

# **Intellectual Output 2**

## **– Task1: Report on Surveys of employers and entrepreneurs**

BEYOND ACADEMIA: BROADENING THE CAREER HORIZONS OF  
DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN MARINE AND MARITIME SCIENCES  
IN EUROPE  
(SEA-EU-DOC)



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## SUMMARY



Universidad  
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Université de Bretagne Occidentale



Kiel University  
Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel



UNIWERSYTET GDAŃSKI



UNIWERSITET JAGIELLONI



L-Università  
ta' Malta



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

SEA-EU-DOC is an Erasmus + Strategic Partnerships for higher education project, financed by the European Union and focused on doctoral studies in marine, maritime and coastal sciences. It is based on a consortium that includes the six universities of the SEA-EU (European University of the Seas) alliance: Cádiz, Brest, Kiel, Gdańsk, Split and Malta.

The SEA-EU DOC project aims to increase job opportunities, particularly in the business sector, for doctoral students in Marine Sciences by focusing on the development and transfer of the skills acquired in their training, as well as on their applicability in a context of professional integration.

This project aims to increase the employability of our doctorate holders through the following goals:

- Giving visibility to the diversity of doctorate holders' careers.
- Identifying valuable skills acquired during the doctorate that can be transferred to any work context.
- Improving the quality of doctoral training to better fit the diversity of doctorate holders' employment opportunities.
- Strengthening the links between the university and the private sector by creating a European network of doctorate holders, students, and institutions in marine sciences.





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One of the tasks

## 2. METHODOLOGY





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## 3. RESULTS

### 3.1. Sectors more related to your company's goals

Of all the companies that have participated in the study, 31.3% stated that “maritime transport” is the sector that is most related to their company’s goals. This sector is followed by “marine renewable energy” and “shipbuilding and repair”, both categories with 28.4%. The less important sectors to achieve the company’s goals are “submarine cables” and “desalination”, with 1.5%.

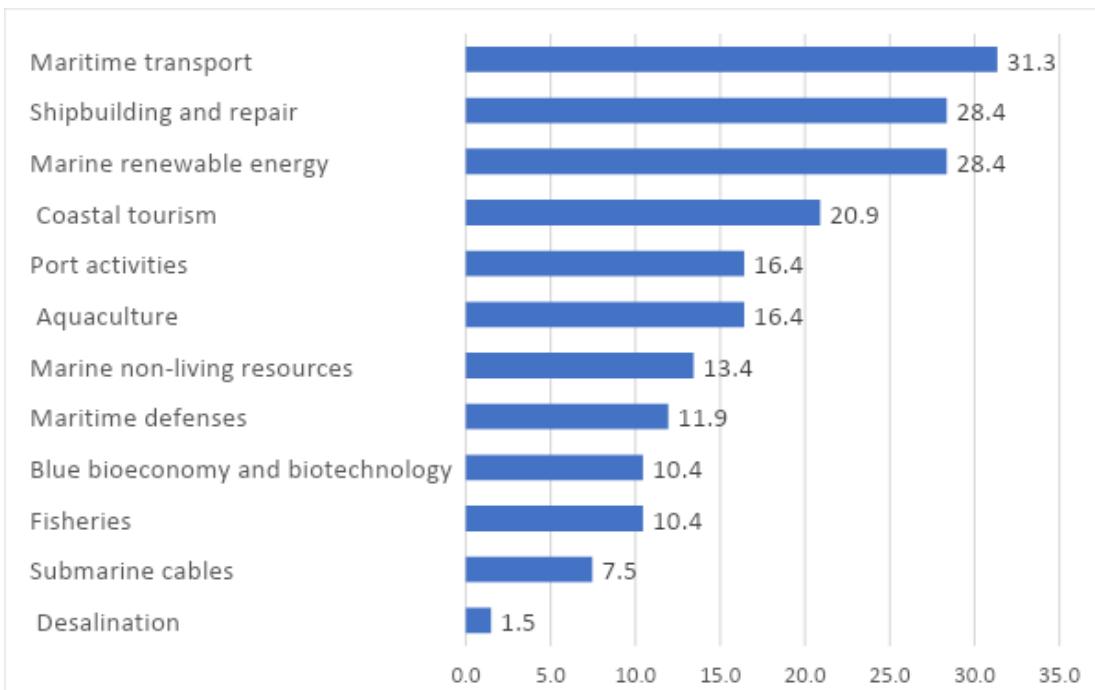
**Table 1: Which of the following sectors (according to blue economy report 2020) is more related with the scope of your company?**

