



**Netherlands Institute of Governance**

# State of PhDs 2018 - 2022

Evolving standards and practices of PhD-research in  
Public Administration and Political Science in the  
Netherlands and Flanders

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## 1. Introduction

### Aim: mapping evolving standards and practices

A PhD is the highest research qualification, suggesting a researcher has proven to have mastered research knowledge and skills of the highest professional level in a field. This may sound a lot clearer than it really is in any academic discipline and even more so in the dispersive open fields of public administration and political science. It is not codified what the disciplinary standards are on which candidates are judged. Different universities and local graduate schools have divergent regulations (many of which are formal rather than substantive). PhD-theses, and academic research more broadly, change over time. And one does not have to see many theses in our fields to understand that there is substantial variation and diversity in accepted PhD-theses.

The openness to diversity in research gives freedom and autonomy to scholars developing different types of good and relevant research in public administration and political science. This is in principal very positive and something to cherish. Standards in our fields should be principally open to meaningful variations in research practices. However, the lack of overview of evolving standards and practices can at times also be problematic. PhD-candidates can be uncertain about what is expected from a PhD-thesis. Supervisors and PhD-candidates have little formal guidelines when they craft a particular research approach that fit the person and the project. And PhD-defense committees may not know how to meaningfully solve differences in their assessments of a particular thesis. In all of the cases above, it is the PhD-candidate who is most likely to suffer from consequences of intra-disciplinary dissensus and a lack of clarity of reasonable expectations.

The Netherlands Institute of Governance (NIG) cannot possibly decide what the standards are for PhD-theses in public administration and political science. This is ultimately up to the profession as-a-whole. But NIG *can* contribute to professional self-understanding, reasoned discussions, and realistic expectations by showcasing trends, common denominators, implicit standards and bandwidths in PhD theses. This is the purpose of this report. The report assesses the state of PhDs in our fields at this moment in time. It does so by drawing on three sources: a quantitative analysis of as much as possible all PhD-theses defended in 2018-2021 in our fields at the 13 NIG-partner universities (N=189), a survey distributed among PhD-candidates in 2022 (N=45) and three focus-groups with PhD-candidates (N=15). With this approach we aim to provide a comprehensive overview of diverse practices in PhD-research in public administration and political science in the Netherlands and Flanders.

Our overview allows PhD-candidates, supervisors, defense committees and the disciplines-as-a-whole to gauge evolving disciplinary practices and standards for PhD-theses within which particular PhD-projects can develop.

## 2. Analyzing PhD-theses

In order to gauge the state of PhDs we have drawn on three sources: an analysis of recently published PhD-theses, a survey and three focus-group meetings.

### 2.1 Quantitative analysis of PhD-theses

We analyzed PhD theses in public administration and political science defended between 2018 and 2021 at 1 of the 13 NIG-affiliated universities. Identifying what theses belong to this selection is neither simple nor self-evident. Drawing on web-pages of NIG-partners, university libraries, online queries, self-evaluation reports and email-contacts we developed lists of potential theses belonging to this sample. These were then checked and corrected with contact persons from the 13 universities. And these corrections were in a few cases again re-corrected by the scientific director of NIG in order to apply the inclusion criteria in a maximally consistent way. Notably, some local contact persons took a strict focus, trying to zoom in on theses logically belonging to the *discipline* of public administration. Others took a broader focus, also including theses less clearly belonging to the discipline yet defended at a public administration department. We followed this broader approach. The final selection of theses is undoubtedly marked by some errors of omission and commission. In conjunction however we believe the total set of analyzed theses gives a reliable and good overview of current PhD-research in our fields.

All in all we found 207 PhD theses defended at one of the 13 NIG-partner universities (more or less) in public administration or political science between 2018-2021. As several of these could not be accessed online, we ended up analyzing 189 PhD-theses. Below are the universities where the theses were defended.

Table 1: Alma Maters of PhD-theses

Antwerp	10	Leiden	21	Nijmegen	12	Twente	15	Wageningen	10
Delft	17	Leuven	7	Rotterdam	30	Utrecht	23		
Gent	6	Maastricht	5	Tilburg	7	VU	26		

The theses were analyzed using a coding scheme focusing on factual issues. We for instance coded the language in which the thesis is written, the number of articles or chapters in the thesis, the number of supervisors mentioned and the types of research methods used. Additionally we collected limited biographical information available in the author bios generally attached to PhD-theses. The coding scheme is available as Appendix 1; the list of theses as Appendix 4 (in the online version)

### 2.2 Survey of PhD-candidates

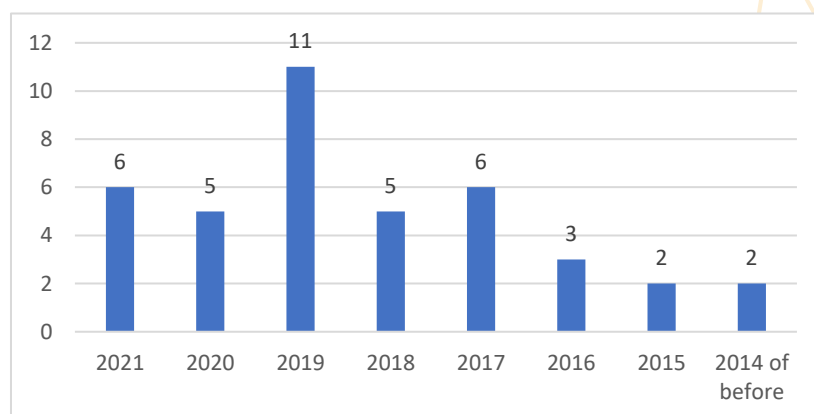
In September 2022 a survey was distributed focusing on ongoing PhD-candidates in public administration and political science in the Netherlands and Flanders. The survey was distributed among those PhD-candidates who were enrolled in the NIG-program. Additionally, the invite was also sent to participants in the focus groups held early 2022. The survey was sent out via Qualtrics to

109 PhD-candidates. After two reminders the total N of completed responses was 45; equaling a response rate of 41%. The survey focused on active PhD-candidates, on the candidates writing the theses that will be defended in the next years, thus adding to the analysis of published theses.

The survey revisited as much as possible the same subjects as were used for analyzing published theses. We thus asked candidates about the language in which they write, intended number of articles or chapters, the number of supervisors, and the types of research methods used. Additionally the survey allowed us to add some questions on supervision, on who takes crucial decisions in the PhD-process, the candidates' knowledge of evaluation criteria and a few general items on excitement and stress in their work. Some of the items were derived from the survey sent out by the NIG PhD-council in 2015 (Overman 2015), allowing us to compare some of the responses over time, notably regarding co-authorships. The survey is available as Appendix 2.

Responses to the survey came from PhD-candidates who had started in different years. For some reason, there was a high response by PhD-candidates who started in 2019, as the figure below shows.

**Figure 1: year of start PhD survey-respondents**



Of these respondents, about a third had a 100% research job (N=17). A somewhat larger group of respondents had some additional teaching responsibilities (N=20) while a few (N=2) were working on their PhD on the side of a primary teaching position. A

small number of external PhD-candidates (N=5) filled out the survey.

The results from the survey must be read with care. Our approach does not make this sample of respondents representative of the field in the same way as the analysis of theses can claim to be. The inclusion of NIG-PhD-candidates only is obviously selective. It is also easy to imagine that there can be various types of differences between the 41% of PhD-candidates responding to the survey from the 59% who did not. One highly probable implication of our selection is that very few external PhD-candidates have responded to the survey while they represent a sizable minority within the total set of ongoing PhD-projects, judging from the completed theses in 2018-2021.

### 2.3 Focus-groups with PhD-candidates

On 26 and 29 of January 2022 three focus groups were held with 15 PhD-candidates in total. Potential participants were PhD-candidates who are or were enrolled in NIG's program. PhD-

candidates in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year of their PhD, and former PhD-candidates in the first two years after completing their PhD, were invited to participate in the focus groups.

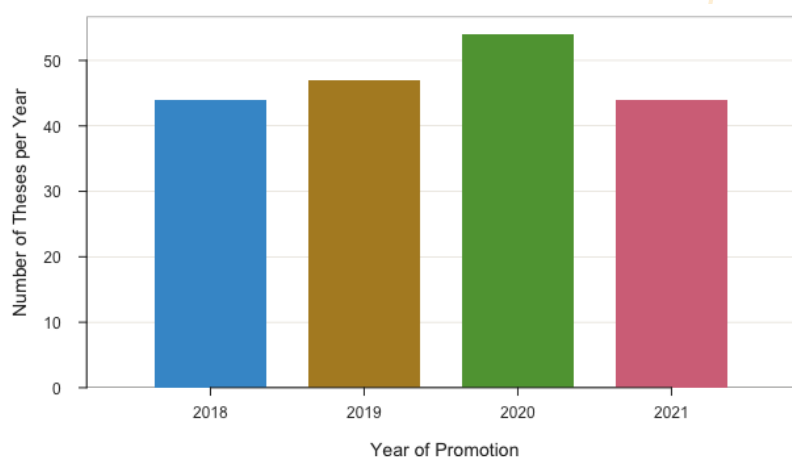
The focus groups were organized, moderated, summarized and reported by one of the managing directors of NIG and a research assistant. It was important to create a safe setting, protective of the identity of participants and excluding the presence of supervisors of participants.

