit hun voorkeur heeft.

Promoverende medewerkers

33 promoverende medewerkers hebben de survey ingevuld. Vanwege dit relatief lage aantal, moeten de volgende resultaten met de nodige voorzichtigheid worden geïnterpreteerd.

- Minder dan de helft van de promoverende medewerkers gaf aan voldoende tijd te hebben om aan hun promotietraject te werken (42,9%). Dit betekent dat meer dan de helft van de promovendi structureel van te weinig tijd krijgt om succesvol te kunnen promoveren.
- De meest genoemde redenen waardoor promoverende medewerkers onvoldoende tijd hebben om aan hun proefschrift te werken zijn onderwijs, ander onderzoek en projectmanagement. Vooral onderwijs staat erom bekend dat het vaak meer tijd in beslag neemt dan hiervoor gegeven wordt.

Extern gefinancierde promovendi

64 extern gefinancierde promovendi hebben de survey ingevuld. Dit zijn de belangrijkste resultaten.

- Minder dan de helft van de extern gefinancierde promovendi vindt dat ze meestal voldoende tijd hebben om aan hun promotietraject te werken (40,4%)

- De meest genoemde reden om niet genoeg tijd te hebben om aan hun promotietraject te werken, was dat de andere baan vaak voorrang kreeg boven hun onderzoek. Belangrijk is dat tijd zelf niet altijd het grootste probleem was, maar ook de verdeling van energie tussen het promotietraject, de andere baan en het gezinsleven werd een grote uitdaging genoemd.

Buitenpromovendi

- De meest genoemde reden om te promoveren als buitenpromovendus is dat er geen andere promotietrajecten beschikbaar waren en dat ze zelf hun onderwerp wilden kiezen.
- 77% van de buitenpromovendi heeft een baan naast hun promotietraject. Een groot deel van hen geeft aan deze baan te hebben om zichzelf financieel te onderhouden tijdens hun promotietraject (52,6%), in plaats van dat hun baan de hoofdbaan is waarbij het promotietraject een nevenproject is (39,6%). Het traditionele beeld van buitenpromovendi als senior experts die hun werkervaring in een proefschrift samenvatten geldt dus slechts voor een minderheid van de buitenpromovendi.

Faciliteiten

- De meeste 'niet-standaard' promovendi hebben toegang tot de universiteitsbibliotheek (95,9%), gratis kunnen printen (85,3%) en gratis koffie (84,5%). 25,2% van de promovendi heeft geen institutioneel e-mailadres en 33,7% heeft geen institutioneel account. Slechts 51,6% van de 'niet-standaard' promovendi krijgt een formeel kerstpakket en 44% kan een laptop lenen van hun werk.
- Buitenpromovendi hebben minder vaak toegang tot faciliteiten dan beurspromovendi en extern gefinancierde promovendi.

Prijs voor het schrijven van een proefschrift

- 23,9% van de 'niet-standaard' promovendi werd geconfronteerd met het betalen van een vergoeding om te kunnen promoveren, variërend van minder dan €1.000 per jaar tot meer dan €10.000 per jaar.
- 73,0% gaf geen antwoord op de vraag of er voorschriften waren voor kwijtschelding van deze vergoedingen. Het hoge percentage respondenten dat deze vraag niet heeft beantwoord, kan duiden op onbekendheid van zulke regeling onder promovendi.

Aanbevelingen

- Beëindig het Experiment Promotieonderwijs. Het experiment biedt niet meer vrijheid voor beurspromovendi⁴, en bovendien is de grote meerderheid van beurspromovendi dit niet vanwege hun voorkeur voor dit type promotietraject en zou daarvoor in de plaats liever werknemerpromovendus zijn. Het experiment of het invoeren van een bursalenstelsel zijn daarom op geen enkele manier in het belang van promovendi.
- Informeer alle beurspromovendi *aan het begin van het wervingsproces* expliciet over de voorwaarden van het werken als beurspromovendus en hoe dit verschilt van werken als werknemerpromovendus. Promovendi moeten degelijk geïnformeerd worden om een weloverwogen keuze te kunnen maken of ze solliciteren op de positie als beurspromovendus en of ze deze uiteindelijk zullen accepteren. Idealiter wordt deze informatie al verschaft in vacatures of de wervingswebsite van de instelling, en wordt deze herhaald tijdens wervingsgesprekken. Wanneer promovendi pas geïnformeerd worden over de voorwaarden als ze al aangenomen zijn als promovendus, maakt dat het veel moeilijker voor promovendi om de suboptimale arbeidsvoorwaarden af te wijzen.
- Beurspromovendi zouden hetzelfde inkomen moeten hebben als het netto-inkomen van werknemerpromovendi. PNN roept daarom op om alle extern gefinancierde beurspromovendi een aanvulling op hun beurs te geven. Het is onacceptabel dat hoogopgeleiden voor een laag inkomen onderzoek doen waar instellingen direct van profiteren. Nederlandse instellingen kunnen een voorbeeld nemen aan Zweden, waar een soortgelijk systeem reeds is ingevoerd.⁵
- Universiteiten, UMCs en onderzoeksinstellingen zouden ervoor moeten zorgen dat promoverende medewerkers voldoende tijd hebben om aan hun proefschrift te werken. Dat betekent dat de promotieovereenkomst in de eerste plaats voldoende tijd moet bieden, en dat de tijd die ze besteden aan andere taken (onderwijs, klinische zorg, vertegenwoordiging van medewerkers of promovendi, etc.) realistisch moet worden ingeschat, zodat er voldoende ruimte overblijft om aan het proefschrift te werken.
- Hoewel universiteiten, UMCs en onderzoeksinstellingen het werk dat extern gefinancierde promovendi bij hun eigen werkgevers moeten doen niet direct kunnen beïnvloeden, kunnen ze extern gefinancierde promovendi ondersteunen wanneer zij aangeven onvoldoende tijd hebben om aan hun proefschrift te werken. Het kan extern gefinancierde promovendi helpen om gesteund te worden door hun universiteit/UMC/ onderzoeksinstelling wanneer zij dit adresseren bij hun werkgever.
- Hoewel buitenpromovendi hun proefschrift vrijwillig schrijven, zouden universiteiten, UMCs en onderzoeksinstellingen moeten nagaan in hoeverre het wenselijk is dat buitenpromovendi een precaire bijbaan moeten nemen om in hun levensonderhoud te kunnen voorzien terwijl ze onderzoek produceren waar de instelling van profiteert.
- Scheld vergoedingen om te mogen promoveren kwijt voor promovendi die deze vergoeding uit eigen zak moeten betalen. Het vragen van vergoedingen voor promovendi die onderzoek produceren voor de instelling en ook leiden tot een promotiepremie à €82,000⁶ voor de instelling creëert een perverse prikkel om het promotietraject om te bouwen tot een verdienmodel, ten koste van de promovendi.

⁴ PNN (2020). PNN PhD Survey report on Supervision and Freedom.

⁵ Swedish Council for Higher Education. The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100). Chapter 7, section 36. <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/Laws-and-regulations/The-Higher-Education-Ordinance/#chapter7>

⁶ Rijksoverheid, 2020. Regeling financiën Hoger onderwijs, artikel 4.6 <https://wetten.overheid.nl/jci1.3:c:BWBR0024005¶graaf=3&artikel=4&z=2020-07-01&g=2020-07-01>

- Alle promovendi, ongeacht type promotietraject, zouden op zijn minst toegang moeten hebben tot de volgende faciliteiten, omdat deze onontbeerlijk zijn voor het goed kunnen uitvoeren van een promotietraject
 - Een institutioneel account en e-mailadres
 - Universiteitsbibliotheek en toegang tot wetenschappelijke tijdschriften
 - Gratis koffie en printen
 - (Indien ook van toepassing voor werknemerpromovendi) Mogelijkheid om een laptop te lenen van werk
- Geef alle promovendi, ongeacht type promotietraject, hetzelfde kerstpakket als alle andere werknemers. Veel van deze 'niet-standaard' promovendi werken structureel aan deze instelling, produceren onderzoek waarvan de instelling direct produceert terwijl ze toch al onder suboptimale arbeidsvoorwaarden werken. Het kan ongelofelijk pijnlijk zijn om te zien dat collega's allemaal een kerstpakket krijgen, terwijl zij niks krijgen. Dit kan promovendi het gevoel geven dat ze er toch niet echt bij horen, ondanks dat ze er toch fulltime werken.

Introduction

This report focuses on types of PhD arrangements that deviate from the 'standard' type of PhD, which in the Netherlands is the employee PhD position. As 'non-standard' PhD arrangements, we include:

- **Scholarship PhDs:** PhDs who are not employed by their institution, but get a scholarship from their university or funding organisation to write their dissertation. These PhDs are not protected by labour law and generally are paid scholarships that are (much) lower than the salary of employee PhDs. The largest group of scholarship PhDs are international PhDs who have received a scholarship to pursue a PhD in their home country and come to the Netherlands to work on their PhD project. A second group of scholarship PhDs can be found at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG), that participates in the Experiment with PhD Scholarship students. By participating in that experiment, the RUG is allowed to deviate from the law that PhDs should be hired as employees, and to hire PhDs as scholarship PhDs instead.
- **Employees pursuing a PhD:** these are PhDs who are employed by the University, University Medical Center or research institution, but do not have PhD as their main job title. They however do get time or money to pursue a PhD next to their regular job.
- **Externally financed PhDs:** these PhDs are employed by another organisation than a University, University Medical Center or research institute, but get time or funding from their employer to pursue a PhD next to the regular job.
- **External PhDs:** these PhDs do not get time of funding to pursue a PhD project, but work on a PhD project in their own time. Traditionally, external PhDs are connected to the image of senior or even retired experts who want to convert their experiences into a dissertation, but it is becoming more and more common that early career researchers divert to this type of PhD because they cannot find an employed PhD position and really want to pursue a PhD.

These groups face additional challenges in their PhD trajectories due to their non-standard PhD arrangement. This report will go into their experiences related to their PhD arrangement.

We furthermore investigate to what extent PhDs in these arrangements have access to facilities offered by institutions, whether they are asked to pay a fee to pursue their PhD, and if so, what the characteristics of these fees are.

Methodology

Non-standard PhD arrangements

To determine the type of PhD arrangement of the PhD, we used several questions, depending on at what type of institution the PhDs were doing their PhD. Using these institution-specific typologies, we subsequently created an overall typology of PhDs, which allows for distinguishing between Employee PhDs, Employees pursuing a PhDs, Scholarship PhDs, Externally financed PhDs, External PhDs and other types of PhDs. An elaborate account of this procedure can be found in the [PNN Survey report on Survey Information, demographics and COVID-19](#).

Though this classification can be used to identify all types of PhD arrangements for each type of institution, this classification does not distinguish between university-funded scholarship PhDs and externally funded scholarship PhDs, but when necessary, such a distinction can be made based on the original, institution-specific classifications.

The methodologies concerning subject-specific variables will be elaborated in the results section.

Scholarship PhDs

This section will discuss the questions of the survey that were specifically asked to PhDs that indicated to be scholarship PhDs. As explained before, two types of scholarship PhDs exist. University-funded scholarship PhDs are mostly found at Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG) as part of the Experiment with PhD scholarship students. This experiment allows the RUG to hire PhDs as scholarship PhDs rather than employee PhDs, which is the default in the Netherlands. Externally financed scholarship PhDs can be found at all Dutch universities. In general, these PhDs come from abroad with a scholarship from a foreign funding organisation that pays them to write a dissertation. Probably the most well-known scholarship is the Chinese Scholarship Council (CSC) scholarship, but several countries offer scholarships with this purpose.

