

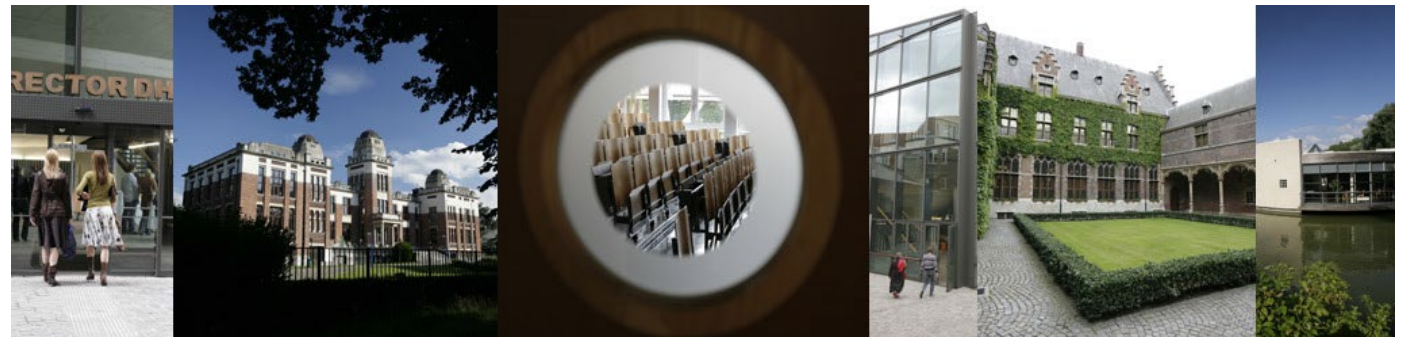


PhD research at the University of Antwerp

Prof. dr. Philippe Meers

Chair Antwerp Doctoral School (ADS)

21.03.2024



20 years UAntwerp!



Photo by [Adi Goldstein](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Mission of the University of Antwerp

As all Flemish universities, we have a **threefold mission**:

- **Scientific research**

- *The University of Antwerp conducts **creative and innovative scientific research** which strives for **international excellence**. It stimulates both **basic and applied research** and their **valorisation**.*

- **Academic education**

- Graduate, postgraduate and PhD level
- Education firmly rooted in scientific research

- **Service to society**

- *The University of Antwerp encourages **societal debate** and attaches great importance to the **scientific and social services** that its staff and students provide to **society**.*

University of Antwerp: facts & figures

UAntwerp has...

- **4 campuses, 9 faculties and 2 research institutes**
- **Education**
 - 32 bachelor, 80 master, 18 advanced master and 24 postgraduate programmes
 - > 23 000 students (17.5% international)
- **Research**
 - 169 research groups
 - > 5100 academic staff (918 professors & lecturers (ZAP+OP); 501 assistants (AAP); 3639 researchers (BAP))
 - **2434 PhD researchers in 2022-2023 (46% international)**

15 Research Centres of Excellence



Sustainable chemistry



Inequality



Digitalisation and Tax



Genomics in medicine



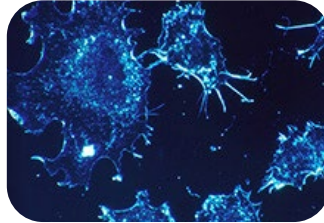
**Environmental pollution in
aquatic and terrestrial
ecosystems**



Inflammatory Diseases



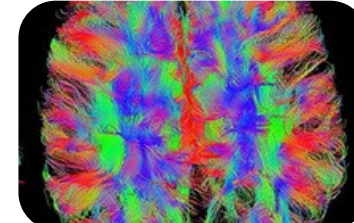
**Vaccine & Infectious
Diseases**



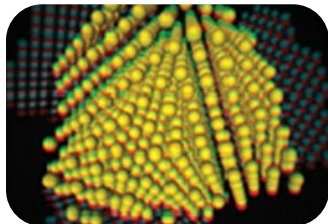
Oncology



**(Dis)trust in Multi-level
governance**



**Multidimensional analysis
of the nervous system**



Nanoscience



Global change ecology



**Political representation
& intermediary actors**



Plasma



**Microbial systems
technology**

Valorisation @ UAntwerp

- Current > 200 active patent families (30 new patent families a year)
- 55 spin-offs founded (2 new spin-offs in 2023)



Valorisation @ UAntwerp



Dive-into-Projects includes a general basic training programme on **research and proposal writing**.