The focus groups were open discussions on doing a PhD in our fields, triggered by a set of statements (see Appendix 3). The discussions focused on the process of doing a PhD, about questions of supervision and well-being and also about career development. The ‘recognition and rewards’ program featured prominently in the focus groups, notably regarding its implications for PhD-candidates. Summaries of main issues in the focus group meetings were shared with participants and are used in this report.

### 3. State-of-PhDs at a glance

Our analysis of as much possible all defended PhD-theses suggests there was almost exactly one PhD-defense each week (excluding school holidays) in public administration and political science in 1 of the 13 universities in the Netherlands and Flanders affiliated to NIG between 2018 and 2021 there. Figure 2 below provides an overview of the number of theses each year that we have analyzed.

Figure 2: number of yearly PhD-theses



At least 6 of these theses were merited as cum laude. The total number is probably a little bit higher. This is not information that is easily available and it is not available in the theses as such.

Of those 189 theses, 83 acknowledged that a research grant had been received that allowed the study to be

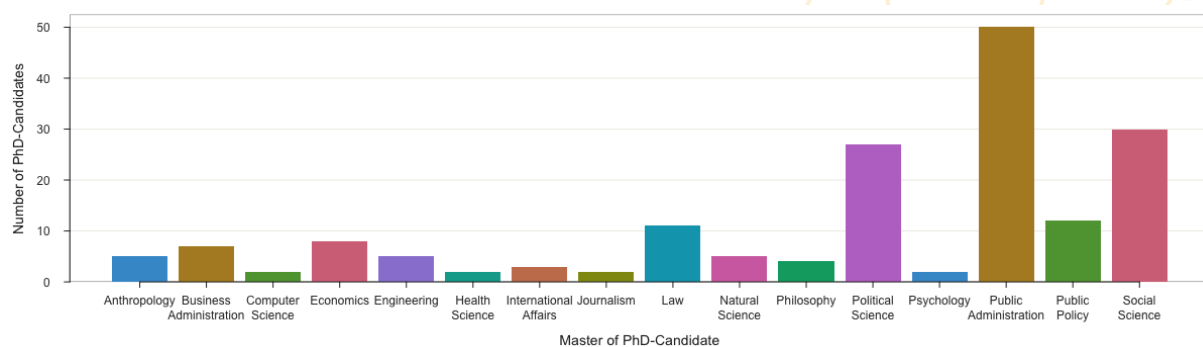
conducted. The importance of research grants for PhD-research has grown over the years. This implies that substantive choices for PhD-research are influenced by the funding procedures and decisions made by funding bodies (notably NWO and FWO).

Most of the PhD-candidates mention in their author bio’s that they were internal PhD-candidates (69%). A sizable majority of 43 (31%) can be characterized as external PhD-candidates. Of those PhD-

candidates mentioning their country of birth, 94 were born in the Netherlands, only 2 were born in Belgium, while 59 were born in other countries. One explanation is that some partner universities have programs for international PhD-candidates. In every case, doing a PhD in our fields in the Netherlands and Flanders is not only for people who have been born in the Netherlands and Flanders.

PhD-candidates in public administration or political science do not necessarily come from master programs in these fields. A sizable minority of PhD-candidates start off as ‘disciplinary insiders’, meaning they have completed master programs in public administration (26%), political science (14%), policy sciences (6%) or international affairs (1,5%). Additionally, a majority of candidates are ‘outsiders’ to the discipline in which they pursue their PhD. We base this on the author bios most PhD-candidates add to their dissertations. They come in with a great variety of master backgrounds. This diversity of backgrounds is meaningful for PhD-education.

**Figure 3: master programs PhD-candidates**



## 4. Supervision and autonomy

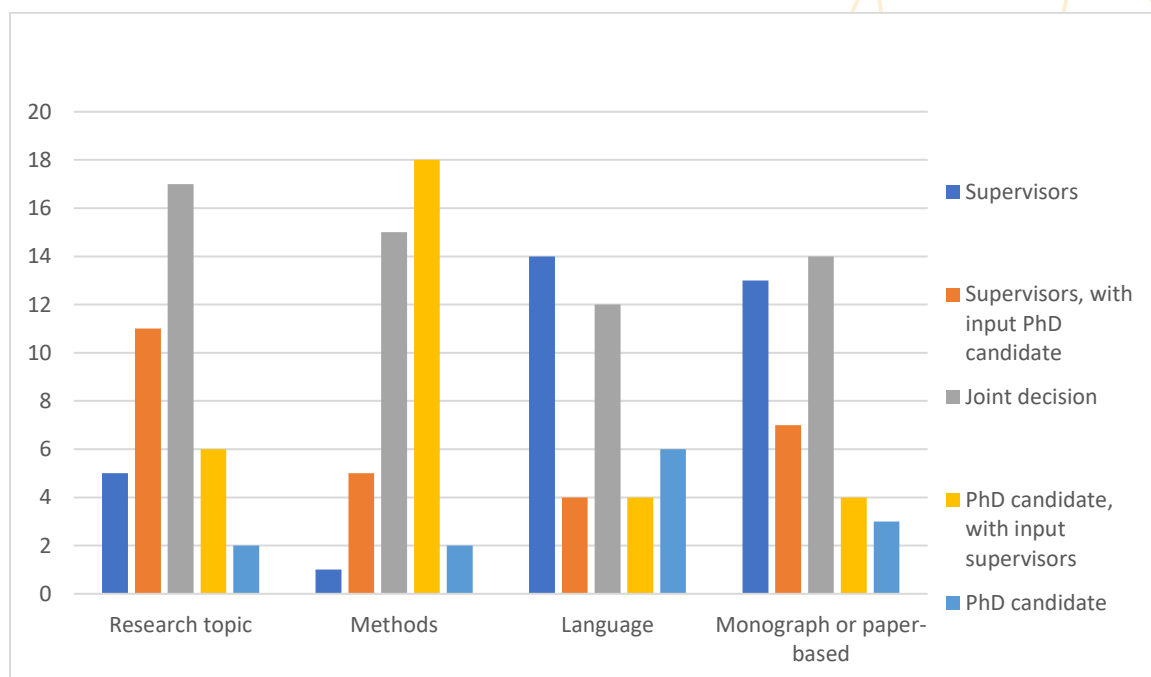
At the heart of a PhD-project lies a potentially highly (and mutually) rewarding , yet at times also strenuous and complex, relationship between one or more supervisors and a PhD-candidate. How are candidates in our fields supervised and where and when are candidates in the lead regarding important choices?

For the theses defended in 2018-2021, the default option for supervisory teams is a set of 2 supervisors (74%). At times there may also be 3 supervisors (27%) or potentially 4 (2%) or 1 (7%). A fairly similar pattern evolves from the survey distributed in 2022. Of the respondents 53% reported they had 2 supervisors, 28% had 3 supervisors while three respondents, while in very rare occasions there were 4 supervisors or just 1.

In writing a PhD, several fundamental choices need to be made. A specific subject needs to be selected. An adequate (combination of) research method(s) need to be chosen. The thesis needs to be written in a specific language. And a format needs to be adopted; will it be an ‘old-fashioned’ monograph or will it be a paper-based thesis?

In the survey we asked respondents whether these choices were made authoritatively by their supervisors, autonomously by themselves or in some form by supervisors and candidates together. The figure below visualizes how such foundational choices are taken in the perceptions of our not fully representative set of respondents. The results suggest that in most cases such decisions are joint decisions or at least decisions in which both parties to the collaboration contribute. The language (with a heavy preference for English) and the format (with a clear preference for paper-based theses) are the areas where supervisors are perceived to be most dominant. The methods used is apparently the area where respondents experience most autonomy to craft crucial decisions.

Figure 4: taking crucial decisions



The balance between the supervisor and PhD-candidate, and the balancing act required to make their collaboration work, was an important subject of the focus groups. Important conclusions were:

- Participants in the focus groups generally appreciated the autonomy and freedom they experience(d) as PhD-candidates. This may sometimes make it hard to find a proper work-life balance but it is also experienced as valuable and unique.
- Communication is seen as crucial. Participants indicate that PhD-candidates should be assertive in stating what *they* want and value in their work while, conversely, at times supervisors can limit or support on demand.



- Expectations in relation to supervisors vary. Some candidates indicate that it is important that supervisor mark some clear boundaries and underline what are priorities for now and what parts of the academic work can wait for later. Others expect more freedom to take their own decisions, certainly in an academic context where ideas and practices are changing.

#### *Recognition & rewards & PhD-candidates*

- During the focus groups it was noted that the 'recognition and rewards' program is developing in ways that seems promising to most participants. The implications for PhD-candidates, however, are not clear (at all). The focus for PhD-candidates is still really on doing research, only.
- Teaching is also the subject of attention in the supervisory relationship. Participants however indicate it is often treated instrumentally, as something which is necessary for future applications for positions as assistant professor. They also experience that it is often up to the candidates to indicate that they find it important to teach. At times they feel it is discouraged by their supervisors (in part nicely so, as it limits work pressures).
- Other dimensions (than teaching and research) of the recognition & rewards program are framed by supervisors as 'nice extras' for PhD-candidates. It is lauded but there is no time available for it and candidates may be told it is risky for their academic careers. Conversely, however, such extras may be of high relevance to future career options outside of academia.