For Dutch universities and University Medical Centers, hiring PhDs on a scholarship rather than as employees is very attractive, as in all cases it is cheaper, while the same amount of research is done. Externally funded scholarship PhDs are not accompanied with any labour costs: the scholarship pays the PhD a 'salary'. Given that employee PhDs at universities cost around €244,000 in labour costs for four years⁷, this is quite a big saving for universities and University Medical Centers. At the same time, scholarship PhDs are weighed exactly the same as employee PhDs in the financing of universities: for each PhD, whatever the type, universities are financed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for an amount around €82,000⁸. At the same time, scholarship PhDs are not protected by labour law and, due to being student nor employee, often fall through the loopholes of social security. Furthermore, the scholarships they receive are often (much) lower than the net monthly income of employee PhDs.

In total, 225 scholarship PhDs finished the PNN PhD survey. They were asked question on the following topics, that will be discussed in the next sections.

- The reasons why scholarship PhDs have chosen to do their PhDs as a scholarship PhD
- How much their scholarships pay them and whether that amount suffices to make ends meet
- Whether they were informed about the conditions of working as a scholarship PhD and the differences of the scholarship PhD position compared to the default employee PhD position
- Whether they would choose to do a PhD as a scholarship PhD again and which type of PhD arrangement they would prefer to have
- General experiences of scholarship PhDs

Where relevant, we will show results for university-funded scholarship PhDs and externally funded scholarship PhDs separately.

Reasons for being a scholarship PhD

The questions about the reasons for being a scholarship PhD are developed for the PhD survey of the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG)⁹. Due to the experiment with PhD scholarship students, their survey is better catered to scholarship PhDs than other local PhD surveys. We have used these items to make our results comparable to existing research.

⁷ NWO, 2020: Salary tables 2020.

<https://www.nwo.nl/en/funding/funding+process+explained/salary+tables>

⁸ See footnote 2.

⁹ Bouma, E. (2018). PhD Survey 2017. Experiences of PhD students at the University of Groningen.

<https://www.rug.nl/education/phd-programmes/about/phd-survey/2017.pdf>

Van der Scheer, E.A. (2019). Experiences of PhD students at the University of Groningen.

<https://www.rug.nl/education/phd-programmes/about/phd-survey/2019.pdf>

The first question asked to the scholarship PhDs was: “Why did you choose to do your PhD with a scholarship arrangement?” Then, they were given six reasons, which they could each give a score from 1 (Completely disagree) to 5 (Completely agree). The six reasons are:

- There were no employed positions available
- I could not obtain an employed position
- Because I wanted to write my own research proposal
- Because I liked the freedom it would offer
- Because I did not know about other types of PhD positions
- Because my current PhD supervisor offered it to me.

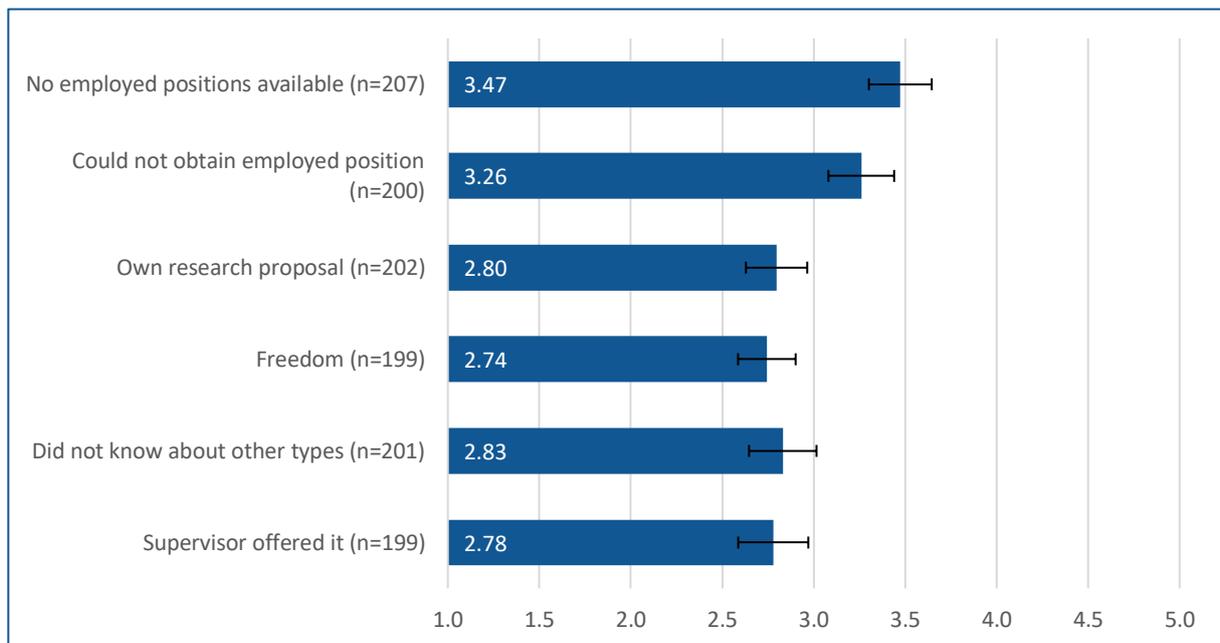


Figure 1.1: Reasons for being a scholarship PhD. 1 = Completely disagree, 5 = Completely agree. 95%-confidence intervals included.

Figure 1.1 shows the scores the scholarship PhDs gave to the six reasons. The reason they most often agreed with was that there were no employed positions available (3.47), followed by that they could not obtain an employed position (3.26). These reasons are significantly more often agreed with than the other four reasons. The other four reasons are agreed with practically equally, and score all lower than 3, indicating that the scholarship PhDs tend to disagree with this item more than that they agree. These results indicate that the scholarship position is not chosen for its merits, but is accepted as a last resort option, because there was no better alternative available.

Looking at the results for university-funded scholarship PhDs and externally funded scholarship PhDs separately (figure 1.2), we see that there are differences between the two types of scholarship PhDs in the reasons why they chose for the scholarship arrangement. University-funded scholarship PhDs significantly more often agree with the reason that there were no employed positions available, that they did not know about other types of PhDs and that their supervisor offered the position to them. Externally funded scholarship PhDs in contrast significantly more often agree with the increased freedom than university-funded scholarship PhDs, but even for externally funded PhDs, the score is lower than 3, indicating that they are actually still neutral about this reason.

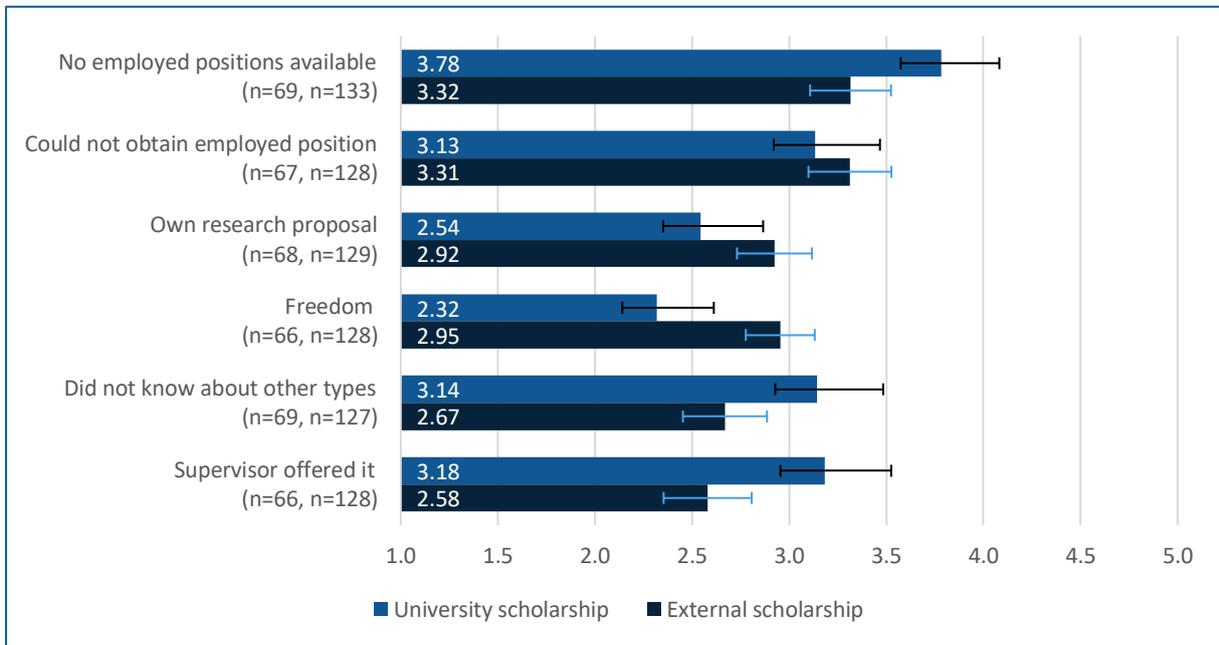


Figure 1.2: Reasons for being a scholarship PhD, per type of scholarship PhD. 1 = Completely disagree, 5 = completely agree. 95%-confidence intervals included.

Scholarship payment

We furthermore asked the scholarship PhDs how much their scholarship paid them monthly. The questions offered them eight options: “Less than €1000”, “Between €1000-€1250”, “Between €1250-€1500”, “Between €1500-€1750”, “Between €1750-2000”, “Between €2000-€2500”, “More than €2500” and “Prefer not to say”.¹⁰

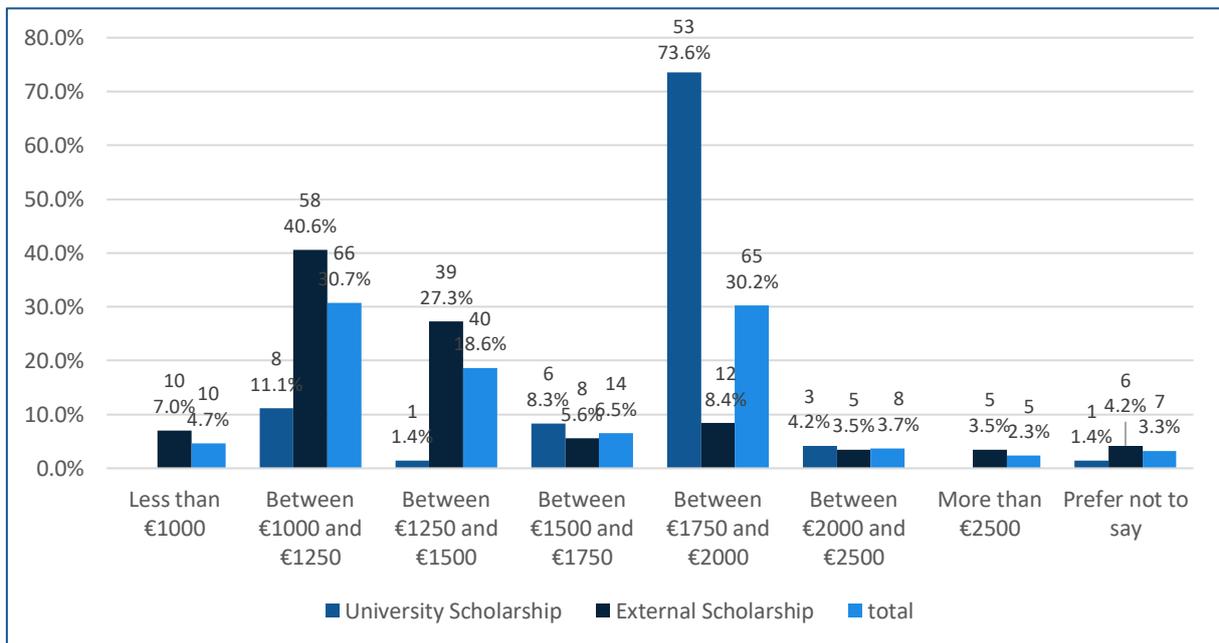


Figure 1.3: Scholarship amount, per type of scholarship PhD and the total group of scholarship PhDs (n=215).