Deep Dive-into-Projects organises specific courses, workshops and guidance aimed at **specific funding**.



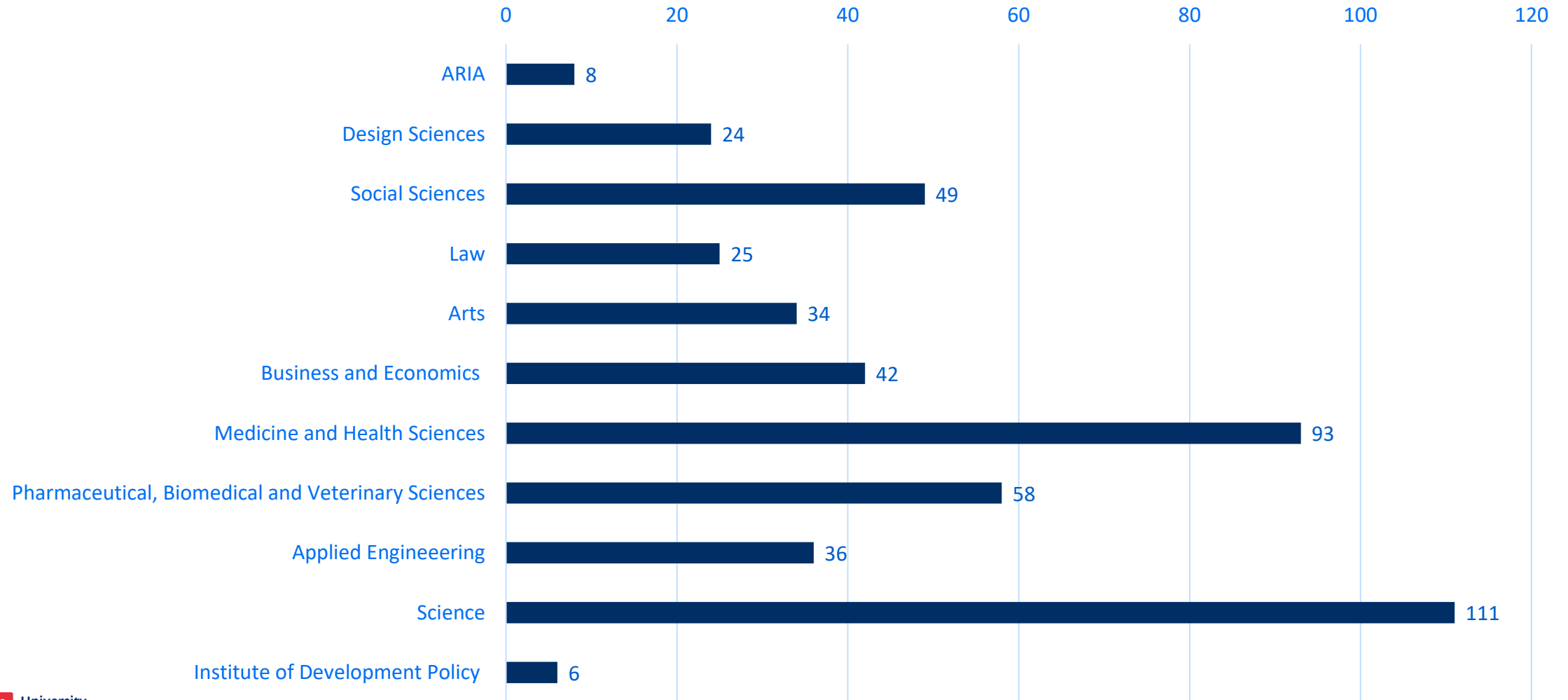
Dive-into-Business focuses on the **links between research and business** and informs you about spin-offs, contract negotiations, funding for business collaborations and intellectual property rights.

Deep Dive-into-Business, focuses on the **valorisation** process and how your idea can grow into a business.