## 5. Crafting a PhD thesis: design choices

A PhD-project can be modeled as a set of design choices. A language needs to be selected to write in. A format for the thesis needs to be set. Authors need to be selected for papers or, for monographs the information and data need to be channeled in a set of chapters. The diversity of choices made in completed PhD theses indicates evolving standards and practices for PhD theses in our fields. Drawing mostly on the analyses of theses and the survey, each of these design choices are discussed in turn.

### 5.1 English or Dutch?

The language of choice for PhD theses in public administration and political science has switched from Dutch to English over the past decades. A nice illustration of this are the winners of the VB Van Poelje prize. In the years before 2000, all winners of that prize wrote Dutch dissertations bar for one exception (Paul 't Hart). In the first decade of this millennium, the balance shifted much more to English, with 8 English-writing (co-)winners alongside 4 Dutch-writing (co-)winners. Since 2010, all winning theses have been written in English.

If one looks at the broader set of published theses in the past years, we find that in 2018-2021, 170 theses were written in English while only 19 were written in Dutch. Of these, many were written by external PhD-candidates. Among the respondents to the survey, more than three quarters indicated they would be writing in English, only 8% would write in Dutch while the last few respondents had not decided yet. Thus, clearly, English seems to have become the standard choice for PhD-theses, notably for internal PhD-candidates, although there is still room for Dutch theses.

## 5.2 What methods to use?

Public administration and political science are multi-methodological fields. The appetite for different research methods can also be seen in PhD theses. PhD-candidates do not only use a wide variety of methods but most of them actually deploy more than one of those. Three quarters of PhD theses can be characterized as multi-methodological theses drawing on more than one method. In the set of 189 theses, the following methods are used:

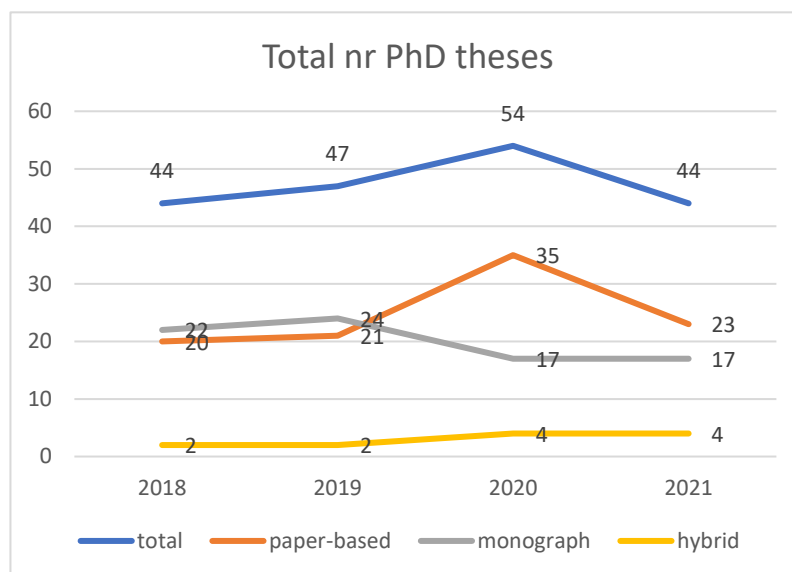
- Literature review: 26
- Secondary analyses existing data: 43
- Quantitative text analyses: 13
- Qualitative text analyses: 71
- Observations: 41
- Interviews: 106
- Focus groups: 23
- Survey(s): 41
- Experiment: 19

## 5.3 A monograph or papers?

A third design choice regards the format. Will it be an 'old-fashioned' monograph or a dissertation based on papers?

Somewhat contrary to our expectations, we found that the monograph is still a format that is quite widely used (again much more so by external candidates than by internal candidates). Nevertheless, also internal PhD-candidates still write and defend monographs or potentially hybrid theses combining separate articles with chapters. The figure below provides an overview.

Figure 5: format of theses 2018-2021



The figure might indicate a relative decline in numbers of monographs over time, but it would be hard to draw such a conclusion based on only four years (including the disruptive global pandemic). The survey distributed in 2022 adds some further fuel to the potential decline in numbers of monographs, although we hardly surveyed external PhD-candidates who are more likely to write monographs. Of our

respondents, 33 indicated they were writing a paper-based thesis (67%), 10 indicated they were writing a monograph (20%, including the external PhD-candidates) while 3 respondents (6%) had not decided yet.

#### 5.4 How many chapters in a monograph?

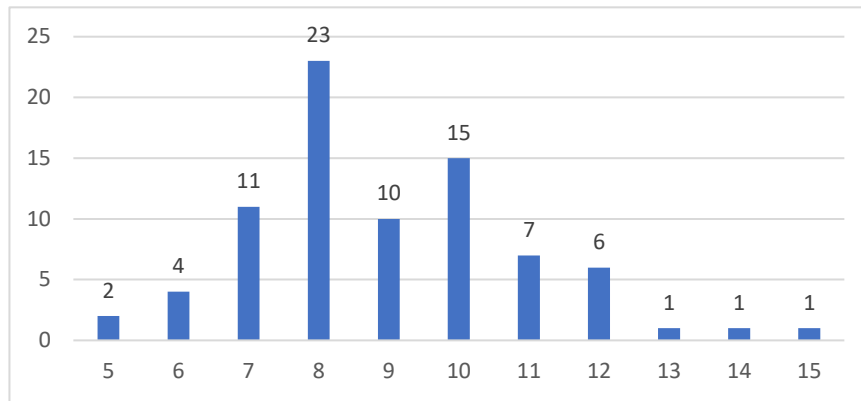
How much work is 'enough' or 'appropriate' or 'advisable' for a PhD-project? It is a simple question to which no simple answer is available. If one were to look for an answer it would make sense to compare completed theses. And then there are clear differences between monographs and paper-based theses.

Starting with monographs: they are really hard to compare sizewise. One way would be to count words. We then find an incredible diversity in accepted theses, with the shortest being 11.368 words, the largest carrying 228.783 words and the average thesis running 106.247 words. Counting words is a poor measure for comparisons, as different research methods will affect how many words are needed, even how important words are, to make sense of the research. A study using observations or qualitatively analyzing documents may need many more words to report results than a survey study or experiment.

It may make a little more (yet still not a great deal of) sense to compare chapters. How many chapters go in a monograph? As each chapter normally relates one major theoretical, methodological or analytical step, the number of chapters provide a somewhat relevant indicator of the bandwidth within which monographs are written.

Looking at the theses completed in 2018-2021, as well as the survey-responses, we find a logical range from 6 to 12 chapters (in addition to the introduction and conclusion), with some further upward and downward variations. For what it is worth, the average number of chapters in completed monographs is 8,9 while developing monographs surveyed aspire to an average of 9,2.

**Figure 6: numbers of chapters in monographs**



The distinction between a monograph and a paper-based thesis is not absolute. Several theses are best characterized as hybrids, combining some articles with ‘regular’ chapters. Also, a monograph is possibly the basis for subsequent

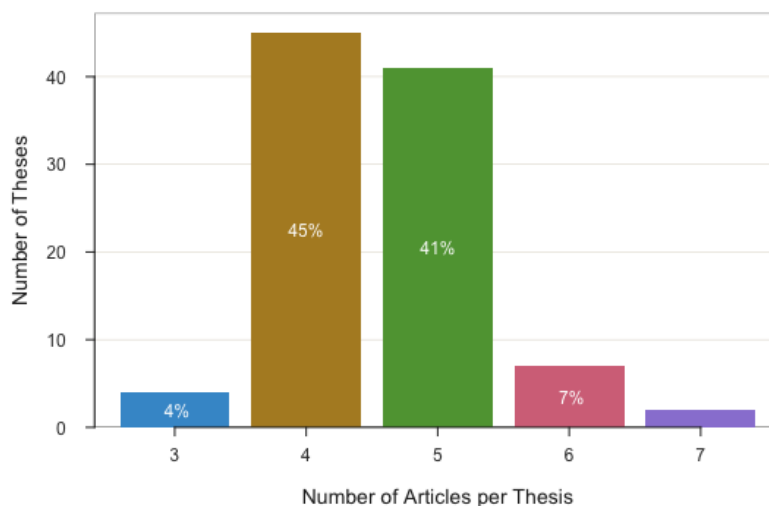
journal articles. 6 out of 10 surveyed monograph-writing PhD-candidates have planned to write at least one articles based on their thesis, while 2 may and 2 report they will not do so.

### 5.5 How many articles in a paper-based thesis?

While the number of chapters in a monograph is quite varied, and also not particularly consequential (chapters can easily be merged or separated in the editing processes), the number of articles included in a thesis is much more consequential and shows much less variation.

The range of journal articles included in theses runs from 3 to 7, with ‘4 or 5’ being the most frequently evolving choice. The average number of articles in a thesis is neatly 4,5. The figure below visualizes this.

**Figure 7: number of articles in theses**



The ongoing PhD-candidates think along the same lines. According to our survey, they are planning to write 3 (1 respondent), 4 (23 respondents), 5 (6 respondents) or 6 (1 respondent) articles.

