

Remuneration of Doctoral Candidates Across Europe 2024-2025

1. Introduction

This report aims to give **an overview of the remuneration of doctoral candidates across Europe**, by which we mean the salary, scholarship or other income or funding that doctoral candidates receive for their work. Across Europe, doctoral candidates are remunerated under very different models: in some systems they are predominantly employees with salaries and full social-security coverage, while elsewhere they are more often students receiving scholarships/stipends, and many countries operate mixed systems.

Consistent monitoring of this information is essential to making such data comparable, and we truly hope it will encourage others to monitor the development of such remuneration. Such frameworks should look beyond remuneration levels alone and take into account the different forms of doctoral funding and employment, including access to social protection, pension contributions, paid annual leave, sick leave and parental leave. A more comprehensive picture of these conditions would enable meaningful comparisons across countries and institutions and support informed discussions on improving the attractiveness and sustainability of doctoral careers in Europe.

However, to provide comparison of salaries across Europe in other sectors, is notoriously difficult, because understanding the value of a salary requires understanding more about the society than just the salary itself. In the case of remuneration of doctoral candidates what makes it even more difficult is that across Europe it will vary whether they receive remuneration in the form of a salary or a scholarship, that is if they receive remuneration at all.

2. Scope and limitations

The aim of this report is to provide a starting point for the systematic monitoring and comparison of doctoral candidate remuneration across Europe. It maps existing national remuneration arrangements, proposes a common framework for classifying these arrangements, and provides available information on gross remuneration levels for doctoral candidates across countries.

Rather than providing a comprehensive assessment of doctoral candidates' income and employment conditions, the report seeks to establish a baseline on which further monitoring can be built. In particular, future monitoring should complement information on gross remuneration with data on taxation, social security contributions and coverage, and associated rights and benefits, such as pension entitlements, paid annual and sick leave, and maternity, paternity and parental leave.

By bringing together available information and relevant national sources, including government agreements, collective bargaining agreements and national funding frameworks, the report also aims to improve the transparency and comparability of information on doctoral candidate remuneration across Europe and to facilitate its regular updating.

3. Remuneration Type

Doctoral candidates across Europe are supported through different funding and employment arrangements. In some systems, doctoral candidates are employed and receive a salary, while in others they are funded through scholarships, stipends, or fellowships without a formal employment relationship.

These differences are important when comparing remuneration across Europe, as the type of remuneration can determine access to social protection and employment-related benefits, including pension contributions, paid annual leave, sick leave and parental leave. Remuneration should therefore be considered not only in terms of the amount received, but also in relation to the employment status and associated rights and benefits of doctoral candidates.

Employment-based (E): Remuneration paid through an employment contract, with the doctoral candidate holding employee status. The remuneration is subject to applicable labour law, taxation and social security provisions, and it is generally accompanied by employment-related rights and benefits.

Scholarship / Fellowship / Stipend-based (S): Financial support provided for doctoral education without a standard employment relationship. Recipients may have limited employment rights and reduced or no social security coverage. The associated rights and social protection vary between countries and funding schemes and may differ substantially from those available under an employment contract, particularly with regard to social security, pension contributions, paid leave and unemployment protection.

Fragmented/Mixed (F): A system in which no single remuneration or employment model clearly predominates at national level. The applicable arrangements vary substantially between institutions, disciplines, funding sources or individual doctoral candidates. This category also includes systems where no nationally established or commonly applicable minimum level of remuneration exists and/or where a significant proportion of doctoral candidates receive no funding remuneration or dedicated funding for their doctoral work.

4. Remuneration Coverage

The remuneration type reported for each country reflects the predominant national system. However, doctoral funding arrangements often vary within countries, and not all doctoral candidates are covered by the main system even when it exists. Some may have more favourable conditions and others less favourable conditions, partial funding, time-limited funding, or no funding at all. The purpose of this report is to identify the principal remuneration model in each country, defined as the system covering the largest share of doctoral candidates.