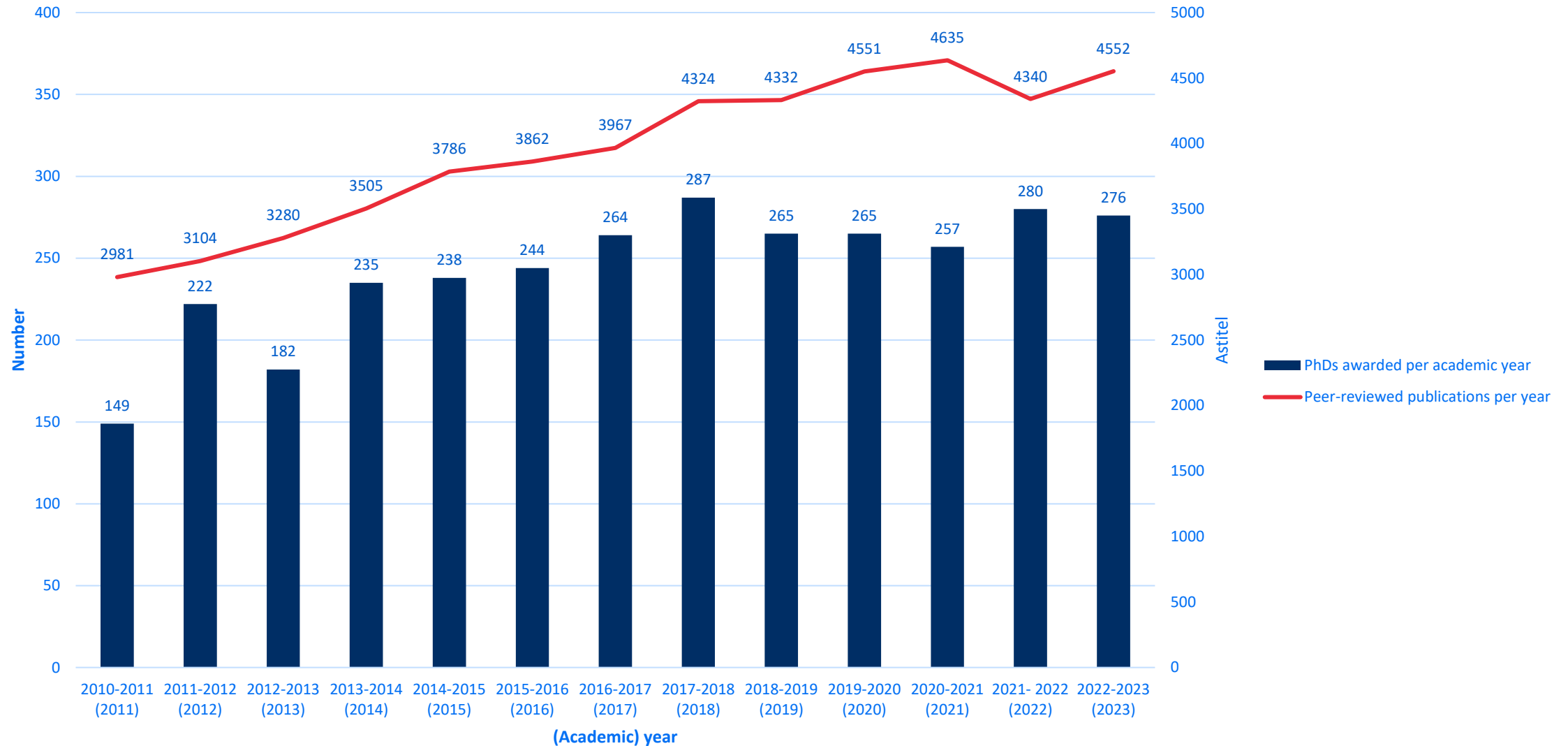
More information in the session on associations, courses and initiatives - Department Research, Innovation & Valorisation Antwerp

Doing a PhD at UAntwerp: facts & figures

PhDs started in 2022-2023 (n = 486)



Doing a PhD at UAntwerp: facts & figures



PhD - It's about perception...