Figure 1.3 shows the responses to this question for university-funded scholarship PhDs, externally funded scholarship PhDs, and the total group of scholarship PhDs. There are clear differences in the amount of the scholarships. For university-funded scholarship PhDs, the scholarship is usually between €1750 and €2000 monthly. This is equivalent to the net salary

¹⁰ The income bracket for €2000-€2500 is larger as €100 more income makes less of a difference at high incomes than it does for lower incomes.

of a first year's employee PhD. However, externally funded scholarship PhDs most often receive scholarships of less than €1500 monthly, with 40.6% of the respondents in this group earning a scholarship between €1000 and €1250 and 7% even earning less than €1000 monthly. Combined, 80.4% of the external scholarship PhDs earn less than €1750, which would be equivalent to the net salary of a first year employee.

Before asking this question, we asked the PhDs to give a score of 0 to 100 for the extent to which they can make ends meet from their scholarship. A score of 50 was indicated to mean that they "can just make ends meet", a score of 0 was indicated to mean "No, not at all" and a score of 100 was indicated to mean "Yes, very well".

The scores on this item are displayed in figure 1.4. The mean score on this item was 64.8, indicating that scholarship PhDs in general can make ends meet quite okay, but certainly not very well. 19.5% of the respondents indicate to be just able to make ends meet, 15.1% give the maximum score and can make ends meet very well. A group of 12.2% gives a score of exactly 75, holding the middle ground between just making ends meet and making ends meet very well, and 3.4% give the minimum score and cannot make ends meet at all. Combined, 14.6% score below 50 and cannot make ends meet properly from their scholarship.

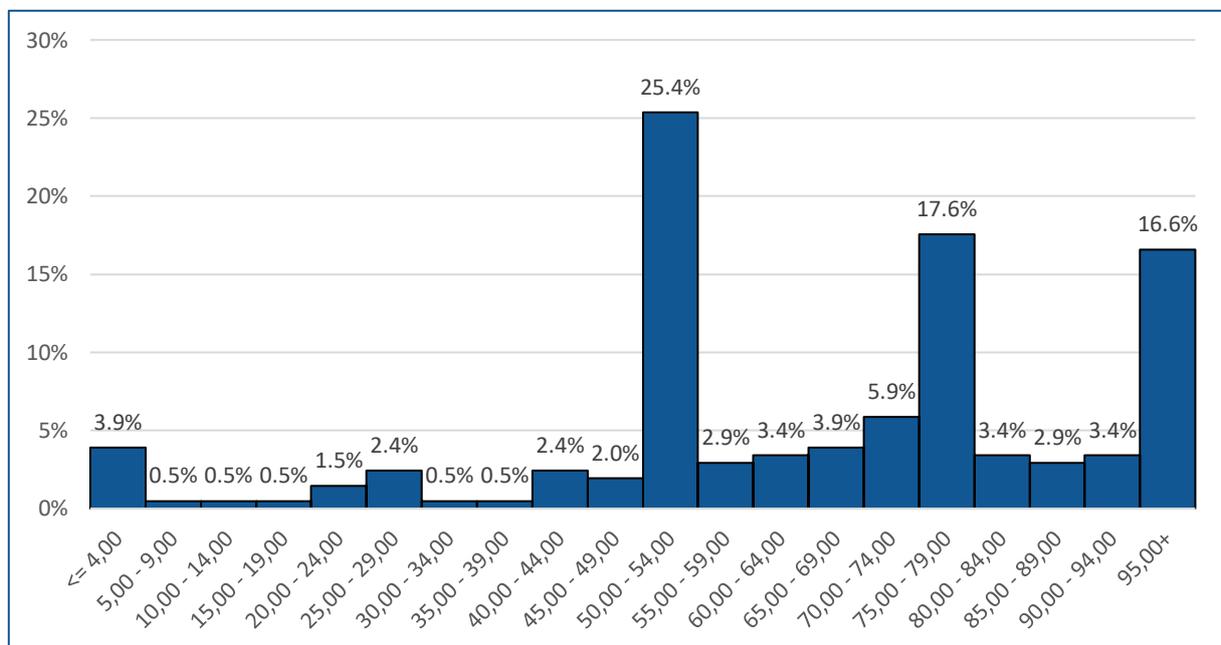


Figure 1.4: Responses to the question "Can you make ends meet from your scholarship?" 0 indicates "No, not at all", 50 indicates "I can just make ends meet", 100 indicates "Yes, very well" (n=205, mean=64.8, standard deviation=1.75).

The extent to which scholarship PhDs can make ends meet from their scholarship is of course dependent on the amount of their scholarship. How these two relate is depicted in figure 1.5. Here, we observe that the score on this indicator increases slightly as the scholarship amount increases, though this increase is not significant. From a scholarship of €2000, the score goes up with a larger step, but we need to be cautious, as the number of respondents receiving such a high scholarship is very low compared to the other scholarship amounts.

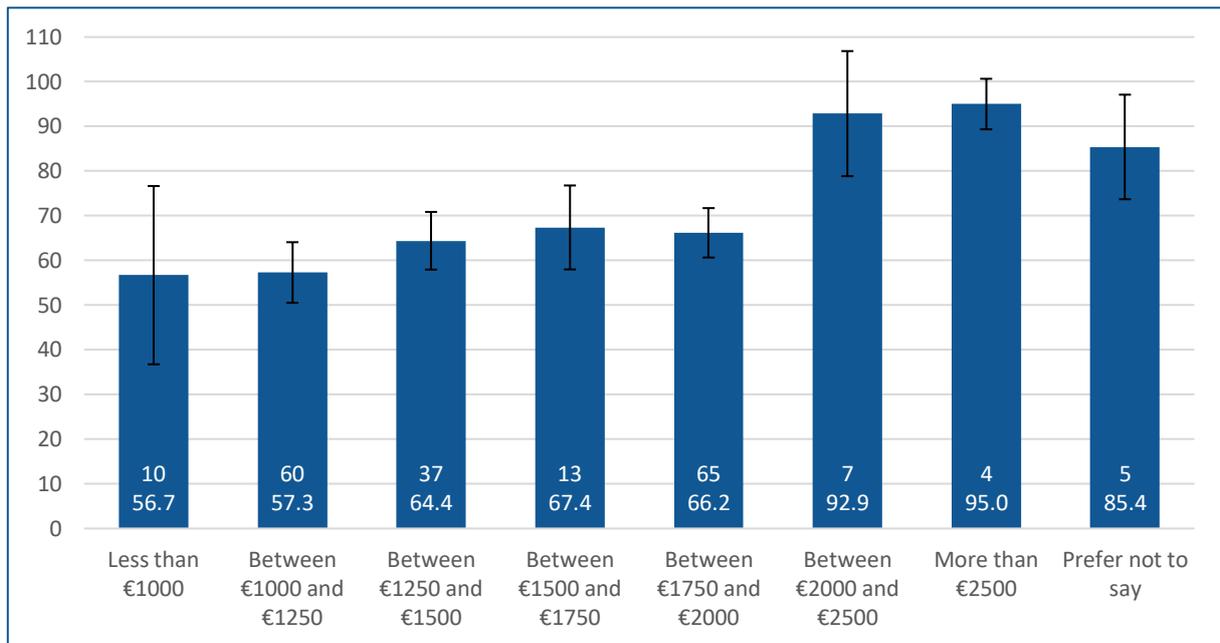


Figure 1.5: Scores on the question "To what extent can you make ends meet?" by scholarship amount. (N=204, n and mean score per subgroup indicated at the bottom of the bars.)

Information about the scholarship PhD position

Given that scholarship PhD positions deviate from the default employee PhD position, it is crucial that the scholarship PhDs are properly informed about the scholarship conditions under which they will work and also how the scholarship position differs from the employee PhD position. We therefore asked the scholarship PhDs in our survey the following question: "Were you well informed in advance about the conditions of being a scholarship PhD student and how this position differs from an employee PhD position?" They could choose from five options:

- Yes, I was well informed about both
- Yes, I was well informed about the conditions of my scholarship
- Yes, I was well informed about the differences between a scholarship and employee PhD
- No, I was not well informed about these topics
- Unsure

Figure 1.6 shows the response to this question per type of scholarship PhD and the group in total. More than half of the scholarship PhDs (56.3%) state to have not been well informed about both these topics. For university-funded scholarship PhDs, this percentage even reaches 72.2%. On the opposite side, externally financed scholarship PhDs are better informed about both topics (21%) than university-funded scholarship PhDs (5.6%). When scholarship PhDs have only been informed about one of the topics, this much more often is about the scholarship conditions (19.5%) and much less often about the differences between scholarship PhDs and employee PhDs (5.1%).

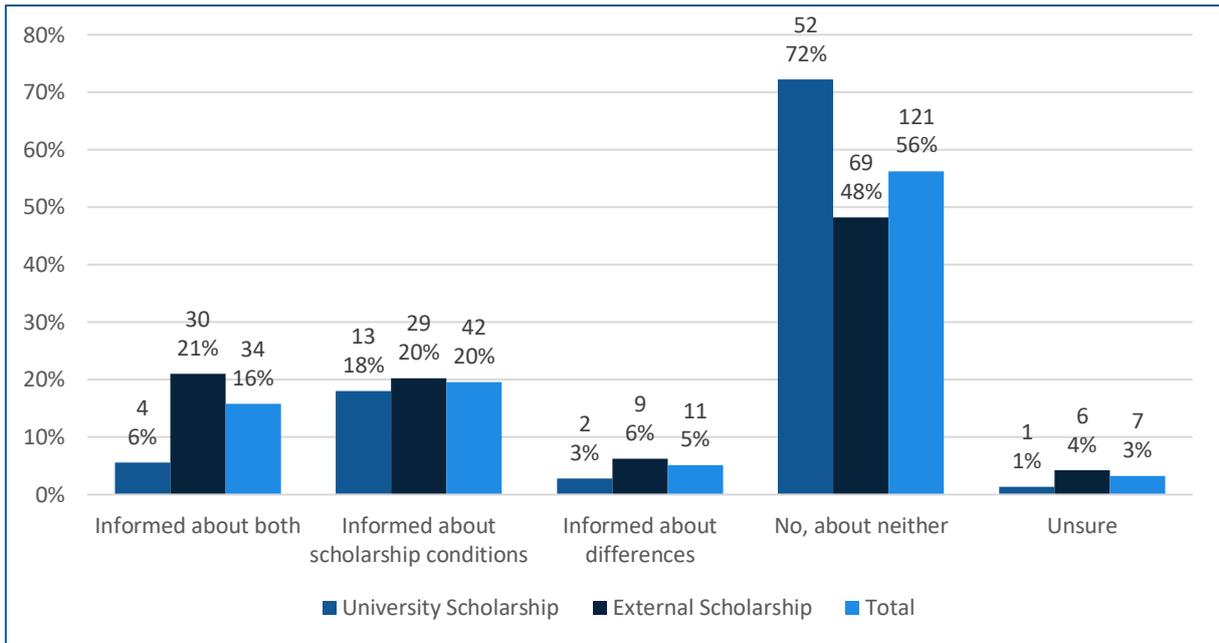


Figure 1.6: Responses to the question: "Were you well informed in advance about the conditions of being a scholarship PhD student and how this position differs from an employee PhD position?" (n=215).