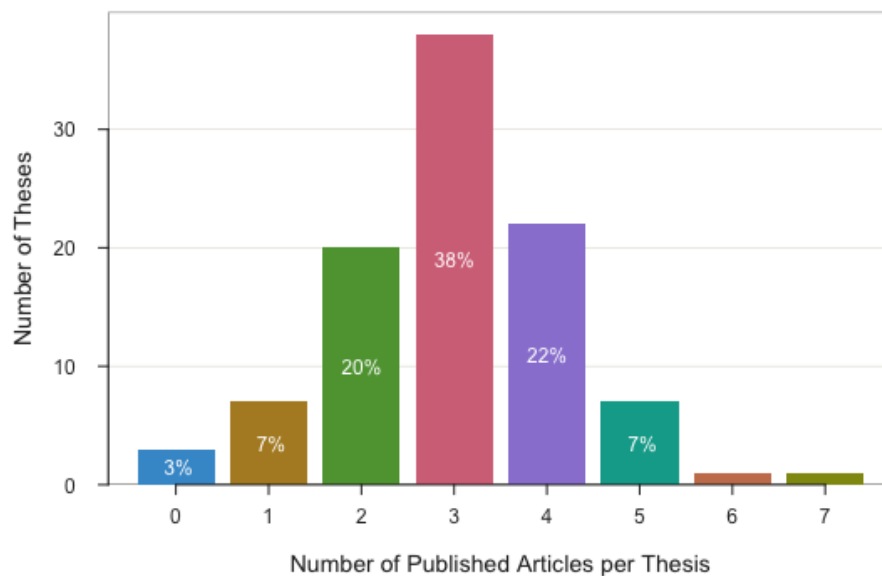
While there seems little dissensus in the field about what can be expected in terms of numbers of articles, there is

much more variance in practices regarding publication status and co-authorships.

## 5.6 Should papers be published?

The variation on this question is really large. For some theses none of the papers included are published when the thesis is defended while in a quite rare case all 7 papers in a thesis were published at the time the thesis was printed. The table below visualizes the variety.

Figure 8: publication status of articles



The variation in practices aligns with expectations PhD-candidates have of what is required, as expressed in our survey. 4 out of 36 respondents in our survey indicate that they believed all of their articles need to be published before their promotion. 16

out of 36 indicated that some articles need to be published before their promotion; more exactly 1 (1 respondent), 2 (10 respondents), 2 to 3 (1 respondent) or 3 (2 respondents). 5 out of 36 respondents indicated that they thought their papers do not need to be published at all before the promotion. Interestingly, 11 out of 36 indicated they did not know what was expected in terms of publication status. This means that almost 30% of the PhD-candidates responding to our survey who write a paper-based thesis do not know what the publication-expectations are they have to meet. Even taking into account that some respondents had just started on their PhDs this seems to be a high number, certainly when we take into account that it matters a great deal in terms of time and work whether or not an articles has been submitted to a journal and managed to navigate the peer-review process.

The subject aligns with one of the key themes in our focus groups: publication pressure. Many participants expressed they were affected by publication pressure. Some of the pressure comes from supervisors exerting pressure to publish in high-quality journals. But participants also indicated there was a lot of peer-pressure, via twitter, linkedin and list of publications added to email-signatures.

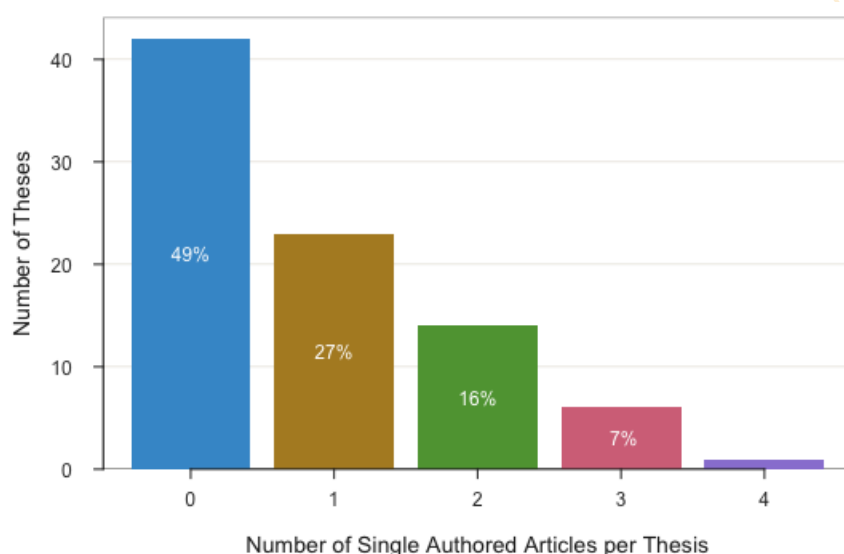
## 5.7 Who is authoring articles?

A PhD is diploma for an individual yet, when the basis for the diploma are articles suggestive of team-work through multiple authorships, this raises questions that at least the field of public administration has not answered satisfactorily yet. There are diverging practices relating to single-authorship, co-authoring, and author-order where practices vary considerably and expectations by seniors differ strongly. This is a potential source of tension and stress for PhD-candidates.

First of all, while some seniors believe the contents of PhD-theses should be exclusively single-authored, evolving practice is quite different. Also, there is this belief that at least some single-authored articles would be required. However, this is also not in line with evolving practices.

As the figure below shows, drawing on the paper-based theses in our sample (2018-21), a paper-based thesis is almost equally likely to consist of no single-authored articles or to have 1 or more. The average number of single-authored articles in theses is below 1 (0,84). The range varies from 0 to 4, although the upper bound is really rare.

Figure 9: number of single-authored articles



A positive way to understand this development would be to frame it as a form of 'team work'. It might also simply be a different way of thinking about authorships by broadening it from 'authoring' to 'having a meaningful impact on a research project'. The increased reliance on external funding for

projects, implying that supervisors will have more intellectual clout in a PhD-project than is customary in candidate-initiated projects, could be another interpretation. However, it could also be indicative of publication pressures experienced by candidate and/or supervisors and supervisors enforcing their interest on those of the candidate. Which of these interpretations is plausible is impossible for us to say.

In most cases, the coauthor of the PhD-candidate are the supervisors. In all paper-based theses (2018-21) promotors coauthored at least 1 paper. On average promotors coauthor 3,2 papers, which is quite a lot, given that the average number of papers in these theses is 4,5. It leaves a little more than 1 paper to each thesis for which the supervisor is not the coauthor. This is underscored by the survey in 2022. Respondents indicate that supervisors will coauthor all (17%), most (43%), 1 or 2 (30%) or none (7%) of the articles in the thesis.

Apparently the evolving norm is that promotors more often than not coauthor papers.

A further point of discussion revolves around the order of authors; more importantly about whether the PhD-candidate should be the first author of papers in the PhD. This is most often the case yet not always. On average, for the paper-based theses in the past years, the PhD-candidate is the first

author of 3,3 papers. Given that the average number of papers in a thesis is 4,5, approximately a quarter of all papers in PhD-theses have others than the PhD-candidate as the first author. The range for first-authorships is 0 to 6.

We should be a bit careful to interpret this; in some of the cases being the first author does not imply one has done the heavy lifting but, simply, that one comes up first alphabetically. We have tried to control for this via the co-author statements provided in PhD-theses. This was not possible for approximately a quarter of all paper-based theses, where we could not find such information. When papers have more than one author, and when the PhD is awarded to the individual PhD-candidate, a coauthor statement explaining contributions of all coauthors seems imperative.

## 5.8 What do promotors contribute to coauthored papers?

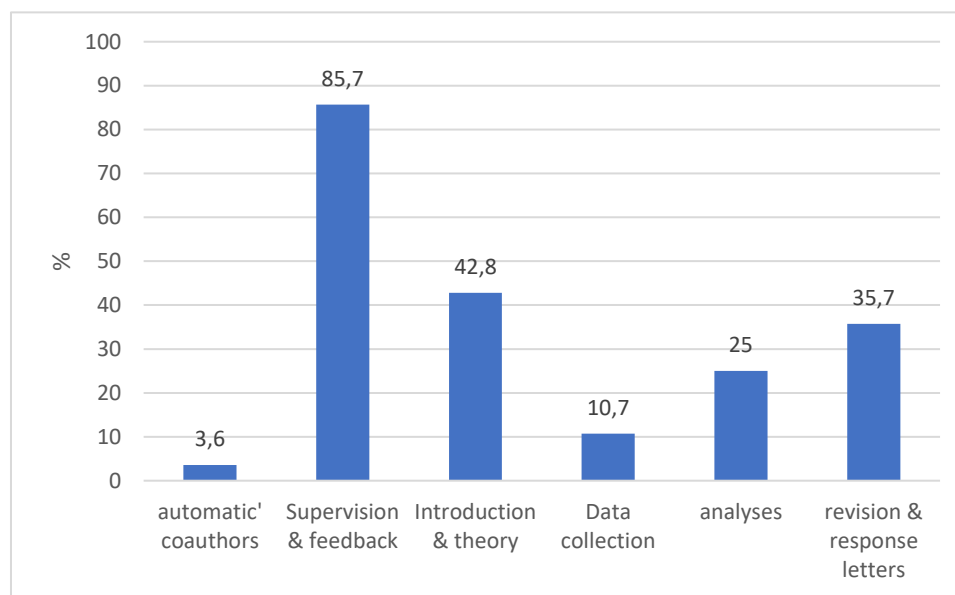
Coauthoring supervisors are still relatively new in our fields and it seems there are no fully crystallized professional norms and routines for this. While in some academic disciplines a publication will automatically have a very large number of formal authors (most of whom are not in a literal sense authors and have done no typing), and in other fields a publication will be exclusively authored by the PhD-candidate, our fields are much more hybrid.