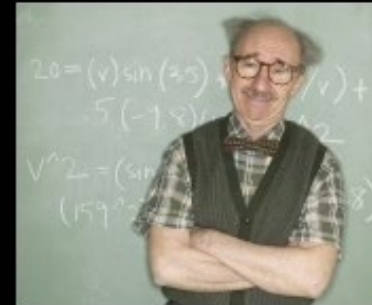
PhD Student



What my friends think I do.



What my parents think I do.



What society think I do.



What my supervisor thinks I do.



What I think I do.



What I actually do.

What PhD researchers actually do...



What does it take to be a PhD researcher?

A passion for and engagement to research

The ambition to excel

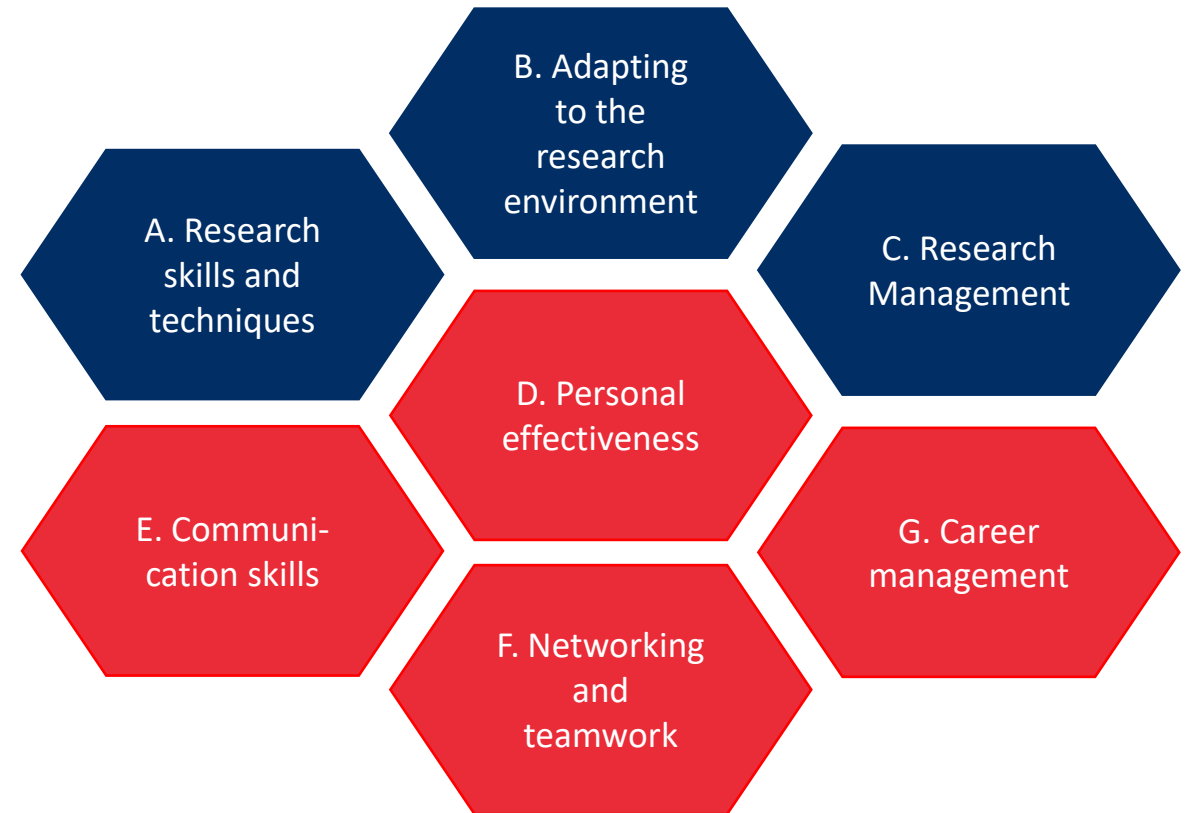
Perseverance (4-6 years)

Integration in your research group and the university

Profile yourself in the international research community

Doing a PhD at UAntwerp: doctoral research & education

- **Doing research**
under the **supervision** of a supervisor and an individual PhD commission
in one of the **research groups** at the university
- Participating in the **university's doctoral study programme**
which focuses on **training in seven competence categories**