Preferred PhD arrangement

To assess the extent to which scholarship PhDs are satisfied with being a scholarship PhD, the RUG PhD surveys¹¹ ask the following question: "Would you choose a scholarship PhD position again?" The possible answers to this question are yes, no and unsure. As we aim for good comparison to previous research, we included this question in our survey in the same way as well.

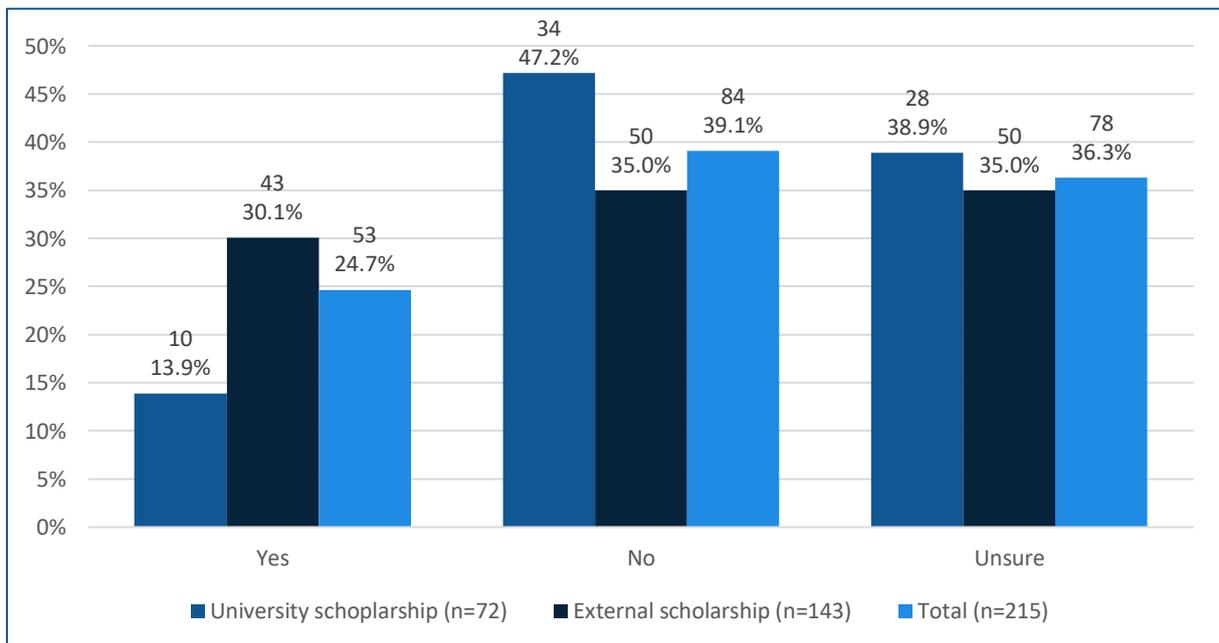


Figure 1.7: Responses to the question "Would you choose a scholarship PhD position again?" (n=215).

The responses to this question are found in figure 1.7, separately for the two types of scholarship PhDs as well for the group as a whole. The most frequently chosen option for both group of PhDs is however that they would not choose a scholarship PhD position again. The

¹¹ See footnote 7.

university-funded scholarship PhDs are a bit stronger in this opinion than the externally funded PhDs. Of the total group of scholarship PhDs, only 24.7% indicate that they would choose for this position again. This score differs for the types of scholarship PhDs: only 13.9% of university-funded scholarship PhDs would choose a scholarship position again, compared to 30.1% of the externally funded scholarship PhDs. Finally, a large group of scholarship PhDs is not sure whether they would choose a scholarship position again.

This question is however quite problematic, as the counterfactual is unclear: one replies differently to this question if the alternative is not having a PhD position at all, than when the alternative is getting an employee PhD position. Given that we previously saw that many scholarship PhDs are in this position because there was no alternative to a scholarship PhD position, this can very much drive the responses to this question.

Therefore, we added another question to the survey, directly after this question, asking the scholarship PhDs "What kind of PhD position would you prefer?". Here, they could choose between "Employee PhD", "Scholarship PhD", "External PhD" and "Other, namely...". 21 PhDs did not answer this question, which we interpreted as not knowing what to answer.

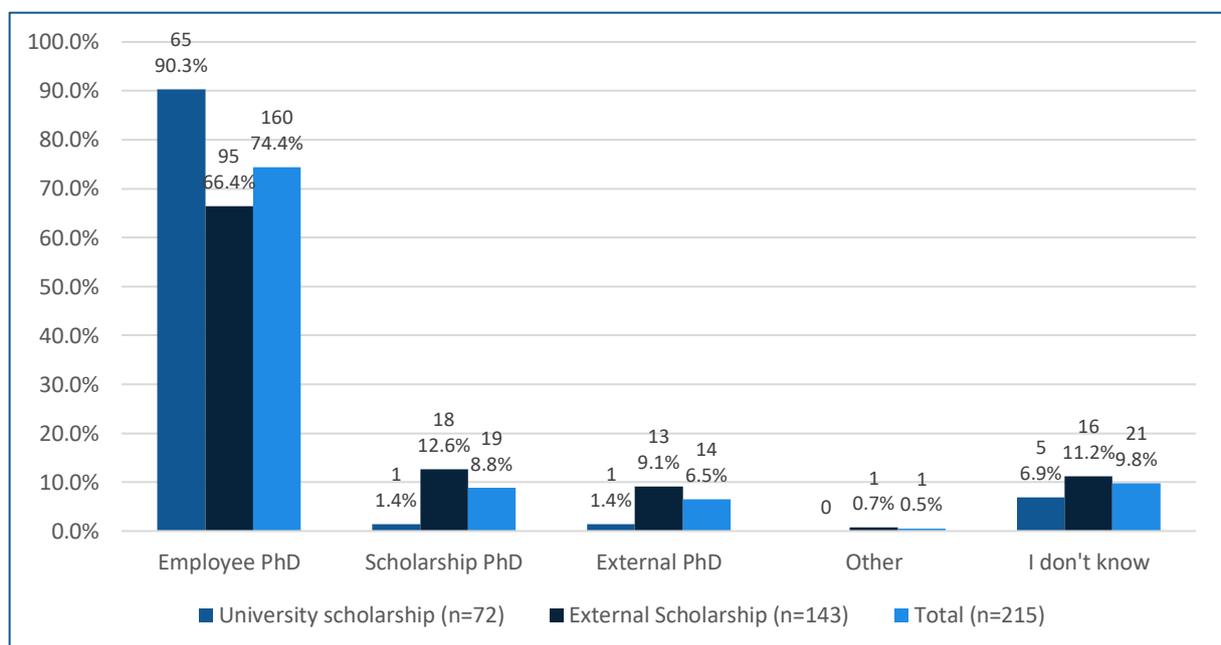


Figure 1.8: Responses to the question "What kind of PhD position would you prefer?" (n=215).

Figure 1.8 shows the responses to this question. In total, 74.4% of the scholarship PhDs indicate that their preferred PhD position would be an employee PhD position. Only 8.8% prefers to be a scholarship PhD, and 6.5% would prefer to be an external PhD. Again, there are differences between the types of scholarship PhDs in their preferences, though in majority they agree. The university-funded scholarship PhDs are most united in their preference for an employee PhD position (90.3%) while this is the case for 66.4% of the externally funded scholarship PhDs. Of this latter group, 12.6% still would prefer to have a scholarship PhD position. However, the general message shown by this question is clear: most scholarship PhDs are not scholarship PhDs out of choice.

In table 1, we also show the responses to both questions about the preferences of scholarship PhDs are related. Here we see that very large majority of PhDs who would not choose a scholarship PhD position again or a unsure about this, would prefer to be employee PhDs (84.6%). Even of the PhDs who would choose a scholarship position again, 43.4% prefer to be employee PhDs. Only 28.3% of them prefer a scholarship PhD position. These results thus confirm that even when PhDs say they would choose a scholarship position again, this does not necessarily mean they prefer a scholarship PhD position.

Table 1: Comparison of the two questions regarding scholarship PhDs' employment preferences¹

		What kind of PhD position would you prefer?					Total ²
		Employee PhD	Scholarship PhD	External PhD	Other	I don't know	
Would you choose a scholarship PhD position again?	Yes	23 43.4%	15 28.3%	10 18.9%	0 0.0%	5 9.4%	53 24.7%
	No	79 94.0%	1 1.2%	1 1.2%	0 0.0%	3 3.6%	84 39.1%
	Unsure	58 74.4%	3 3.8%	3 3.8%	1 1.3%	13 16.7%	78 36.3%
	Total	160 74.4%	19 8.8%	14 6.5%	1 0.5%	21 9.8%	215

¹ n and row percentage reported. ² column percentage reported instead of row percentage

General experiences of scholarship PhDs

At the end of the section of questions for scholarship PhDs, we added an open question where scholarship PhDs were invited to elaborate on their experiences as a scholarship PhD. 79 scholarship PhDs answered this open question. Four respondents were positive about the scholarship PhD position, as it allowed them freedom and independence, or they would not have had the possibility to do a PhD at all.

“A scholarship gives you freedom: you are connected, yet independent, but with pay. [...]” (R.49, Externally funded scholarship PhD, non-experiment).

The majority of these respondents however explained that they felt that their conditions were a lot worse than their employee counterparts (n=60), especially given that they were doing the same job, had the same responsibilities but in much less favourable circumstances. They felt treated in an unfair and unequal manner.

“[...] My salary was so low that my own faculty alarmed me with the idea that I could not even reach the IND's minimum salary requirements. I was asked to provide proof of additional funds to prove that I could support myself in addition to my scholarship. [...]” (R.43, Externally funded scholarship PhD, non-experiment).

The conditions not only involved the remuneration they receive, that does not increase like the employee PhDs' salary, but they are also lacking their other social employee benefits, such as holiday, sick leave, pensions. They also complained that their education and training facilities are not good, and that there often is no funding available for traveling and visiting conferences.

“I was originally offered an employee PhD position, but was then told that due to an error in the budget, my status had to change to scholarship. This had a huge effect on my livelihood, but I didn't know that at the time of the agreement. I don't get a transport subsidy, a 13th month, May bonus, and all other things that employee PhDs get. [...]” (R.55, Externally funded scholarship PhD, non-experiment).