In the survey we were able to ask what it was that coauthoring supervisors contribute to publications. What is it they 'do' as coauthors? We envisioned several responses were possible, drawing on the earlier survey distributed by the PhD-council of NIG (Overman, 2015).

- Supervisors can be 'automatic' coauthors, whose names are on the publication, irrespective of whether they provide a specific contribution to the specific publication
- Supervisors can contribute to a publication with general supervision and feedback
- Supervisors can contribute to a publication by writing parts of the introduction and theoretical section
- Supervisors can contribute to a publication by participating in data collection
- Supervisors can contribute to a publication by conducting or writing up parts of analyses
- Supervisors can contribute to a publication as they frame and write parts of revisions and response letters

These options were suggested to the PhD-candidates responding to our survey in 2022 who mentioned their supervisors were also coauthor. Note that our sample of respondents is not representative of the entire field and the N for these items is modest.

**Figure 10: Contributions of coauthoring supervisors**



The figure suggests that in most cases, yet not in all (which seems a bit surprising), the contribution of supervisors is perceived to consist of general supervision and feedback.

Only one respondent indicated that the supervisor was an automatic coauthor.

The most typical more hands-on contributions to the publications specifically are either in the start of the publication, by framing the introduction and the theoretical angling, or in the end, in helping maneuver the peer-review process. On the other hand, data-collection is, if anything, almost (yet not fully) exclusively the task of the PhD-candidate.

Deciding who is an author and how to go about this can be tricky. It is possibly an area where the interests of the supervisor and PhD-candidate may clash and, given dependencies and power-differences, even sensed conflicts may be hard to address. Whatever the outcome is, it seems important to talk openly about expectations and practices of authorships. This does apparently not always happen.

In the survey we asked participants indicating their supervisors coauthored articles whether and how they had discussed the issue of authorships with their supervisors.

In almost half of the cases (14/29) the rules-of-conduct for coauthoring supervisors were perceived to have been discussed in an open discussion with the candidate.

In a limited number of cases (3/29) the supervisors explained their coauthoring policy to the candidate, with no real input from the candidate.

In some cases it “may have been mentioned, but was never clearly discussed” (6/29).

And in some cases it was never discussed at all, in the perception of the candidate (4/29).

Open answer responses to the survey suggest some tension about the publication interests of the PhD-candidate and of those of the supervisors. One candidate explains (s)he indicated along the way that (s)he wanted to have one single-authored publication. “After some discussion” a particular study was chosen for this purpose. And a second candidate explains it was a subject of an open



conversation with supervisors while (s)he simultaneously sensed: “they would like to be on most of the papers”.

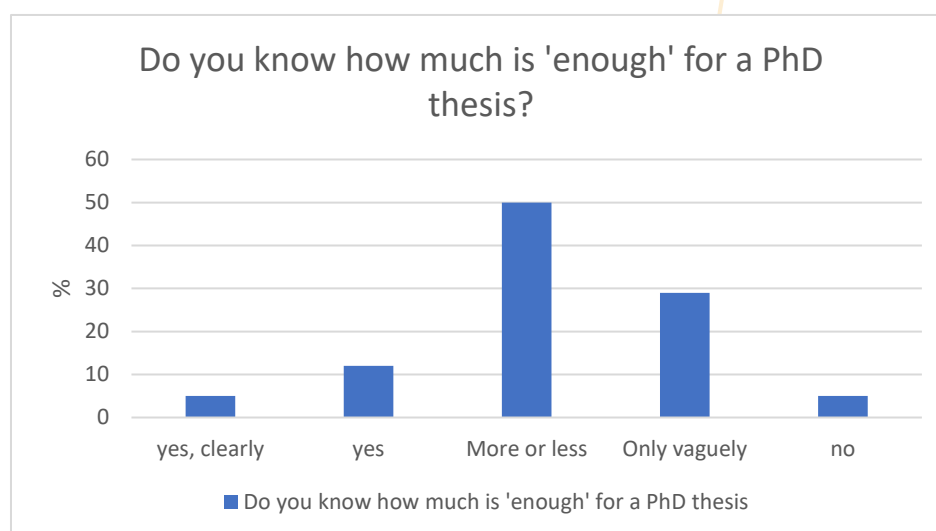
## 6. Evaluation criteria

PhD-candidates work for four years (or more) in the ‘shadow of evaluation’. They know that at some point in the future a committee, consisting of currently unknown professors, will ultimately assess and evaluate their research work. To what extent do PhD-candidates feel they know how they will be evaluated? And, if at all, on what aspects do they experience that the criteria for evaluation are not (sufficiently) clear?

These questions cannot be answered drawing on the analyses of completed theses; we focus on the survey and the focus groups.

A first question revolves around the amount of (empirical) work expected for a PhD-thesis. A PhD thesis must be of sufficient quality but it must also quantitatively be ‘enough’ research work. Most people will understand that one very small, however brilliantly executed, study in almost all conceivable cases would not suffice for a PhD. But how much work is ‘enough’ to qualify for a PhD? This is a question which is hard to address. Most PhD-candidates surveyed indicate they know ‘more or less’ what is expected of them. It remains an elusive concept to understand how much work is needed however.

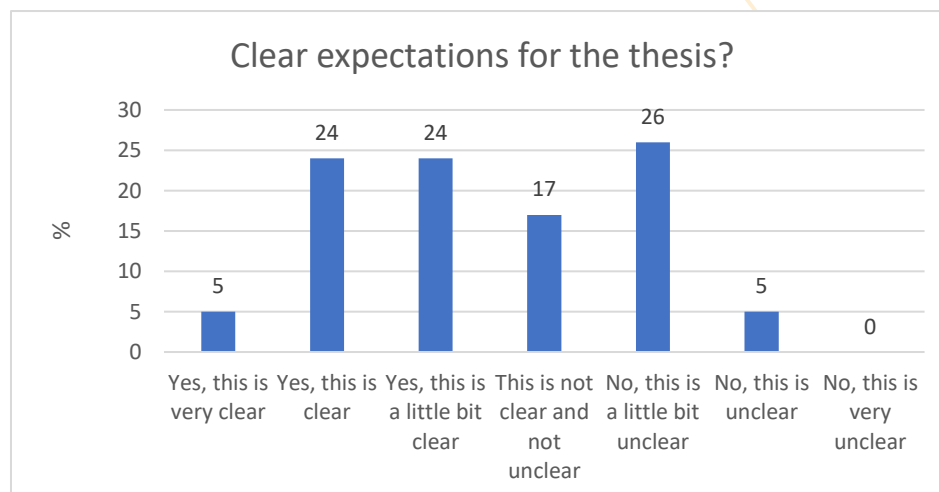
Figure 11: expectation regarding the amount of work required



PhD-candidates, thus, seem to have only a rather general (perhaps even vague) sense of what is expected of them in terms of amount of work, judging from our survey results. The same goes more or less for the evaluation of the thesis by supervisors and the committee. Do PhD-candidates feel it is clear what is expected of a PhD thesis?

The figure below suggests that for a little more than half of the PhD-candidates it is at least a little bit clear for them what is expected of their theses. Taking into account that we mostly surveyed those PhD-candidates enrolled in the NIG-program – a not fully representative sample – it is conceivable that the clarity of expectations is even more limited for the broader group of PhD-candidates in our fields.

Figure 12: clarity of expectations thesis



Open responses to the survey suggest the sources of unclarity vary. Some respondents (4) indicate that it is very unclear to them what amount of empirical work is needed. Some respondents (3)

indicate that it is very unclear to them how many articles are expected. Some respondents (2) indicate that it is very unclear to them what the publication status of articles for their thesis are. Some respondents (2) indicate that it is very unclear to them what expectations regarding co-authorships are. One respondent indicates that there is a “wide range in quality and quantity of empirical work in published dissertations”. One respondent indicates, quite rightly in our view, that for monographs the expectations are not very clear. And one respondent states quite simply: “I just started with my PhD”.

All in all, the expectations for theses are not very clear, so it seems. This is corroborated further during the focus groups. One of its conclusions was that it is often unclear for PhD-candidates what is expected of them. They perceive that expectations are based on publishing mainly. That is also what supervisors expect from them. But simultaneously there is the recognition and rewards program and to some of them it seems as if everyone can do “everything” and there is pressure to be good at everything; which is a source of work pressure.