5. Remuneration-Setting Mechanism

The level of doctoral remuneration is determined through different governance arrangements across Europe. Depending on the national context, remuneration may be established by governments, negotiated through collective bargaining, determined by funding organisations, or set directly by higher education institutions. For comparative purposes, four categories are used.

Government-set remuneration (GSR): Remuneration determined directly through legislation, regulation, or decisions by a public authority.

Collectively bargained remuneration (CBR): Remuneration established through negotiations between employers and employee representatives and, in some cases, governmental representatives, typically formalised in collective agreements.

Funding agency-set remuneration (FSR): Remuneration or funding levels determined by a research council, funding agency, or similar body, often in connection with grants, fellowships, or scholarship schemes.

University-set remuneration (USR): Remuneration determined primarily by individual universities or higher education institutions, within the limits of national legislation where applicable.

6. Reported Remuneration

To ensure comparability across countries, remuneration is reported using a common approach. Differences in taxation, social security contributions, welfare systems, and currencies make direct comparison challenging.

Year: The remuneration reported in this report are with the exception of Ukraine reported for either 2024 or 2025. For Ukraine the remuneration is 2026.

Currency: Remuneration is reported both in the national currency and in euros (€). Amounts are converted to euros solely to facilitate cross-country comparison, while national currency values are retained to reflect the original remuneration level. All euro conversions are based on exchange rates obtained from Wise on 13 September 2026. Exchange-rate fluctuations

may therefore affect the euro-denominated values over time, but do not alter the original remuneration amounts reported in national currencies.

Gross remuneration: Compensation before taxes and employee deductions. Gross remuneration is used in this comparison because national tax systems, social security contributions, and benefit structures vary substantially across Europe, limiting the comparability of net income figures.

Starting remuneration: Where remuneration increases with seniority, progression, or years of enrolment, the starting remuneration is reported. This provides a consistent basis for comparison and reflects the minimum remuneration that a newly enrolled doctoral candidate can expect to receive under the main national system.

7. Country information 2024/2025

Country	Year	Euros	Other Currency	Type and Setting Mechanism
Austria	2025	44,580 €	NA	Employment based- CBR
In Austria doctoral candidates are often employed on 75% FTE. Some employment-related benefits can be linked to the contract percentage.				
Belgium	2025	50,799.96 €	NA	Employment based- CBR
The reported remuneration applies to doctoral candidates employed by universities under the standard academic and research staff framework. While not all doctoral candidates in Belgium are employed under these conditions, this represents the principal employment-based pathway. Remuneration follows a national salary framework, with salaries progressing automatically according to nationally defined salary scales and periodic indexation mechanisms.				
Bulgaria	2024	8,283.21 €	16200 BGN	Scholarship based - GSR
The remuneration reported reflects the amount specified in the regulation governing the national doctoral stipends. While this represents the main national scheme, not all doctoral candidates are covered by it. Depending on institution, discipline, or funding source some doctoral candidates may receive different levels of remuneration or none at all.				
Cyprus	NA	NA	NA	NA
No comprehensive national remuneration system exists. Funding arrangements are fragmented and vary between universities, disciplines, and funding sources.				
Czech Republic	2025	12,357.96 €	299,520 CZK	Scholarship based - GSR
The current framework was introduced in 2025 and links the scholarship level to the national minimum wage (1.2 times the national minimum wage). As a result, increases in the minimum wage are reflected in corresponding increases in doctoral remuneration.				
Denmark	2025	58,013.90 €	433,658 DKK	Employment based - CBR
Doctoral candidates in Denmark are employed under a collective agreement negotiated between the state and the relevant trade unions. Salary levels and employment conditions follow the framework applicable to Master's-level academics employed in the Danish state sector, including pension contributions and other collectively agreed benefits.				
Estonia	2025	21,600 €	NA	Employment based- GSR
Estonia recently transitioned from a stipend-based to an employment-based doctoral funding model. Prior to the 2023/2024 academic year, doctoral candidates typically received a stipend of less than €1,000 per month. Doctoral candidates are now generally employed as junior research fellows, with remuneration determined through a national framework and adjusted in line with developments in wage levels across the country.				