More information in the next session:

"Doctoral education @UAntwerp"



Learning



IT



Self
management



Critical thinking

Transferable Skills



Communicating



Teamworking



Career management

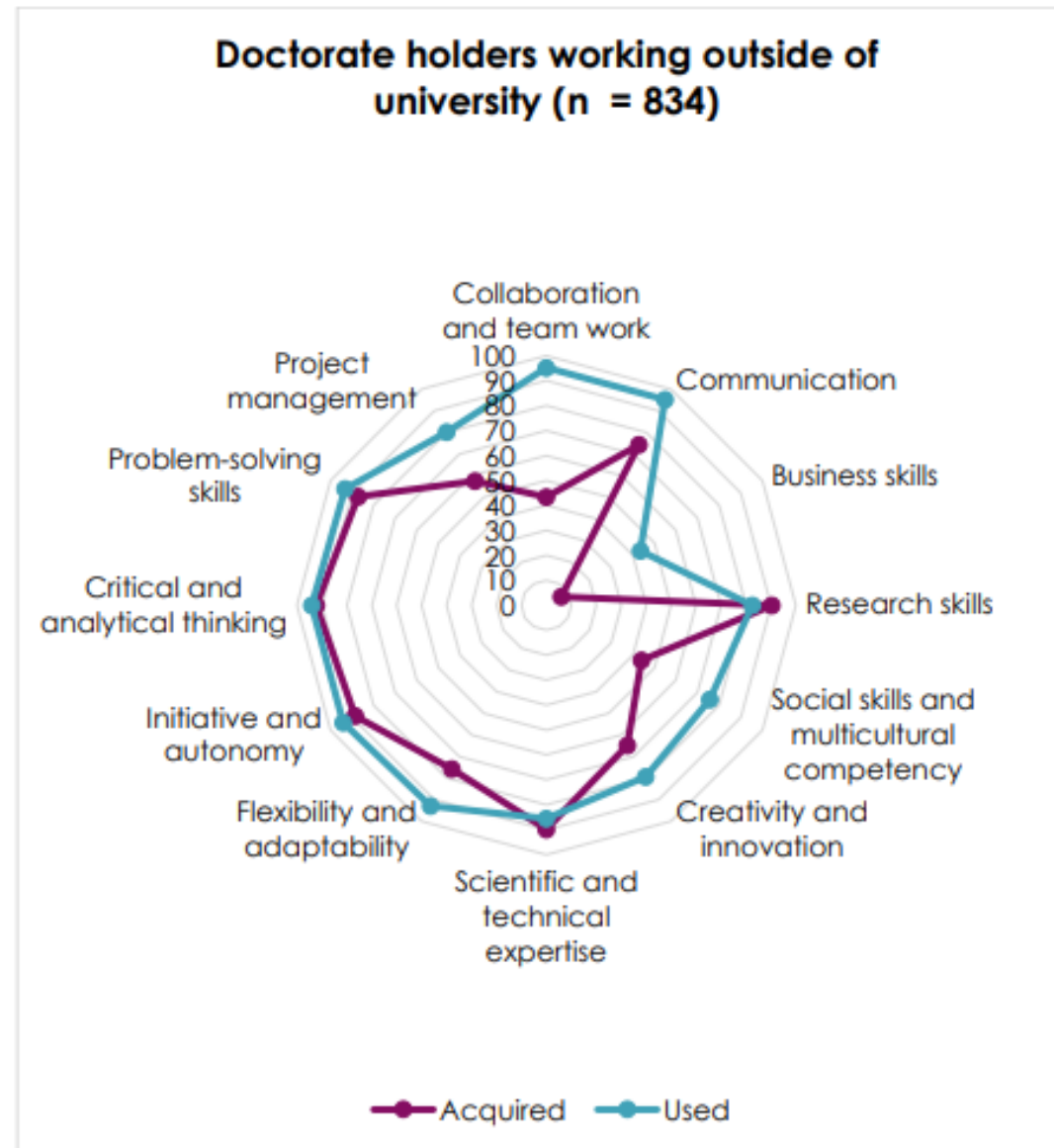


Numeracy



Information
handling

Skills acquired and skills needed



Source: FNRS – Report 1, 2022 'Gaining insight into transferable skills: Perspectives from doctorate holders and non-academic employers'
https://observatoire.frs-fnrs.be/_media/report.employers.1.pdf