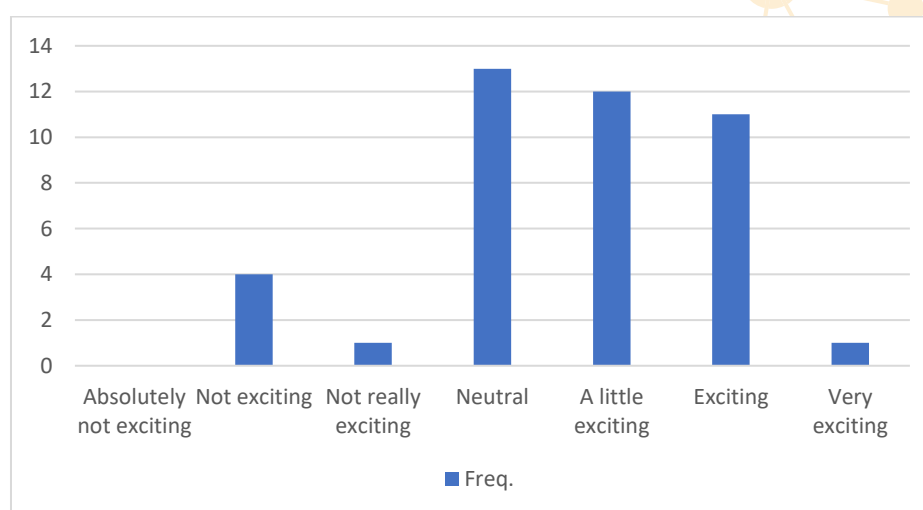
We analyzed the data in the survey to see whether some of the ‘design choices’ for PhD-projects were related to the perceived clarity of evaluative criteria. We have been hesitant to analyze relations, given the small sample size and the nature of the survey, and we should be careful in interpreting results. Having said that, it seemed one of the variables was related to clarity of expectations. There was a significant positive relationship with whether supervisors and PhD-candidates discussed co-authorships openly. We interpret this to probably indicate that a supervision style in which major choices are discussed openly make PhD-candidates more confident that they understand what is expected of their research.

## 7. Well-being, excitement and stress

Are PhD-candidates in public administration and political science in the Netherlands and Flanders excited about their research? And do they experience a lot of stress in relation to their work? One could imagine it can be both. On the one hand, researchers are relatively autonomous in doing their work which is generally a source of potential well-being and excitement. On the other hand, there are many signals of stress in relation to academia in general and PhD-candidates more specifically. For instance, the Dutch network for PhD-candidates PNN issued a shrill warning about high pressures, workloads and burn out among PhD-candidates in August 2020.

In the not fully representative survey we asked participants whether they were in general excited about their work and, additionally, whether they experienced stress. For the 45 PhD-candidates in the survey it seemed that most were at least a little bit excited about their PhD-work with many also preferring the neutral response option. One could say this is overall encouraging, although the high number of neutral responses is not what could be hoped for.

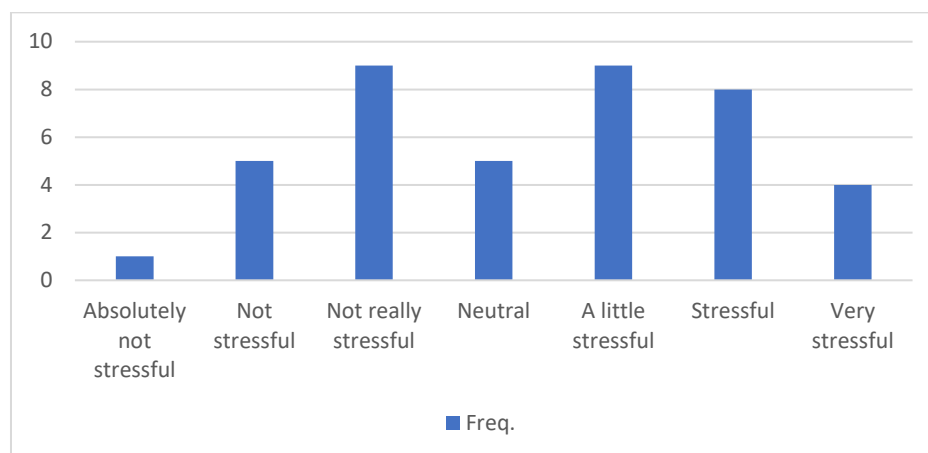
**Figure 13: excitement and PhD-research**



Turning to experiencing stress, we see a slightly different picture. Respondents mostly either do or do not indicate they find their work in general stressful. There are slightly more respondents indicating they experience at least a little bit stress than respondents indicating they do (not really) do so. Some of the respondents indicate they find their work very stressful, a response option one would hope would attract no respondents.

Stress and excitement are negatively correlated in the survey. All in all, more respondents indicate excitement than stress, however, the experience of stress in itself seems to be more intense than the experience of excitement.

Figure 14: stress and PhD-research



Excitement and stress were related to some variables in the survey. We should be careful to interpret this; we use it as *weak signals* of relations, not as proof of relations.

Excitement was related to two factors. First of all, excitement was negatively related to the indicated starting year of a PhD-project. This might suggest that excitement can wear off. This might be an effect of the composition of the sample. Some of the respondents had started their PhD in 2014 or before, suggesting they had worked on it for 8 or more years, possibly with delays. This might explain why excitement lowers over time. Additionally, as stress and excitement were to some extent communicating vessels in the survey, some of the 'older' candidates were probably nearing finalization and stress may have been taking the upper hand on excitement in the finalization process. However it is, there were some indications of excitement wearing off over time.

Secondly, excitement was positively related to PhD-candidates experiencing more autonomy regarding the choice for research methods. This would be in line with general HRM-insights about the importance of autonomy and control for employee well-being. It may further signify that methodological choices are crucial not only for how research questions are answered but also for the person-research-job-fit of PhD-research.

Stress on the other hand was related to whether PhD-candidates in general felt there were clear standards on which they were evaluated. In general, those respondents indicating they perceived such standards to be less clear were also more stressed.

To repeat, given sample size and composition we should be careful in interpreting these findings. What they do suggest is that clarity of standards and sufficient autonomy in selecting research methods are probably important for the well-being of PhD-candidates.

## Focus groups

The issue of well-being featured prominently in the focus-groups. Several noteworthy points were made.

- Participants generally indicated that it is not easy to find a healthy work-life balance as a PhD-candidate, but that it *is* nevertheless possible. Parts of why it can be hard to find such balance are examples such as articles in which science is compared to top sport, grant systems pushing for survival of the fittest and a culture in working overtime is apparently normal.
- Participants also suggested the work itself may make it hard to find a healthy work-life balance. For PhD-candidates there are little tangible outcomes on most working days. The work itself is often not very concrete and working hours are not set. The work is also never finished, can always be improved, there is always an even better argument to be found. The work only stops when you stop yourself. It is hard to say whether a regular day at the office is productive or not. One can feel guilty for not working in the evening or during the weekend.
- The recognition and rewards program, although in general greatly appreciated by the PhD-candidates participating in the focus groups, was not perceived to make it easier to find a functioning work-life balance. It has raised and broadened the expectations for scholars which is perceived by some to make work (even more) ambiguous. Focusing on research only makes it easier to protect your balance, adding teaching already makes it more difficult but when impact, leadership and professional performance are added to the (possible) expectations, it becomes hard to find a functional balance.
- Participants agree that PhD-candidates should protect their limits. But universities in general and supervisors in particular should support and facilitate them in doing so. They can ask more frequently and specifically about work pressures and create space and perspective when work is piling up. Supervisors can also give the right example by not exerting too much pressure, asking about weekends, and also focusing on other things in life than work.

## 8. Working life after a PhD

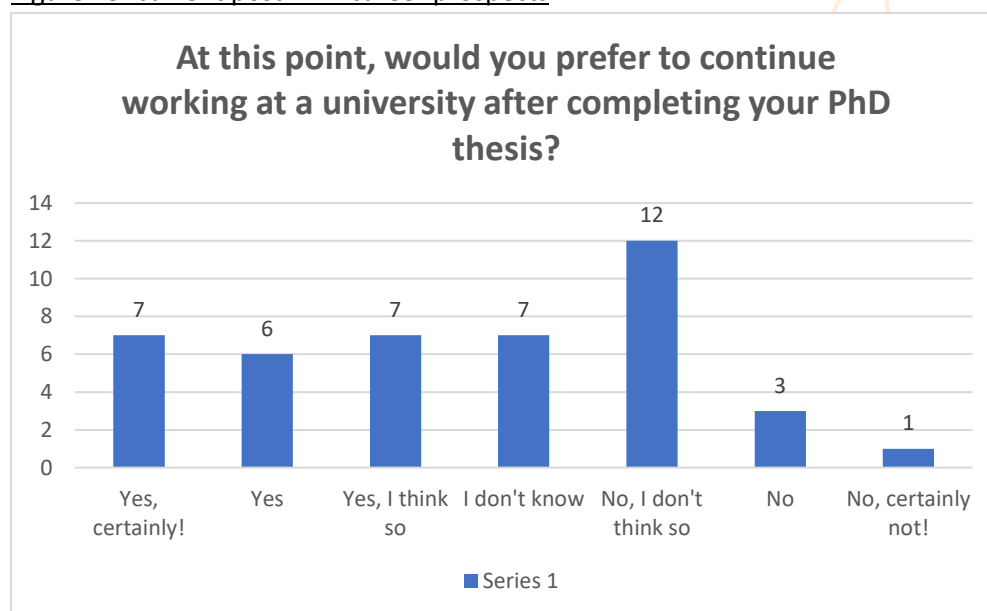
While working on their thesis, PhD-candidates are almost exclusively focused on the academic world. Over time, however, not all of them will (want to) continue in academia. How do careers develop after a PhD in our fields? And how are PhD-candidates prepared for working life after a PhD?