Other topics that were mentioned are that supervisors are less involved with them compared to employee PhDs, that they have less status and consequently receive less respect than employee PhDs, that they miss out on valuable teaching experience that is a requirement to stay in academia, or have to teach without getting paid for it, and that they are not represented properly in the faculties and universities.

“PhD scholarship students need to teach if they are to enter academia, so it's an illusion to imagine not having to teach is something that works in our favour. It just makes it more difficult to formalize this teaching experience and we have to elect to do it for free, while we then do that in time that we should be dedicating to research. [...]” (R.31, University-funded scholarship PhD, experiment).

Employees pursuing a PhD

PhDs who are employed by the university, University Medical Center or research institution, but do not have PhD as their main job title, are considered “employees pursuing a PhD”. Even though their main jobs is different, they do get time or money to pursue a PhD next to their regular job.

In total 33 employees pursuing a PhD have filled out the PNN PhD survey, with representation for all disciplines except law. The following topics were addressed:

- Whether they feel they have sufficient time to work on their PhD project
- What they think the reasons are why they do not always have sufficient time.

Time to work on the PhD project

First, we asked the employees pursuing a PhD whether they have to combine their PhD project with other tasks, or whether they can focus fully on their PhD research. 12 of them indicated that they can focus fully on their PhD research (36.4%), while 21 indicated that they combined their PhD trajectory with other job tasks (63.6%)

For those who combine their PhD trajectory with other job tasks, we wanted to know how this balanced out in available time. We therefore asked them in the survey how often they felt they had sufficient time to work on their PhD project. They could select one of the following responses:

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Sometimes
- Never

Less than half (42.9%) of the employees pursuing a PhD indicated they felt they have sufficient time to work on their PhD project (figure 2.1). This indicates that for more than half of the employees pursuing a PhD, structurally too little time is provided to work on their PhD projects. It must be noted however that the numbers here are very small, thus these results should be interpreted with caution.

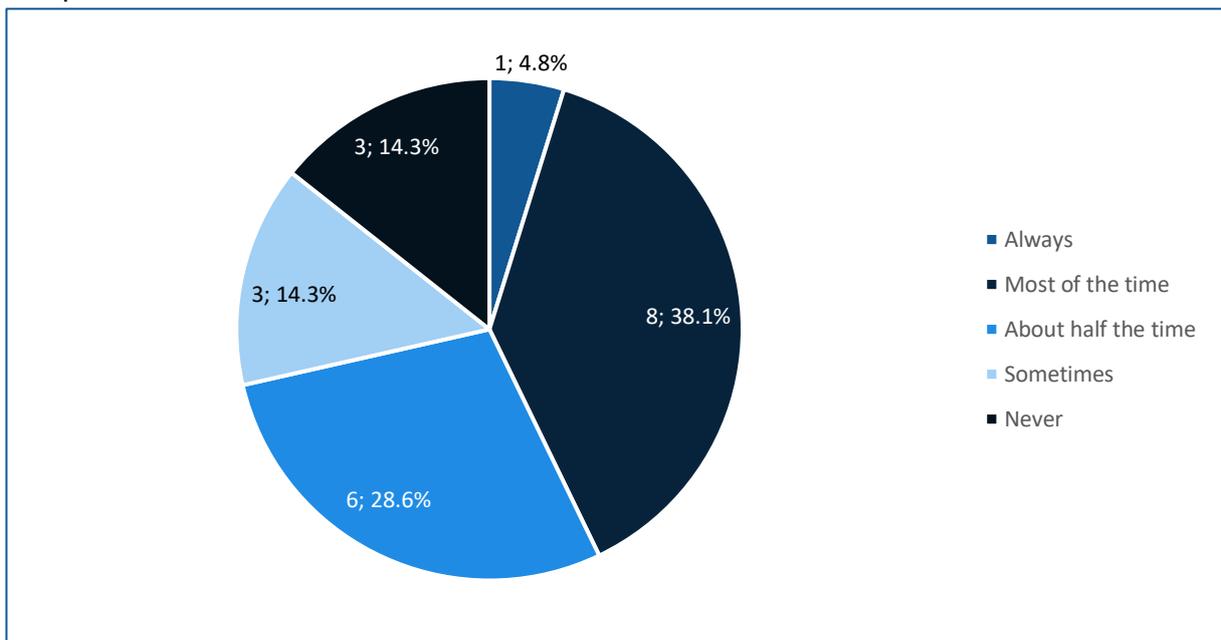


Figure 2.1: Response to the question: "Do you feel you have sufficient time to work on your PhD project?" (n=21).

Reasons for experiencing insufficient available time for PhD project

All employees pursuing a PhD who did not respond “always” to the previous question, were asked to select reasons why they felt that they did not have the required time for their PhD project. They could select all that applied from the following options:

- Teaching
- Management tasks
- Project management
- Other research
- Other reasons

A total of 20 employees pursuing a PhD responded to the question regarding reasons for not having sufficient time. As the number of respondents is quite low, results should be interpreted with caution, though they give a first image of what causes employees pursuing a PhD to not have sufficient time to work on their project. For the total group, teaching is in 60% of the cases responsible for not being able to spend sufficient time on the PhD project. Other research asks and project management are also often mentioned as factors that take away precious PhD time (35%). The three respondents with other reasons all mentioned extra tasks in supporting roles (i.e. communication and ICT).

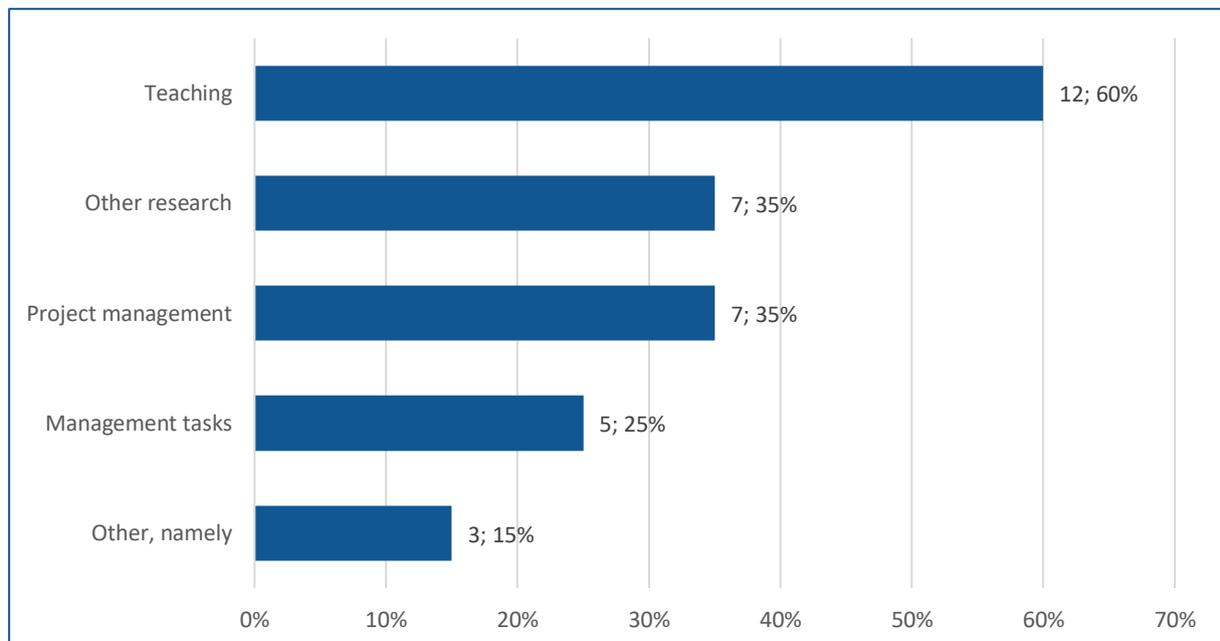


Figure 2.2: Responses to the question: "Why do you think you do not always have sufficient time to work on your PhD project?" (n=20).

Externally financed PhDs

Externally financed PhDs are employed by another organisation than a university, University Medical Center or research institute, but they do get time or funds from their employer to pursue a PhD. Hence they are balancing their PhD project work with another job.

With the PNN PhD survey we reached 64 externally financed PhDs, and asked them questions about the following topics:

- Whether they feel they have sufficient time to work on their PhD project
- What they think the reasons are why they do not always have sufficient time.

Time to work on the PhD project

We asked all externally financed PhDs whether they can focus fully on their PhD research, or whether they combine their PhD trajectory with other job tasks (n=64). 28.1% indicated that they can fully focus on their PhD research, while 71.9% indicated that they combine their PhD trajectory with other job tasks.

For those who need to divide their time between their PhD project and their main job, we wanted to know how this works out in practice. In the survey, we asked the externally financed PhDs how often they felt they had sufficient time to work on their PhD project. They could select one of the following responses:

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Sometimes
- Never

As shown in figure 3.1, less than half of the PhDs feel they mostly have sufficient time (40.4%). The most frequent answers were “about half the time”(34.0%) and “most of the time”(31.9%), indicating at least some degree of fluctuations in available time. However the numbers are too small to draw any rigorous conclusion about the total population of externally financed PhDs.

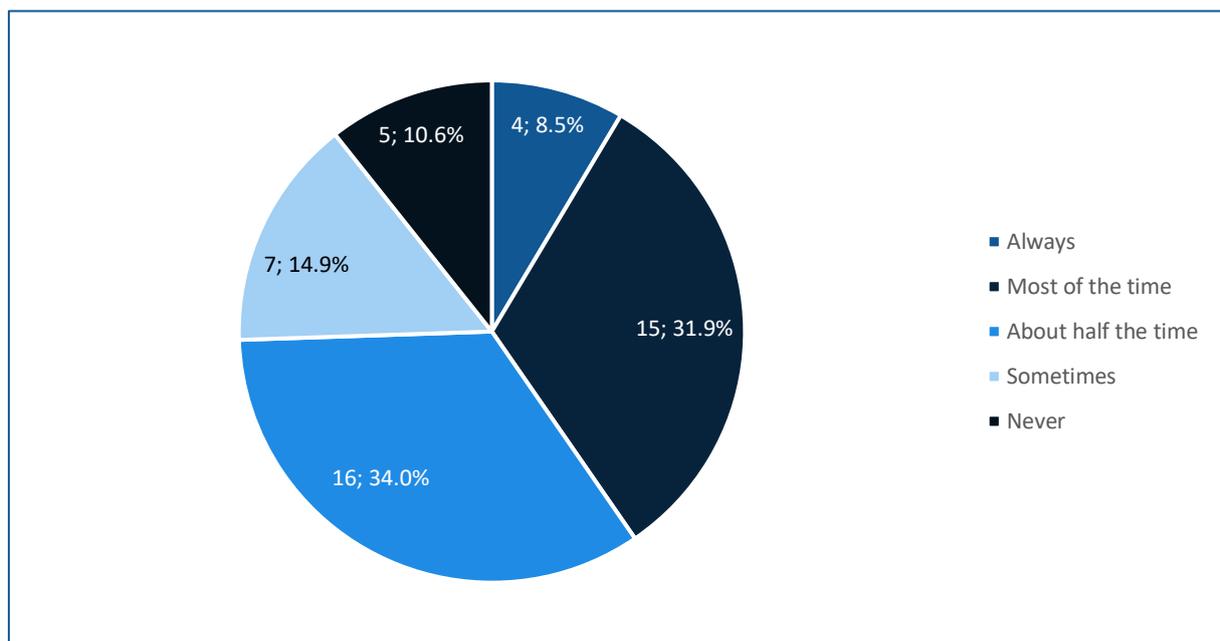


Figure 3.1: Response to the question: "Do you feel you have sufficient time to work on your PhD project?" (n=47).