Life after the PhD: future careers

DOCTORATEN +

Steeds meer studenten halen hun doctoraat: “Het is de sleutel tot meer kansen op werk en een hoger inkomen”

08-01-19, 06.00u - Eva Christiaens

Vlaamse doctoraatsstudenten brengen steeds meer hun project tot een goed einde. Vandaag dienen zeven op de tien hun proefschrift ook effectief in. Achttien jaar eerder slaagde nog minder dan de helft.

Het aantal doctoraatsstudenten is de laatste twintig jaar fors toegenomen. Maar ook hun slaagkansen blijven stijgen. Het aantal studenten dat na vier tot acht jaar de meet haalt, bedraagt volgens de meest recente cijfers 70,3 procent. Achttien jaar geleden lag dit nog op 46,7 procent. Dat blijkt uit gegevens van onderzoekscentrum Ecoom. Zij keken naar de resultaten van de doctoraatsstudenten die tussen de



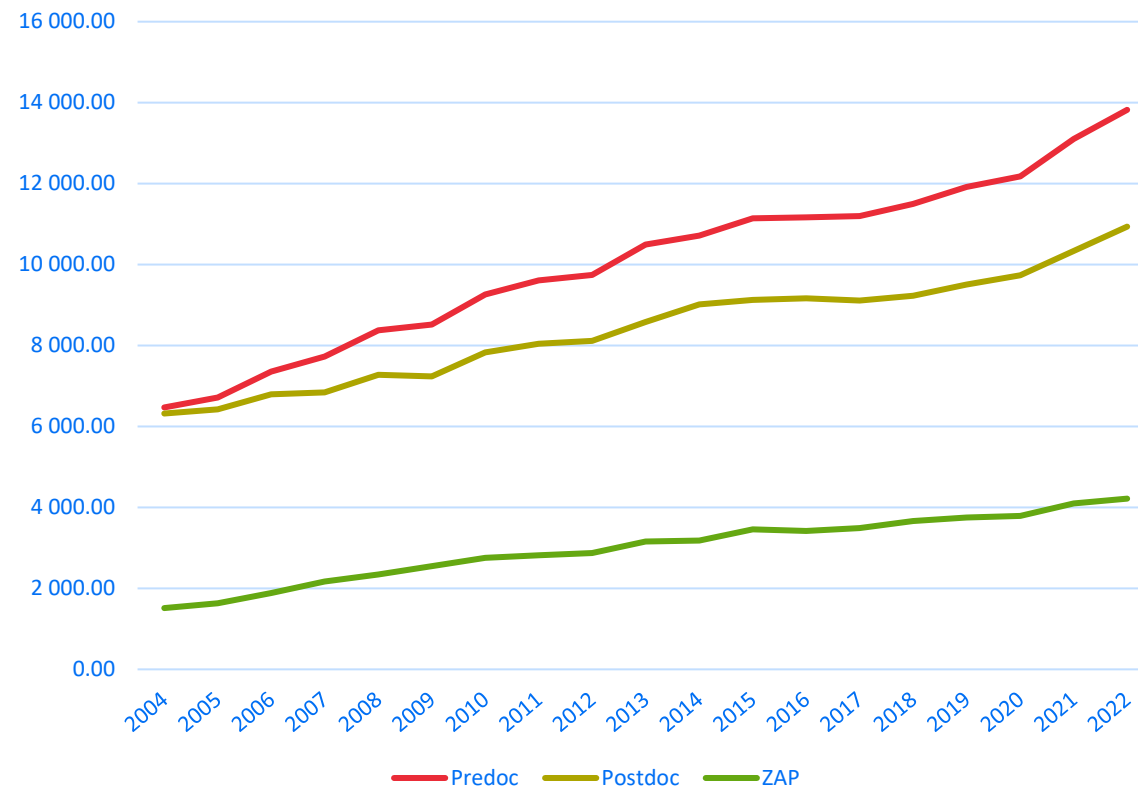
More and more students obtain a PhD: "A great knowledge potential on our labour market".

