

Part I: Context

Which data and information are available on your country's doctoral education? There is no need to provide details, a reference to the source suffices:

1. **History:** Who were/are the drivers of doctoral training over time (state/regional, federal government, religious institutions)?

Do all institutions of higher education in your country award PhD/doctorate degrees?

No. The National evaluation and accreditation agency accredits only those universities, which provide education at the graduate level that meets specific standards.

<https://www.neaa.government.bg/en/>

What types of doctoral degrees (professional doctorate, industrial doctorate) exist?

Professional doctorate.

2. **Size and Demography of Doctorate Pool:**

Data on the number of doctorate degrees awarded annually in 2005, 2010, 2015, (current, if available).

(total number all disciplines)			
2004/2005	2009/2010	2014/2015	2016/2017
5079	3850	6617	6738

The distribution of PhDs among your country's universities?

I sent a request to the Ministry of education and science because many universities do not provide this information on their web-pages (15th of October but no answer yet till today)

The law was changed in 2010 in Bulgaria. Before 2010 national commissions (in every scientific field) awarded PhD degrees – *national degrees*. After 2011, the universities that were accredited by the NEAA, began to award PhD degrees of a specific university. This explains the rapid increase of the number of PhD students seen in the table above. The control over the quality is much weaker. The tendency of "McDonalization" of the education is clearly seen.

The demographic characteristics? (% international students, women & men, major fields of study)

2005 – 4647 (Bulgarian citizens – women & men) state universities
378 (Bulgarian citizens – women & men) state universities
52 (Bulgarian citizens – women & men) private universities
2 (Foreign citizens – women & men) private universities

(state universities – total number of students is reported)

	2004/2005	2009/2010	2014/2015	2016/2017
Bulgarian citizens	4647	3567	6144	6064
Foreigners	378	222	322	410

(private universities – total number of students is reported)

	2004/2005	2009/2010	2014/2015	2016/2017
Bulgarian citizens	52	58	133	171
Foreigners	2	3	18	93

3. **Time-to-degree and Completion of Degree:**

Data on expected time to completion and actual average time-to-degree?

3 years expected time; the average time is 3.5 – 4 years but the extra time is not financially covered by the university or state

Does the time include the master's degree time? **No.**
The average completion/attrition rate?

Any major disciplinary differences? **Yes.**

3. Purpose and Goals of Doctoral Education:

If your country offers research (PhD) and professional doctorates, what is the purpose of each type of doctorate?

Only professional doctorates are offered – the purpose is to prepare the students for working in the **research field.**

Currently, the **industrial** sector in Bulgarian **does not require** PhD degree for hiring.

Has the purpose changed in the last 20 years?

There has been a non-stop discussion on changing the tendency since 2000 but in practice nothing substantial has happened.

Part II: Structure of Doctoral Education

Please provide brief information on the **structure of doctoral education** and **weblinks to National Policies and QA frameworks:**

What is the predominant model of doctorate education (structured with courses and thesis; in a cohort; only dissertation; only apprentice-ship model working with the adviser)?

The predominant model of doctorate education in BG (structured with courses and thesis)

What are admission and degree requirements?

Examinations – twice a year; the requirements depend on the field and, since 2010, on the university

Do your institutions have central campus units that are advocating for and providing services to doctoral students? i.e. a central graduate school, training centers, etc.

At the University of Sofia, there are two training centers – for humanities and for natural sciences and humanities, which provide extra training (to the major field) – in project writing, gender issues, political science.

a. Main National Policies/Reforms Affecting Doctoral Education:

Is policy for doctoral education developed by a Ministry or others?

Before **2010** – the Ministry was responsible for the doctoral education

After 2011 – every university develops its own strategy BUT the Ministry should approve the number of paid-by-state fellowships in different disciplines.

It is possible that a University offers fellowships paid by projects.

b. Funding:

What is the relative support for PhD candidates through various kind of support mechanisms (individual fellowships, project funding, structured PhD funded programs/Doctoral Schools, Industry PhD's,)

Individual fellowships (state-funding) **93-95%**

Project funding (3-4%)

Industry PhD (in software development) less than 1 %

Inter Institutional Collaborative doctoral program (less than 1%, etc)

c. Quality Assurance/control:

Are there national guidelines?

New rules were adopted by the Council of Ministers № 122 OT 29 ЮНИ 2018 Г. **June 2018** for establishing national criteria – **too early to comment results, but the expectations are not high.**

What role do the universities and possibly funding agencies play in the setting and monitoring of

quality?

Every university **is obliged to monitor permanently the quality**. Every 4-5 years the NEAA evaluate the status-quo.

d. **Career paths of doctorate recipients:**

Who collects data doctoral recipients' career path?

At the Sofia University we urge the separate faculties to collect the data.

data website?

<https://alumni.uni-sofia.bg/>

<http://alumni.tu-sofia.bg/>

What level of career support for doctoral candidates is available in universities?

Most universities support the PhD students – dormitory, care for families

Part III: Trends

1. International Collaboration:

Is collaboration in PhD training encouraged? **Yes.**

At the national level: **bilateral agreements** between Bulgaria and various countries (European, international)

The university of Sofia maintains tens of bilateral programs with other universities.

What are the trends? (intersectoral - industry/government/non-profit collaboration; inter-institutional collaboration within the country).

Non-profit collaborations for most disciplines

Industrial – for engineering & chemistry

Are joint degrees and co-supervision with other universities encouraged? **Yes**

(France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Poland, Netherlands – to mention several

2. Equal Opportunities:

Are there policies in your country aiming at diversity and inclusion in doctoral education focusing on overcoming inequalities in the larger social structure?

Yes –

This is the excuse of the governments to accredit more than 25 universities in a country with less than four million people eligible for the PhD level.

3. Digital Transformation:

How has digital transformation influenced the process of doctoral education and training (e.g. MOOCs, life streaming of dissertation defense, new forms of digital dissertations, open science policy)?

About 10 universities offer life streaming of dissertation defense of many universities – the discussion on the IPR is still ongoing.

4. Most Important Aspects for Your Country:

Currently what are the most burning issues in doctoral education in your country? For example, working conditions, job insecurity, and other pressures on doctoral students?

Job insecurity, on the first place.

Secondly, the strong international competition – the PhD students are attracted by richer countries in Europe, China, and the US – makes it almost impossible to keep the best talents in the country. Most of the undergraduates leave the country.

Which issues in doctoral education does your country plan and/or need to address in policies for the future? **New, competitive programs in ICT, culture, and arts.**

Sofia, 21.20.2018