Experiences regarding available time for PhD project

To gain more insight in reasons why they not always felt they could spend as much time on their PhD as desired, we added an open question where externally financed PhDs could elaborate on the obstacles they experienced. A total of 37 externally financed PhDs responded to this question. 28 respondents mentioned that their other job is also highly demanding, and often prioritized over their research.

“My usual job is also busy and I often feel like I have to prioritize it (as it's what I get paid for, the PhD was my own choice)” (R.27, employed).

Five respondents even indicated they cannot be missed in their other job, due to their specific expertise or because of a strong notion of responsibility. These sentiments were particularly visible in healthcare workers.

“Because patients in my regular work are waiting; there is no substitute for me as a professional” (R.9, employed in healthcare).

Having sufficient time itself is not always the issue, the combination of working on a PhD project while having another job and striving for a healthy work-life balance can be hard as well. Five respondents mentioned how combining all three is what makes this construction the most challenging.

“During experiments I have to give myself for 100%. This is hard to combine with a job and kids.” (R.10, employed).

External PhDs

External PhDs pursue a PhD in their own time, without receiving any salary, financing or time to do so. Traditionally, external PhDs were associated with older individuals who wanted to convert their work experiences into a dissertation, at the end of their career or during retirement. However, it is becoming increasingly more common for early career researchers to pursue a PhD in their own time, while getting an income from one or more side jobs.

In the PNN PhD survey, we asked 74 external PhDs about the following topics:

- The reasons why they are doing their PhD as an external PhD
- Whether they have another job aside from their PhD project, and what is the main reason why have another job next to their PhD project

As the number of external PhDs in our survey is quite low compared to the expected number of external PhDs that are currently doing their PhD, these results need to be read with caution.

Reasons for being an external PhD

In the survey, we asked the external PhDs what are the main reasons they decided to do their PhD projects as an external PhD. They could select multiple of the following responses:

- There were no other PhD arrangements available
- I wanted to choose my own subject
- I wanted to decide myself how much time I spend on my PhD project
- I wanted to be able to work remotely
- I did not want contractual obligations
- Other, namely

The responses to this question are depicted in figure 4.1. The most frequently mentioned reason given by the external PhDs was that there were no other PhD arrangements available (43.5%), followed by wanting to choose their own subject (40.6%). Much less frequently mentioned reasons are wanting to decide how much time they spend on their PhD projects (20.3%), wanting to work remotely (20.3%) and not wanting contractual obligations (13%). Amongst the other reasons to do a PhD as an external PhD were being able to combine an external PhD with another job, being retired, and not wanting to give up a higher salary for a junior position.

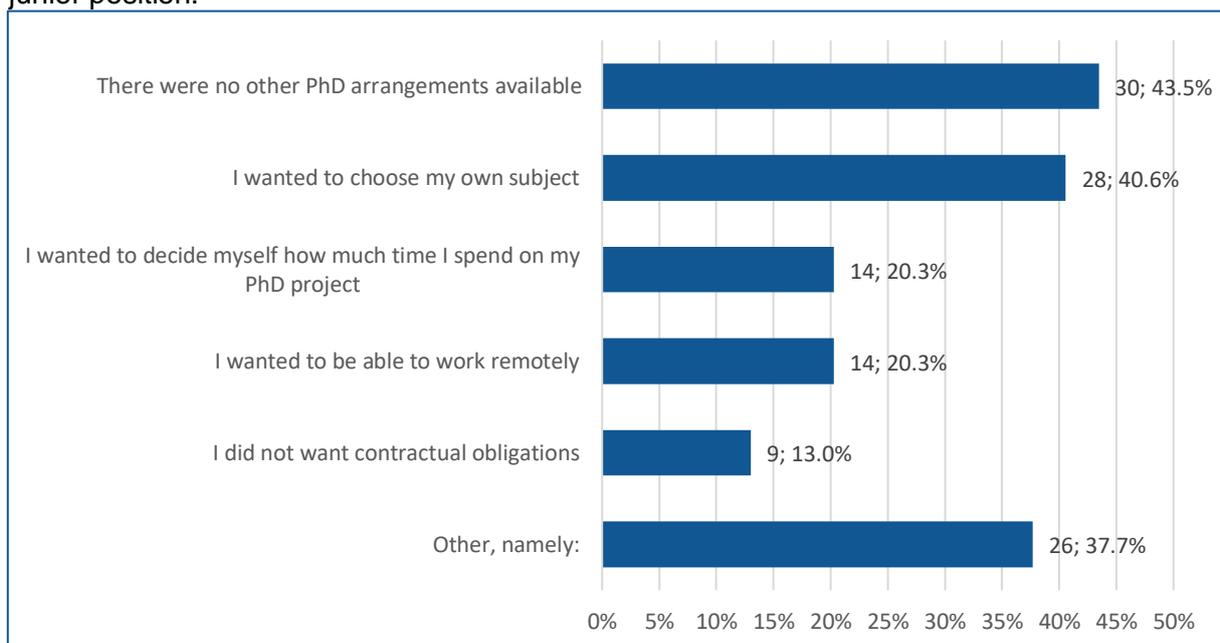


Figure 4.1 Responses to the question: "What are the main reasons you decided to do your PhD project as an external PhD?". N reported in graph (n=69).

Working next to the PhD project

Following this, we asked the external PhDs whether they worked next to their PhD project. The large majority of them (77.1%) worked next to their PhD project (figure 4.2). We asked those PhDs what the main reason is they work next to their PhD project (figure 4.3). 52.8% stated that the main reason to work next to the PhD was to be able to support themselves financially while doing a PhD project, while 39.6% indicated that the PhD was a side project next to their regular job. Though we need to refrain from generalizing these numbers to the population of external PhDs, these results however do show that the traditional image of external PhDs being senior experts writing down their work experience in a dissertation is certainly not valid for the entire group.

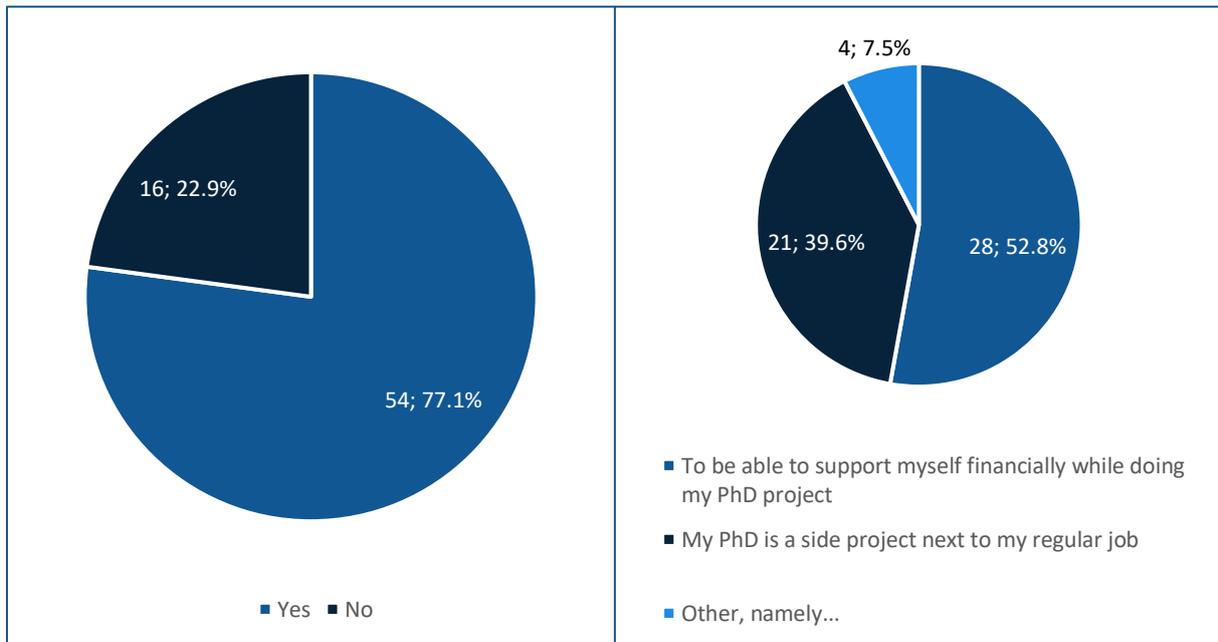


Figure 4.2 Response to the question: "Do you work next to your PhD project?" (n=70).

Figure 4.3: Response to the question: "Do you work next to your PhD project?" (n=53).

Facilities

A part of the integration of PhDs in their institution, regardless of the type of PhD arrangement they are in, is access to basic services provided by the institution, such as an institution account, email address and access to library facilities. Also small services, such as free printing, a coffee card or a Christmas present all help connecting non-standard PhDs to their institution.

We asked all non-standard PhDs – except for employees pursuing a PhDs, as they usually have access to all the facilities of the institution due to their employment status – whether they have access to the following facilities:

- University/UMC account
- University/UMC email address
- Free coffee
- Free printing
- University library
- Official Christmas gift from the institution
- Use of a laptop

They could select multiple from these options, or indicate that they have access to none of these facilities.

The responses to this question can be found in figure 5.1, for the total group as well as separately per type of PhD arrangement. Access to the university library is best arranged, with 95.9% of the PhDs having access to this. Most PhDs also get to print and drink coffee for free (85.3% and 84.5%). However, many non-standard PhDs do not have an institutional email address (25.2%) or account (33.7%), only 51.6% of these PhDs receives an official Christmas gift, and 44% can borrow a laptop from work. Only 1.5% of the PhDs does not have access to any of the facilities

External PhDs least often have access all types of facilities. 10.4% of them for instances does not have essential access to the university library, and relatively few of them have an institutional email address (59.7%) or institutional account (50.6%). For scholarship PhDs and externally financed PhDs, facilities are often better arranged, but there are still quite some PhDs who lack access to some facilities.