Finland	2025	25,743.6 €	NA	Employment based- CBR ▾
The reported remuneration applies to doctoral candidates employed by Finnish universities and does not cover all doctoral candidates, many of whom are funded through scholarships, grants, or project funding. Salary levels and employment conditions are determined through collective bargaining.				
France	2025	26,400 €	NA	Employment based- GSR ▾
Doctoral candidates funded through doctoral contracts are employed and receive a salary determined through a nationally regulated framework. The remuneration levels are set at the national level. The doctoral contract system does not cover all doctoral candidates in France, and alternative funding arrangements remain common.				
Germany	2025	55,556.88 €	NA	Employment based- CBR ▾
In Germany doctoral candidates are often employed on contracts below 100% FTE. As both remuneration and some employment-related benefits are linked to the contract percentage, actual income and social protection may differ from the figures reported. For comparability, this report presents full-time equivalent (100% FTE) remuneration levels.				
Greece	NA	NA	NA	NA ▾
No comprehensive national remuneration system exists. Funding arrangements are fragmented and vary between universities, disciplines, and funding sources.				
Hungary	2025	4,615.38 €	1680000 HUF	Scholarship based - GSR ▾
The reported remuneration corresponds to the state-funded doctoral scholarship established in national regulations. The scholarship forms the standard national funding framework for funded doctoral candidates and is associated with social insurance coverage, including pension entitlements.				
Ireland	2025	21,996 €	NA	Scholarship based - FSR ▾
The remuneration reported reflects the amount given in the Research Council's national doctoral stipends in 2025. While this represents the main national scheme, not all doctoral candidates are covered by it. Depending on institution, discipline, or funding source some doctoral candidates may receive different levels of remuneration or none at all.				
Italy	2025	16,243 €	NA	Scholarship based - GSR ▾
Doctoral remuneration in Italy is provided through a nationally regulated stipend, the minimum level of which is established by ministerial decree. Universities may admit up to 25% of doctoral candidates without funding. The stipend is not automatically adjusted on an annual basis and only changes when the regulations are revised.				
Latvia	2025	12,000 €	NA	Scholarship based - NA ▾
Since the 2024/25 academic year, doctoral candidates admitted to state-funded doctoral study places are generally employed under an employment contract. However, doctoral scholarships also exist under Cabinet Regulation No. 818 and range from €140-300 per month for 11 months per year, for thus not employed.				
Lithuania	2025	15,960 €	NA	Scholarship based - GSR ▾

The numbers presented here are thus of national research council scholarship levels are determined by the Government of Lithuania and are linked to the Basic Social Benefit (BSI). The scholarship is set at 19 times the BSI in the first year of study and 22 times the BSI in subsequent years. The BSI is periodically adjusted by the government of Lithuania.				
Luxembourg	2025	44,400 €	NA	Employment based - USR
Luxembourg has a single public university, the University of Luxembourg. No centrally published doctoral salary scale was identified during the preparation of this report. The reported remuneration was derived from doctoral researcher vacancies published by the university. As it is the only university in Luxembourg this is deemed a reliable reference.				
Malta	NA	NA	NA	NA
No comprehensive national remuneration system exists. Funding arrangements are fragmented and vary greatly.				
Netherlands	2025	36,708 €	NA	Employment based - CBR
PhD candidates are generally employed by the university and covered by the national collective labour agreement for Dutch universities. Salaries are linked to the dedicated PhD pay scale (P-scale), with entry-level PhD candidates placed in P0. The collective agreement applies across disciplines and institutions, although it may differ.				
Norway	2025	49,727.83 €- 51,118.32 €	536 200 NOK- 550 800 NOK	Employment based - CBR
In Norway there is legally no established minimum of PhD remuneration. Almost all doctoral candidates are covered by a collective agreement even when not a member of a labour union. Through umbrella organisations the labour unions negotiate the basic conditions at national level. For 2024-2026 there were two national collective agreements depending on affiliation. For 2026-2028 the umbrella organisations have negotiated one collective agreement.				
Poland	2025	9,622.94 €	41,602.8 PLN	Scholarship based - GSR
The reported remuneration corresponds to the national doctoral scholarship established under the Law on Higher Education and Science. The scholarship is available to doctoral candidates enrolled in doctoral schools and constitutes the standard national remuneration framework.				
Portugal	2025	15,115.68 €	NA	Scholarship based - GSR
The remuneration reported reflects the amount specified in the regulation governing the national doctoral stipends. While this represents the main national scheme, not all doctoral candidates are covered by it. Depending on institution, discipline, or funding source some doctoral candidates may receive different levels of remuneration or none at all.				
Romania	2025	8,448.88 €	44,400 RON	Scholarship based - GSR
The remuneration reported is the amount of the national doctoral stipends. While this represents the main national scheme, not all doctoral candidates are covered by it. Depending on institution, discipline, funding source, or employment status, some doctoral candidates may receive different levels of remuneration or no remuneration at all.				
Slovakia	2025	13,170 €	NA	Scholarship based - GSR
Full-time doctoral candidates are entitled by law to a doctoral scholarship for the standard duration of study. The scholarship is government regulated and linked to the national public-sector salary scale for university teachers and research staff. Minimum scholarship levels correspond to salary grade 6.				