Flemish PhD researchers are increasingly bringing their project to a successful conclusion.

*Today **seven out of ten submit their dissertation successfully.** Eighteen years earlier, less than half succeeded.*

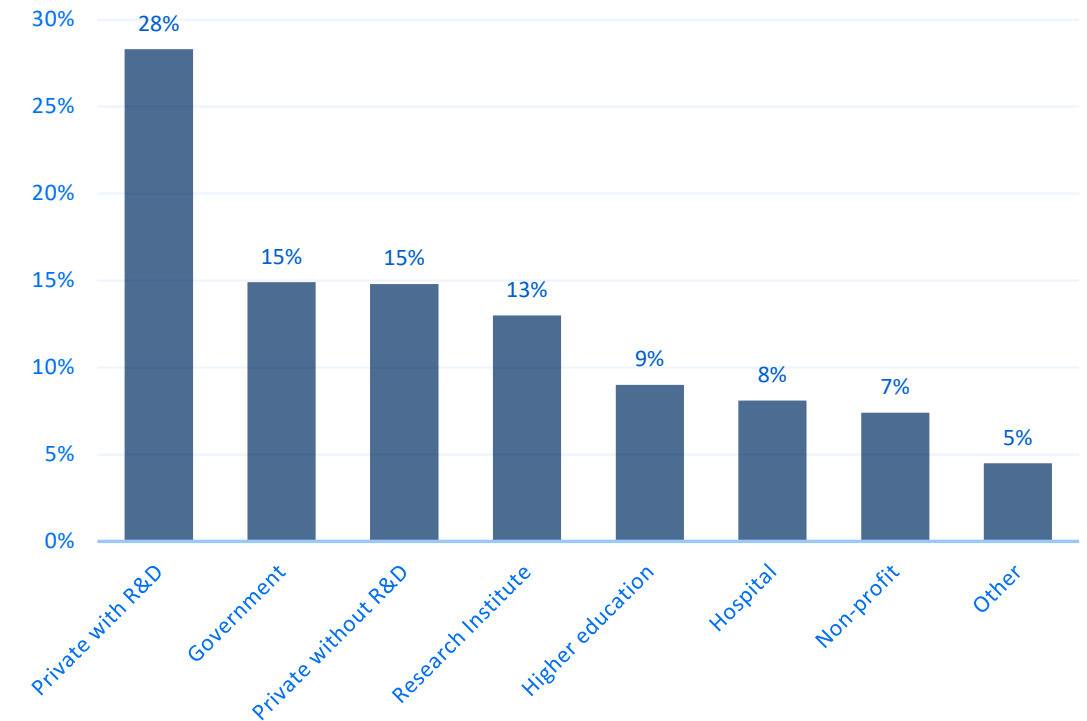
Life after the PhD: future careers

Evolution of the number of junior researchers, postdoctoral researchers and professors in full-time equivalents from 2004 to 2022



Source: Vlaams Indicatorenboek: 3.3.1 Evolutie van het aantal onderzoekers | Vlaams Indicatorenboek

Doctorate holders' first job per sector in the non-academic labour market, 2017 (N-1535)



Source: ECOOM Brief 42, March 2023 [mortier-a-levecque-k-wille-l-2023---de-tewerkstelling-van-doctoraathouders-de-niet-academische-sectoren-in-kaart-gebracht---in-ecoom-briefs-ndeg42-maart-2023.pdf](#)

Life after the PhD: future careers

Employment rate of doctorate holders: 91% = higher than bachelor and master degrees

PhDs' analytical & innovative skills are highly wanted in companies & organisations

A private sector environment differs from an academic environment

Identify the **strengths and talents** that you could bring to a team and learn how to **communicate about** them

Source: *Doorstroom van doctoraathouders naar de arbeidsmarkt*, VRWI 2016 & K. Powell, 2018 [How to sail smoothly from academia to industry \(nature.com\)](https://www.nature.com/articles/18019)



**KEEP
CALM
AND
FINISH
PhD**