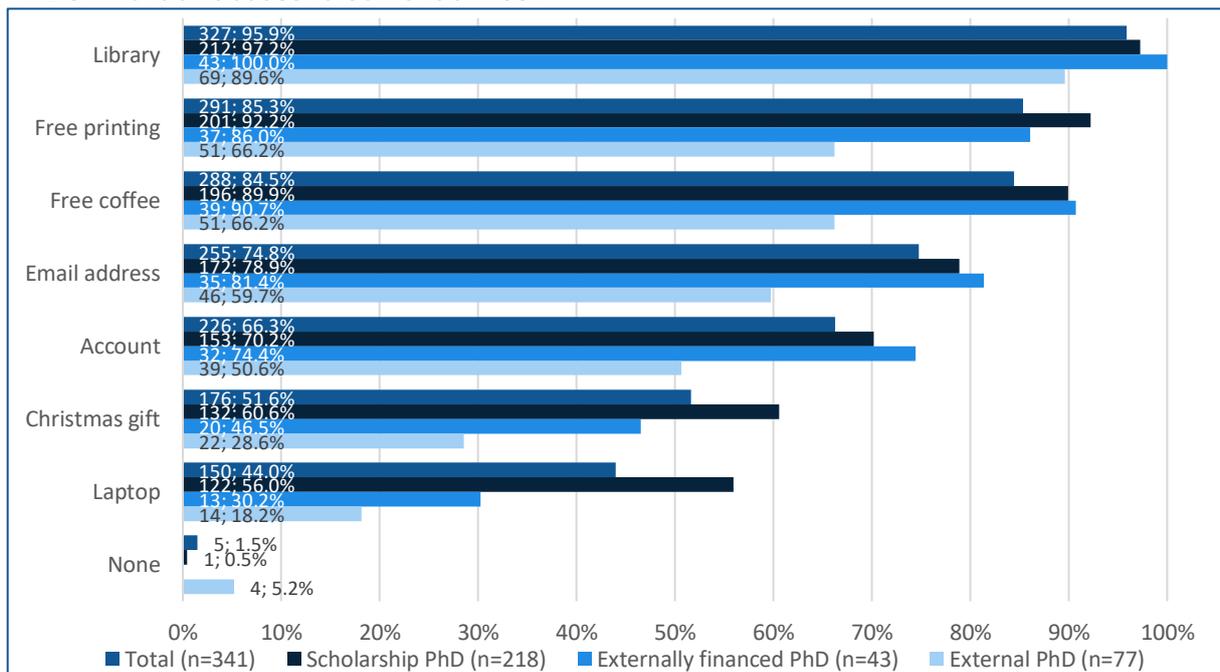


Figure 5.1: Responses to the question: "Do you have access to the following facilities from your University or University medical center?", total and per type of PhD arrangement. N reported in graph.

Fees for pursuing a PhD

Research facilities, courses and supervision time with a senior research staff member all cost money, either directly or indirectly. Some PhDs get charged for these services with a fee, especially PhDs in non-standard PhD arrangements are vulnerable to these constructs as the financial constructions are less conventional.

In the PNN PhD survey, all non-standard PhDs except employees pursuing a PhD were asked whether their institute charges a fee for pursuing a PhD. A total of 344 respondents who completed the survey responded to the questions regarding fees, of whom 219 were scholarship PhDs, 77 external PhDs and 48 were in the “other” category comprising of employees pursuing a PhD, externally financed PhDs and other types of PhDs. The questions covered the following topics:

- Whether the university or University Medical Center charges them a fee for the PhD project
- The annual fee charged
- Whether the PhD has to pay the fee themselves or whether someone else pays
- Which costs are covered by the fee according to the university or University Medical Center
- Regulations regarding waivering of fees

Charging fees, per PhD arrangement

We asked the non-standard PhDs whether their institution asks them to pay a fee. The answer options were “yes”, “usually yes, but my fee was waived” and “no”. Unfortunately, we did not include the option “I don’t know”. This resulted in a relatively high number of respondents seeing this question, but not answering it. We therefore decided to label this group of respondents as having answered “I don’t know” to get better insights in the overall proportion of PhDs having to pay a fee.

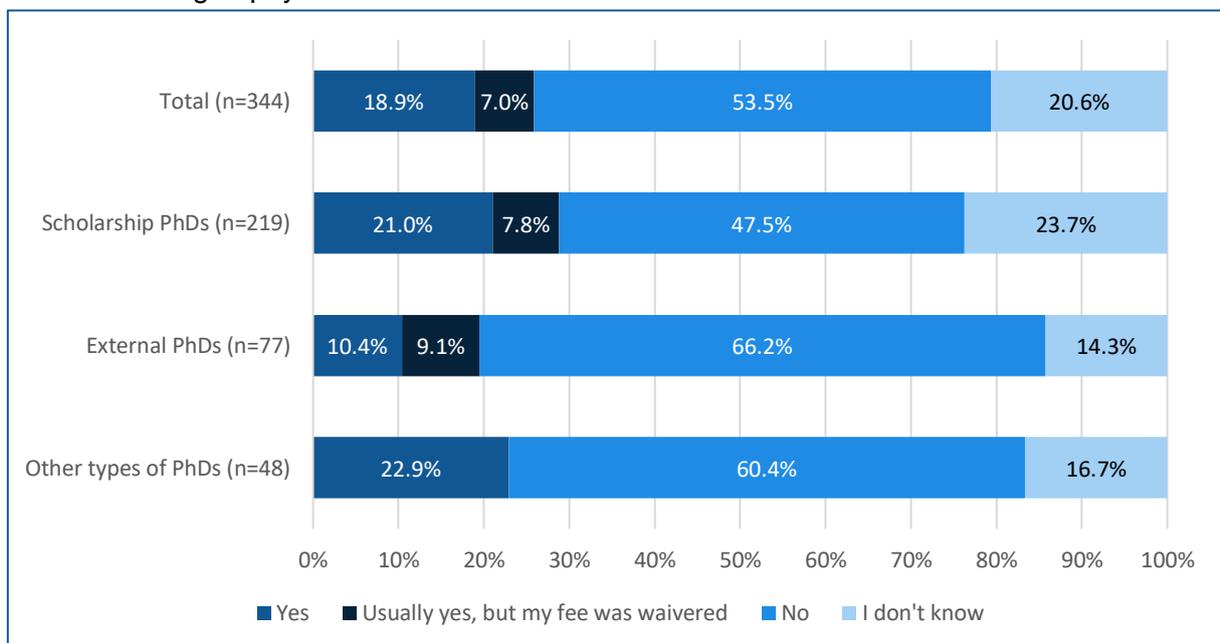


Figure 6.1 Response to the question: "Does your University or University medical center ask you or your funding organisation to pay a fee for your PhD Project?" (n=276).

In our survey, 71 (18.9%) of non-standard PhDs encountered a fee for pursuing a PhD. Since regulations regarding fees might differ according to PhD arrangement, responses are shown separately per type of PhD arrangement (figure 6.1). Other types of PhDs and scholarship

PhDs relatively most often encountered fees (22.9% and 21% respectively) while only 12.1% of the external PhDs encountered a fee (figure 6.1).

The Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG) has exempted fees for all scholarship PhDs who are participating in the scholarship programme experiment¹². We therefore split the data for scholarship PhDs at the RUG and outside the RUG (figure 6.2). Indeed, at the RUG only 7.2% of scholarship PhDs encountered a fee, compared to 27.3% of scholarship PhDs outside the RUG.

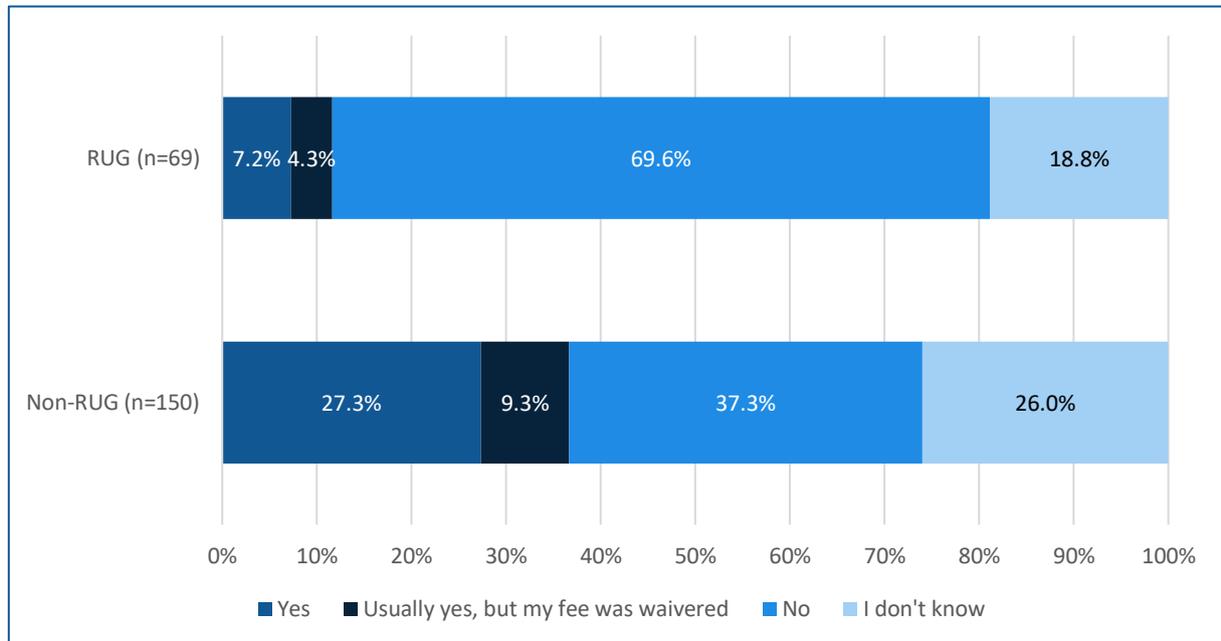


Figure 6.2 Response to the question: "Does your University or University Medical Center ask you or your funding organisation to pay a fee for your PhD Project?" by scholarship PhDs in Groningen and outside Groningen (n=166).

Annual fees charged

The respondents who said they encountered a fee were additionally asked how high the fee was. Since our participants are not distributed equally across universities, no representative proportions can be reported. 58 respondents did give an indication of the annual fee by selecting one of the following options:

- Less than €1,000 per year
- €1,000 to €2,500 per year
- €2,500 to €5,000 per year
- €5,000 to €7,500 per year
- €7,500 to €10,000 per year
- More than €10,000 per year

Generally, the annual fees vary all the way from less than €1,000 to more than €10,000 per year (figure 6.3). 38.2% of the PhDs in our survey who had to pay fees indicated that this fee was more than €10,000 per year. For a standard, four-year trajectory, this would sum up to over €40,000. The second most common category of fees in our survey is €1,000–€2,500 (24.1%). Other fee amounts are encountered as well, but less prominent. However, these results should be interpreted with caution, as the responses are likely not to be fully representative of the fees asked by universities and UMCs. The results however do confirm that a large variety in fees exists.