For the theses defended in 2018-2021, we coded whether participants initially continued working in academia or whether they had jobs in the private or in the public sector. This information was not available for all candidates. Of those for whom it was available, slightly more than half of the candidates (97 in total) completing their PhD in 2018-2021 were (at least initially) working inside academia. Others were working in the public sector (39) or in the private sector (32). This suggests that some 40% continue their careers outside of academia. The number is, however, inflated, as

external PhD-candidates are also part of the sample, many of whom were not employed at universities to begin with. Nevertheless, still a sizable minority of internal PhD-candidates face non-academic future careers.

In the survey, we asked respondents whether, at this point, they preferred to continue working at a university after completing their PhD. A slight majority indicated this was their preference, a slight minority did not think so while several respondents did not know. The figure below visualizes the responses. The figure can be interpreted to indicate some slight, nagging doubts. Few of the PhD-candidates are certain they do not want to continue working at universities but many are uncertain or have doubts. The career prospect was negatively related to the starting date of PhDs. As before this makes sense as some of our respondents had started their PhD at least 8 years before the survey, suggesting their PhD-trajectories were, for whatever reasons, non-standard.

Figure 15: current post-PhD-career prospects



### Focus groups

During the focus groups the question of whether PhD-candidates are properly prepared for post-PhD positions was an important subject of conversation. At least five relevant points were discussed.

1. Participants indicated that PhD-candidates are not explicitly prepared for their careers after completing the PhD. More support and more frequent conversations about this would be appreciated.
2. During the PhD, candidates develop skills that are helpful for academic careers, which is often understood as the default option, but, for instance regarding teaching, they feel a lot of this comes from their own initiatives. Developing such skills is recognized as relevant, candidates feel, but is not really rewarded and must be done on the side of the job, often in one's own time.

3. Even when PhD-candidates develop teaching skills, they feel that the step from a PhD-position to being an assistant professor is very large. Work pressures for assistant professors are perceived to be much higher, stemming for instance from the amount of teaching required.
4. Many PhD-candidates also feel they are ill prepared to teach. It feels odd that a 4-year study is needed to teach a class of 4-year-old-kids while PhD-candidates, sometimes without any specific training and qualifications, are allowed to do lectures for 20+-year-old-students.
5. Participants also felt that PhD-candidates were not sufficiently prepared for careers outside of the academic world, even though this is where quite some of them will work in the future. It would be good to make this a standard subject of conversation. And it might be interesting and relevant to invite former PhD-candidates now working elsewhere to discuss this and learn from experiences.



## 9. Points for discussion; perhaps of concern

The main aim of this report was to showcase evolving standards and practices of PhD-research in public administration and political science in the Netherlands and Flanders. PhDs are expected to meet the standards in a field yet what these standards are, what diversity exists, what common bandwidths of research practice are, are generally unknown. Although this gives freedom to academics it also creates uncertainties for PhD-candidates and makes it literally impossible to solve conflicts of interpretation with factual arguments. We hope this report helps universities, supervisors and, most importantly, PhD-candidates navigate the various viable routes leading to a successful and rewarding PhD. We hope this report jump starts a disciplinary reflection across universities on expectations for PhD-theses.

Public administration and political science are broad fields, with highly diverse research objects ranging from a micro-level focus on individuals to a macro-level focus on institutions and systems. Scholars also use a wide variety of methods to study various administratively and politically relevant 'things'. Scholars also adhere to different epistemological positions. As a consequence it is imperative that practices and standards for PhDs are plural and facilitate a diversity of types of research.

Having said that, this report also suggests that the professional fields of public administration and political science can do more to provide guidance to developing scholars. We see at least seven important points of discussion emanating from our report; and for some of them there is reason for concern.

### **Expectations and well-being**

1. On a general level, both in the focus groups and in the survey, too many of the PhD-candidates in our view express uncertainties about the expectations they have to meet. This is a likely source of stress.
2. The 'recognition & rewards' program generally speaks to PhD-candidates. However, at present, it may obfuscate rather than clarify expectations. The thrust of 'recognition and rewards' is that academic life should not only revolve around academic publications in major international journals. However, this is exactly what most internal PhD-candidates are expected to concentrate on for four years. As 'recognition and rewards' underlines the importance of other aspects of academic work this may inadvertently increase the work-pressures on PhD-candidates.
3. Possibly related to the above, stress is an area of concern for PhD-candidates (although many also find their work exciting). This is something that universities and supervisors should clearly pay attention to and take seriously.



## Papers and monographs

4. Paper-based theses are relatively new, certainly in public administration. It has become the default option for internal PhD-candidates, certainly when working in larger externally funded research projects. There is a huge variety and there are (too) many uncertainties relating to paper-based publications. Practices also differ greatly between institutions but also between the supervisors involved. These revolve around expectations regarding:

- 1) co-authorships supervisors
- 2) publication status of papers
- 3) need for single-authored papers
- 4) first-author status requirements PhD-candidate
- 5) co-author statements.

It is important to clarify expectations on these issues.

5. Monographs on the other hand have a long-lasting tradition and are still written in our fields, mostly by external candidates but also by internal candidates. The expectations for monographs are mostly implicit and variance between monographs is very large. Conflicts of interpretation regarding whether a monograph is or is not of sufficient quality, are extremely hard to solve with factual arguments. It is also hard to compare monographs to paper-based theses, while both lead to the same qualification.

## Preparedness for careers: teaching in & working outside of academia

6. Internal PhD-candidates may not be sufficiently prepared for follow-up career steps other than having post-doc positions. The step from a PhD-position with an almost exclusive focus on your own research to an assistant professorship where teaching is the prime task is enormous.
7. Further, about 40% of PhD-candidates (including external candidates) consider or will have a career outside of academia. As continuation of an academic career seems to be the default option, there is relatively little guidance and support for developing skills for and orientation on non-academic careers.

## About NIG & the authors

The Netherlands Institute of Governance (NIG) is a joint research school of 13 universities offering PhD-education and a research network. NIG connects junior and senior scholars in public administration and political science in the Netherlands and Flanders. NIG has 9 full members: Delft University of Technology, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Leiden University, Maastricht University, Radboud University Nijmegen, Tilburg University, University of Twente, Utrecht University, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam; and 4 associated members: Ghent University, University of Antwerp, Wageningen University & Research and the KU Leuven.

NIG offers a post graduate program for PhD candidates who can enroll for the full program (30EC) or for single courses. Almost 80% of all candidates successfully defending their PhD in public administration or political science in the Netherlands and Flanders participate at least once in an NIG-activity. In 2019 the program has been accredited by the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) for a term of seven years.

NIG is also a vibrant research network with several research colloquia and a popular annual conference.

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## Appendix 1 Coding scheme

<b>The thesis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Year of promotion</li> <li>- Institute</li> <li>- Nr of promotors</li> <li>- Cum laude or not</li> <li>- Language</li> <li>- Research grant acknowledged?</li> <li>- Paper-based or monograph</li> </ul>
<b>For monographs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nr of words main document</li> <li>- Nr of chapters</li> </ul>
<b>For article-based theses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nr of articles</li> <li>- Nr of published articles</li> <li>- Nr of single authored articles</li> <li>- Nr of first-author articles</li> <li>- Nr of articles authored by promotors</li> <li>- Authorship acknowledged?</li> </ul>
<b>The study</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Main method: case study – interview – survey – document analysis – theoretical study – observation – experiment – media analysis</li> <li>- Locus: Level of govt: supra-national – EU – national – executive governance – sub-national – for profits – non-profits – societal organizations - citizens</li> <li>- Focus: Theoretical key word title (note: this did not work)</li> </ul>
<b>The candidate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internal or external PhD</li> <li>- Master in PA, Poli Sci, or other?</li> <li>- Country of birth</li> <li>- In NL, or B or international?</li> <li>- Current job (inside or outside academia)</li> </ul>
<b>NIG-related</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NIG-diploma?</li> <li>- Nig-enrollment?</li> <li>- At least once participated in NIG-event?</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2 survey

1. In what year did you start with your PhD-research?
2. How are you pursuing your PhD?
  - As a PhD-candidate with a 100% research job
  - As a PhD-candidate with some additional teaching tasks
  - As a lecturer who is also doing a PhD
  - As an external PhD-candidate
  - Other
3. In what language are you writing your PhD-thesis?
  - English
  - Dutch
  - Other
  - This has not been decided yet
4. How many people are supervising your PhD-work?
5. Will your thesis be based on a collection of articles or will it be a monograph?
6. How many articles are you planning to include in your thesis?
7. Do you know how many articles need to be published or accepted before your thesis can be accepted by your supervisors?
8. Do(es) your supervisor(s) coauthor articles for your thesis?
9. How do coauthoring supervisors contribute to the writing of articles?
  - They contribute with general supervision and feedback
  - They write parts of the introduction and theoretical section
  - They participate in data collection
  - They conduct or write up parts of analyses
  - They write parts of the conclusion/discussion
  - They frame and write parts of revisions and response letters
  - They are 'automatic' coauthors
  - Other [...]
10. Have you at any point talked with your supervisors about when they would be co-authors of your studies?
  - Yes, my supervisors have told me how this would go, with no real input from me
  - Yes, me and my supervisors had an open discussion on how to deal with co-authorships
  - It may have been mentioned but was never clearly discussed
  - No
  - Other
  - I don't know/ I can't remember