Slovenia	2025	27,991.44 €	NA	Employment based - GSR ▾
In Slovenia the majority of doctoral candidates are employed through the Young Researchers Programme under the national public-sector salary framework. Salary levels are determined through nationally regulated salary scales established by the government and applied across public institutions. While the original legal source could not be found for the preparation of this report, it was confirmed through information published by the University of Ljubljana .				
Spain	2024	24360 €	24360 €	Scholarship based - GSR ▾
The remuneration reported is the amount of the national doctoral stipends. While this represents the main national scheme, not all doctoral candidates are covered by it. Depending on institution, discipline, funding source, or employment status, some doctoral candidates may receive different levels of remuneration or no remuneration at all.				
Sweden	2024	33,718.65€ - 35,959.45€	379,200 SEK - 404,400 SEK	Employment based - CBR ▾
Unlike several other countries included in the comparison, Sweden does not have a single national doctoral salary scale. Doctoral candidates are normally employed by their universities, but salary levels are determined through local collective agreements negotiated at the institutional level. As a result, starting salaries vary between universities. The numbers used for this report are from Stockholm University and KTH the Royal Institute of Technology.				
Switzerland	2024	49,675.18	47,040 CHF	Employment based - FSR ▾
In Switzerland doctoral candidates are often employed on contracts below 100% FTE. As both remuneration and some employment-related benefits are linked to the contract percentage, actual income and social protection may differ from the figures reported. For comparability, this report presents full-time equivalent (100% FTE) remuneration levels.				
Ukraine	2026	2,263.44 €	116,172 UAH	Scholarship based - GSR ▾
Doctoral candidates (PhD candidates) enrolled at a university may receive state scholarships regulated by national legislation [1]. Under this regulation the scholarship levels are linked to the Unified Tariff Scale (ETC). The numbers reported here refer to doctoral candidates enrolled at higher education institutions (universities). Scholarship amounts for doctoral candidates enrolled at research institutions are lower.				

8. Coverage of Council of Europe Memberstates

The **European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (Eurodoc)** aims to include all Council of Europe member states in its comparative reports whenever possible. The objective is to provide a comprehensive overview across the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area.

Despite these efforts, the present report does not include the following Council of Europe member states: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, San Marino, Serbia, Türkiye, and the United Kingdom.

On fragmented national systems

For a small number of countries, namely Cyprus, Greece and Malta, no single national doctoral remuneration system was identified that applies across universities and academic fields. In these countries, doctoral funding arrangements are highly fragmented making the identification of a single representative national remuneration level inappropriate.

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[2] Про оплату праці працівників на основі ЄТС [On the remuneration of employees based on the Unified Tariff Scale]. Available at:

<https://buhgalter.com.ua/zakonodavstvo/zarobitna-plata/pro-oplatu-pratsi-pratsivnikiv-na-osnovi-ets/>

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