¹² Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2020. Regulations for registration and tuition fees for 2020-2021. <https://www.rug.nl/about-ug/organization/rules-and-regulations/general/regeling-inschrijving-en-collegegeld>

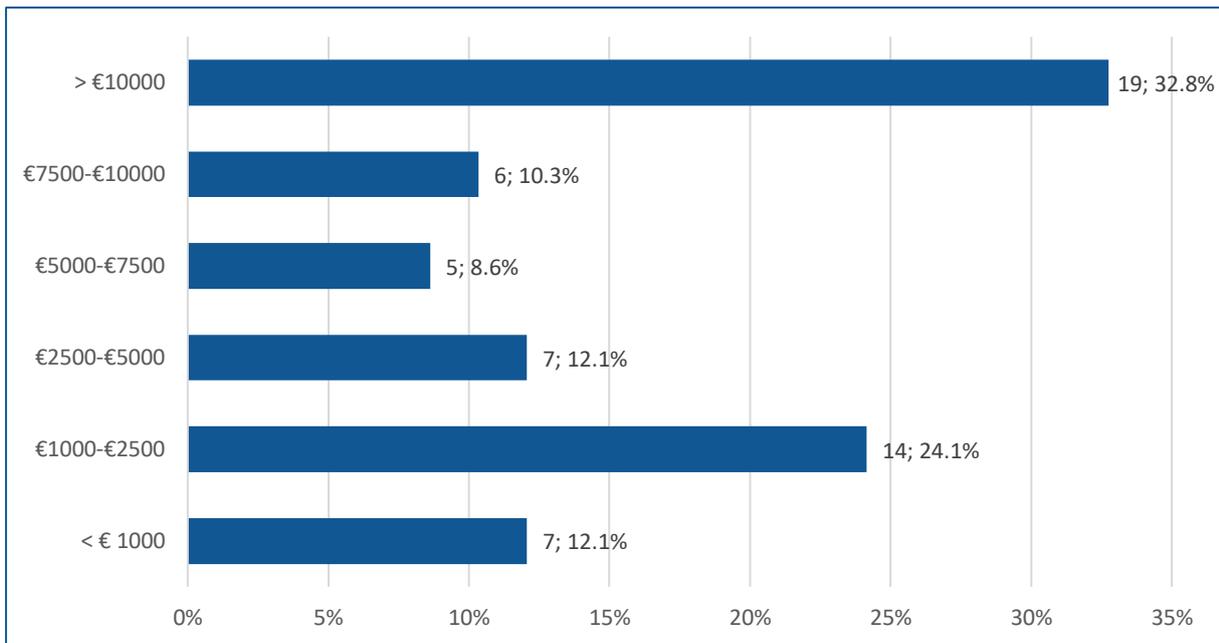


Figure 6.3: Responses to the question: "How much is the fee your University or University Medical Center charges you or your funding agency? (Per year)". N reported in graph (n=58).

Responsibility for paying the fee

Fortunately, not all PhDs who encounter a fee have to pay the full fee by themselves. Financing organisations or the employer can pay a part of the fee or the full fee instead. Respondents who had filled out encountering a fee were additionally asked who was paying the fee. Out of the 51 participants who responded, 11 (21.6%) paid the full fee themselves, while for 68.6%, their employer or financing organisation paid the fee. As shown in figure 6.4, the highest categories of annual fees of more than €7,500 per year were paid by the employer or financing organisation in most cases (75.0% for €7,500 to €10,000 per year and 86.7% for more than €10,000 per year). The number of respondents per category are however quite small, so these results should be interpreted with caution.

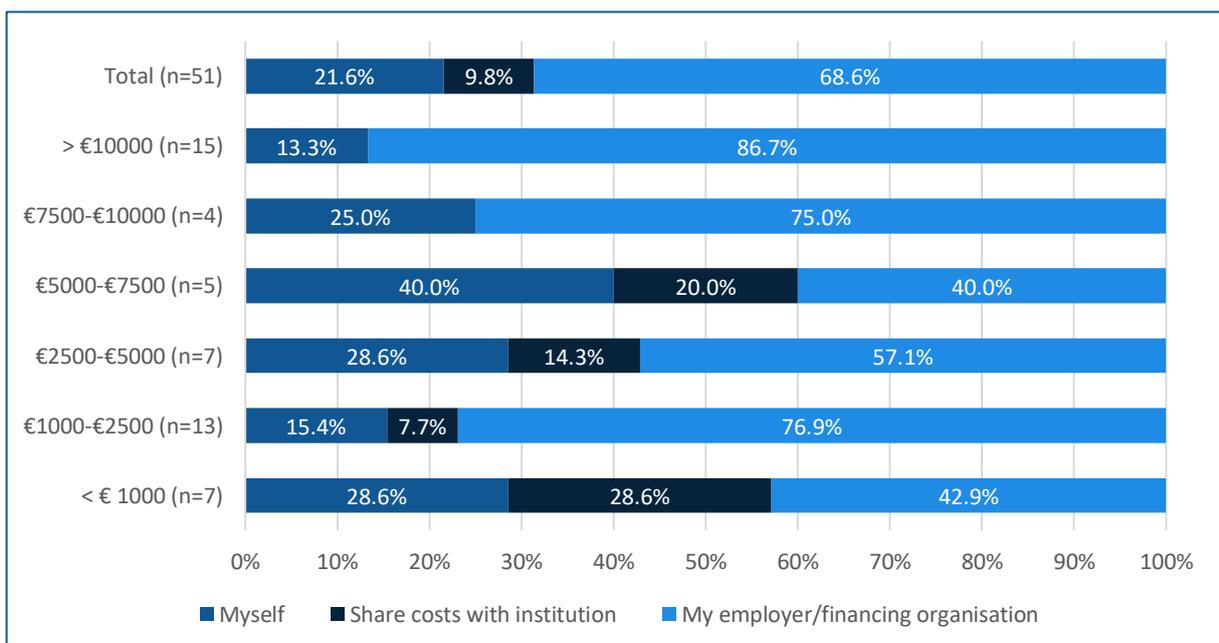


Figure 6.4: Response to the question: "Who pays your fee?" (n=51).

Costs covered by fees

The justification of the universities and University Medical Centers for charging fees is covering the costs of facilitating a PhD project. Therefore, the respondents who encountered a fee were asked which costs are covered by the fees, according to their institute. They could select all that apply from the following options:

- Administration (including a personal account, e-mail, library access)
- Supervision
- Research costs (including data storage, field work, equipment, laboratories)
- Education (including Graduate school, courses, conferences)
- Other

The most common response to costs covered by fees was administration costs (91.9%) among 62 respondents (figure 6.5). The other options were all selected by more than half the respondents, indicating the fees are mostly covering the same domains. No new domains were mentioned in the other category, though two respondents answered they did not know what costs were covered by the fees.

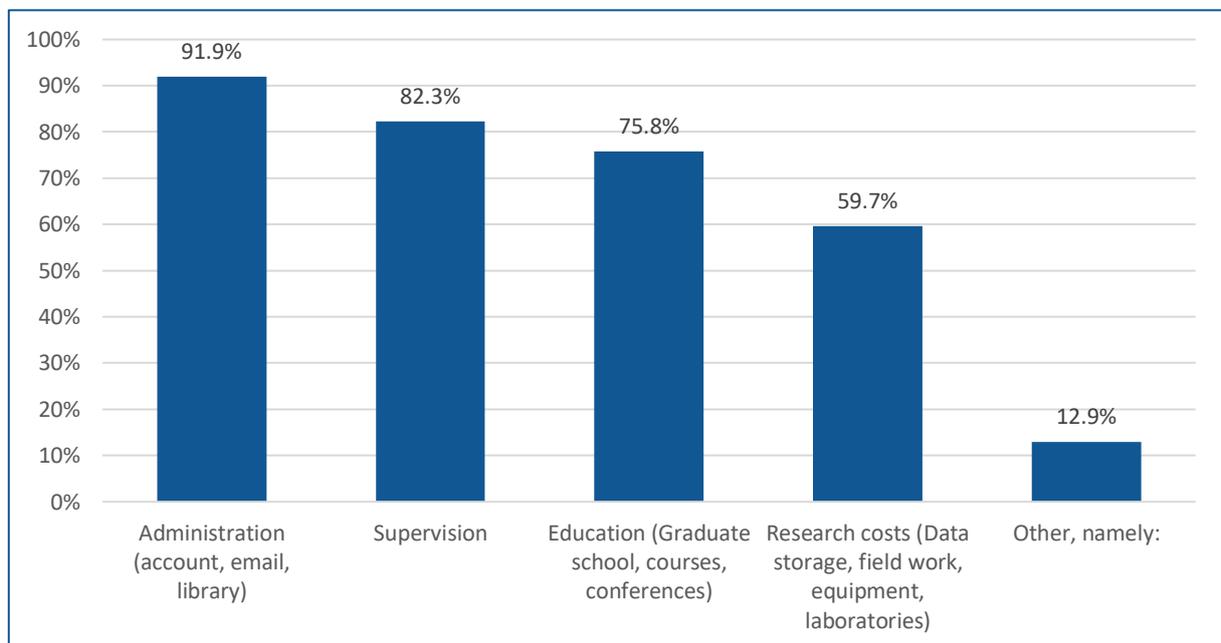


Figure 6.5 Response to the question: "Which costs are covered by the fee, according to your University or University Medical Center?" (n=62).

Regulations regarding fee waivers

In some situations PhD fees can be waived, however the procedures might not always be known to the PhDs who might benefit from them. The respondents who answered in the PNN survey that they encountered a fee or were waived from paying were later asked whether any regulations were in place about when fees can be waived. Ten respondents (11.2%) answered there were regulations, 14 (15.7%) answered there were no such regulations, while 65 (73.0%) did not answer the question (figure 6.6). The high number of respondents not answering the question might suggest unfamiliarity of PhDs with the existence of regulation.

The question under which circumstances fees can be waived was answered by only seven respondents. Reasons selected by respondents included PhDs having to pay the fee all by themselves, PhDs who cannot afford to pay the fee, agreements between the university or University Medical Center and the funding organisation and exemption granted by a person of authority.

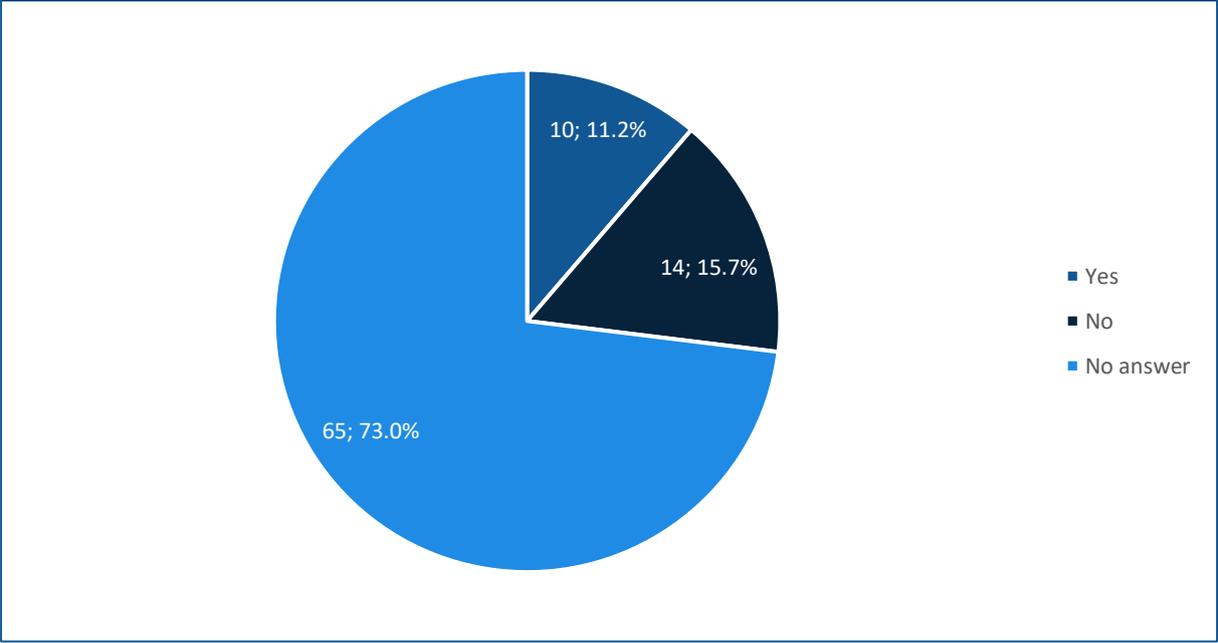


Figure 6.6 Response to the question: "Are there any regulations about when fees can be waived?" (n=89).