11. How many chapters do you envision your monograph will have, in addition to the introduction and conclusion?
12. Do you plan to write (or have you already written) one or more journal articles, based on your monograph?
13. Do you feel you know how much research you need to do and how much you need to write to be 'enough' for a PhD-thesis
14. Your PhD thesis will be evaluated by your supervisors and by a committee. Would you say that in general it is clear to you what is expected of a PhD thesis?
15. You have indicated that the expectations for your thesis are at least a little bit unclear. Could you indicate whether this is related to one or more of the aspects mentioned below
  - The expected number of articles
  - The publication status of articles
  - The expectations regarding co-authorships
  - The amount of empirical work needed
  - The diversity of opinions of supervisors
  - Expectations regarding methods
  - Expectations regarding societal impact
  - Other
16. Who would you say was responsible for some of the main choices made regarding your PhD-project

	Supervisors	Supervisors, with some input from me	A joint decision by supervisors and PhD-candidate	By me, with some input from my supervisors	Me as the PhD-candidate
Choice of research topic					
Choice of method(s)					
Choice of language					
Choice between monograph and article-based thesis					

17. On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 stands for absolutely not exciting and 7 stands for very exciting, would you say that on a day to day basis, you experience the work on your PhD thesis as exciting?
18. On a scale from 1 to 1, where 1 stands for absolutely not stressful and 7 stands for very stressful, would you say that on a day to day basis, you experience the work on your PhD thesis as stressful?
19. At this point, would you prefer to continue working at a university after completing your PhD-thesis?



## Appendix 3 Guiding statements focus groups

Statement 1: The rewards and recognitions discussion is practically implemented in my job as a PhD-candidate

Statement 2: I am supported in balancing the different aspects of rewards and recognitions (i.e. education, research, impact, leadership and professional performance)

Statement 3 : Within my job as a PhD-candidate I was/am prepared for the career that I want

Statement 4: maintaining a healthy work life balance is easy when doing a PhD



## Appendix 4 List of PhD theses 2018-2021

Note: Red cells indicate theses we were unable to access and were therefore not included in the analysis.

Utwente	2021	Triculescu, R. M.	Harmonised asylum policies in the European Union? The role of street-level bureaucrats in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System
Utwente	2021	Proszowska, D. K.	How people trust their governments: Trends, patterns and determinants of trust differentiation in multilevel polities.
Utwente	2021	van der Zeeuw, A.	IoT as simple as Do Re Mi: A micro-figurational approach to the social context of Internet of Things skills and digital inequalities.
Utwente	2021	Eckhardt, F.	Let the people speak: deliberative mini-publics: A pathway towards a participatory democracy?
Utwente	2020	Hladchenko, M.	Global education models in national contexts: the establishment of research universities in Ukraine
Utwente	2020	Nisrane, B. L.	Home, but not 'at home': the reintegration of unskilled Ethiopian female return migrants from Arabian Gulf countries.
Utwente	2019	Hoekstra, M. J.	De bijdragen van de businesscase: een verkennend onderzoek naar de functies en de eigenschappen van een nieuw besluitvormingsinstrument
Utwente	2019	de Koning, K.	Modelling human behavior in coupled human and natural systems
Utwente	2019	Jaansoo, A.	Provision of Services Across International Borders: Factors Driving Cooperation of Subnational Governments in Europe
Utwente	2019	Steinmann, P. L. M.	Stelselwijziging forensische zorg: Verklarend onderzoek naar een centralisatie van sturing in de zorg
Utwente	2019	Priante, A.	Tweet your #mo and save a bro: Micro-mobilization dynamics and outcomes of online social movement campaigns
Utwente	2018	Jowi, J. O.	Deans in Kenyan Universities: Their leadership styles and impacts on staff commitment
Utwente	2018	Konijnendijk, A. A. J.	Fragile, please handle with care: Understanding and supporting professionals' response to suspicions of child abuse and neglect
Utwente	2018	van den Akker, J. P.	Ruling the Referendum? European Integration Challenged by Direct Democracy



Utwente	2018	Killermann, K.	The influence of commissioners' characteristics on the EU's legislative process
Utwente	2018	van Stenus, C. M. V.	Through their eyes: Experiences of clients and professionals with obstetric and neonatal healthcare during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum period
MU	2018	Hoh, Anna-Lena	Counting for EU enlargement? Census-taking in Croatia, Bosnia and Macedonia
MU	2018	Bury-Kosc, Paulina	Cooperation and competition in highly skilled migration policy in the European Union Analysing the policy cycle of the Blue Card directive
MU	2018	Kim, Jinhee	The Influence of EU Agencies Real but guided influence in the policy-making process
MU	2019	Ruiter, Emmy	The Politics of Advice in the European Parliament. Understanding the political role of group advisors.
MU	2019	Stinsky, Daniel	Cooling the Cold War: The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe 1947-1960
MU	2019	Huddleston, Thomas	European citizenship in practice: Implementation and effectiveness of naturalisation policies across Europe
MU	2020	Groen, Afke	With a little help from our friends: Exploring the transnational party activities of the German SPD, Die Linke and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen in the European Union
MU	2021	Ayre, Elizabeth	From glass walls to 'windows of opportunity'. Framing and policy advocacy for children affected by parental imprisonment in Ireland
RU	2021	Blom, R	Managing people in semi-autonomous agencies: A between- and within-sector analysis
RU	2020	Bonfert, B.	Allied against austerity: transnational cooperation in the European Anti-Austerity Movement.
RU	2021	Kets, G	Follow the leader? Ideas and agents in the German Revolution of 1918–1919.
RU	2020	Krasnopolskaya, I.	When do non-profits produce social innovations? Exploring the determinants of the innovative capacity of non-profits, based on Russian survey data
RU	2021	Magioni Junior, D.M.J.	Before It's Too Late: INGOs' Handling of Conflict Risk in South Sudan.
RU	2020	Molendijk, T.	Soldiers in Conflict: Moral Injury, Political Practices and Public Perceptions
RU	2020	Polman, D.F.	Return to sender. Closing the cycle from domestic implementation experiences to the formulation of European legislation

RU	2020	Vuijk, R.	Wethouder Financien in Zwaar Weer: PR of Prestatie?
RU	2020	Voorn, B.	When politics meets professionalism: The characteristics and performance predictors of municipally owned corporations
RU	2021	Shakeel, F.	Ethical leadership: a broader definition, conceptualization and measurement scale.
RU	2019	Turolla, M.	Youth in Agribusiness in Uganda. An Ethnography of a Development Trend
RU	2019	Bouwman, R.	Public and Private Sector Negotiations, Comparing Negotiators and Contexts
LU	2018	Kamphof, R.	Play by the rules?: coordination of EU sustainable development policies and the importance of the politico-legal context
LU	2018	Ashikalit, T.S.	Leadership and inclusiveness in public organizations
LU	2018	Broekema, W. G.	When does the phoenix rise? Factors and mechanism that influence crisis-induced learning by public organizations
LU	2018	Bolhuis, W.	Van woord tot akkoord. Een analyse vna de partikkeuzes in CPB-doorrekeningen van verkiezingsprogramma's en regeerakkoorden, 1986-2017
LU	2019	Elias, Carrillo, I.L.	Agenda dynamics in the European Union : the interaction between the European Council and the European Commission in the policy domain of organized crime
LU	2019	Corvers, F.B.J.A	Designing 'context-specific' regional innovation policy: a study on the role of regional government in six European regions
LU	2019	Flöthe, L.	Speaking for the People? : Analysing the extent to which interest groups represent the opinion of the citizens and under which conditions they are more likely to do so
LU	2019	Porth, J.	Local government in times of global challenges: the implications of the financial crisis since 2007 on public finances at the municipal level in the Netherlands
LU	2020	Karakasis, V. P.	Adding fuel to the conflict: How gas reserves complicate the Cyprus question
LU	2020	Heijden, M. J. A. van der	Transnational networks and domestic agencies : making sense of globalizing administrative patterns
LU	2020	Reijnders, M. A. W.	Non-take-up of social support and the implications for social policies
LU	2020	Romeijn, J.	What's the issue? : the lobbying and representativeness of political parties on specific policy issues

LU	2020	Tessema, Y. N.	Political discourses and the securitization of democracy in post-1991 Ethiopia
LU	2020	Kowalski, M.	Ethics on the radar: exploring the relevance of ethics support in counterterrorism
LU	2020	Schmidt, J.E.T	Perspectives on cutback management in public organisations : what public managers do
LU	2021	Albareda Sanz, A. (some documents under embargo)	Unpacking interest groups: On the intermediary role of interest groups and its effects for their political relevance
LU	2021	Roy van Zuijdewijn, J. H. de (some documents under embargo)	The aftermath: Meaning-making After Terrorist Attacks in Western Europe
LU	2021	Palani, K. M. A	Fluidity and dynamics of de facto statehood: the case of Iraqi Kurdistan
LU	2021	Sterkenburg, N.	Van actie tot zelfverwezenlijking: routes van toetreding tot radicaal- en extreemrechts
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