	Frequency	Percent
Maritime transport	21	31.3
Marine renewable energy	19	28.4
Shipbuilding and repair	19	28.4
Coastal tourism	14	20.9
Aquaculture	11	16.4
Port activities	11	16.4
Marine non-living resources	9	13.4
Maritime defenses	8	11.9
Fisheries	7	10.4
Blue bioeconomy and biotechnology	7	10.4
Submarine cables	5	7.5
Desalination	1	1.5





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**Figure 1: Which of the following sectors is more related with the scope of your company?**



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## 3.2. Start of your company's activities

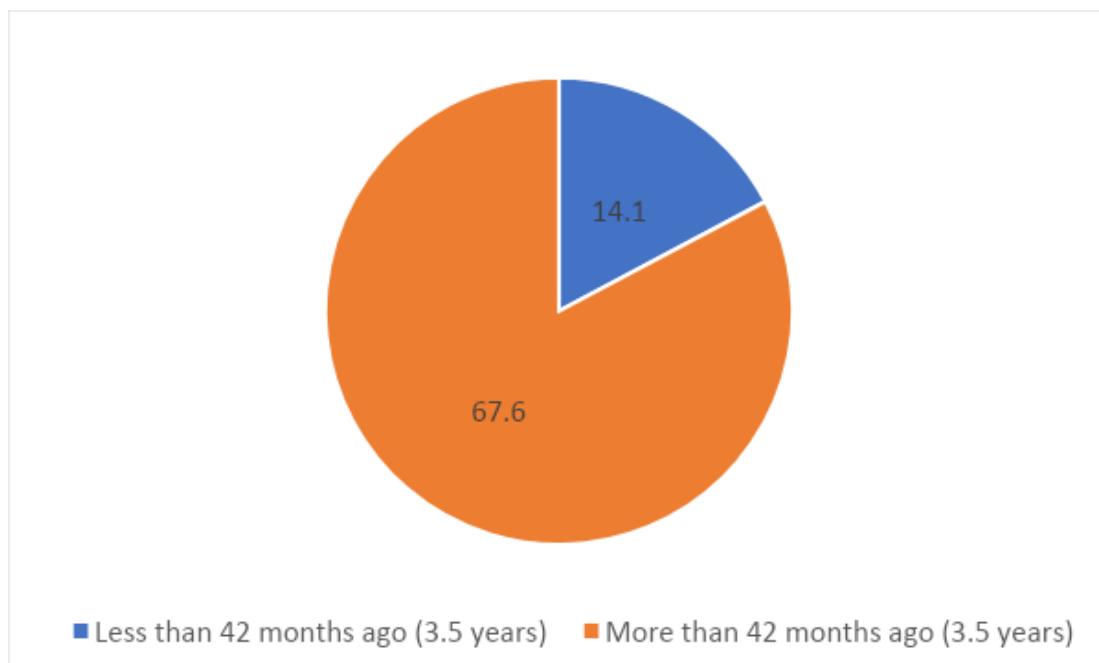
As for the beginning date of the activities of the companies surveyed, 67.6% stated that they have been developing their activities for three years and a half, 14.1% less than three years and a half, and 18.3% indicated their accurate beginning date, as Figure 2 shows.

**Table 2: When did your company start its activities?:**

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 42 months ago (3.5 years)	10	14.1
More than 42 months ago (3.5 years)	48	67.6
Optional: Indicate the starting year	13	18.3
Total	71	100.0



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**Figure 2: When did your company start its activities?**



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**Table 3: Indicate the year in which your company began its activities**

	Frequency	Percent
1963	1	7.7
1977	1	7.7
1983	1	7.7
1986	1	7.7
1993	1	7.7
1994	2	15.4
1996	1	7.7
2002	2	15.4
2014	2	15.4
2021	1	7.7
Total	13	100.0



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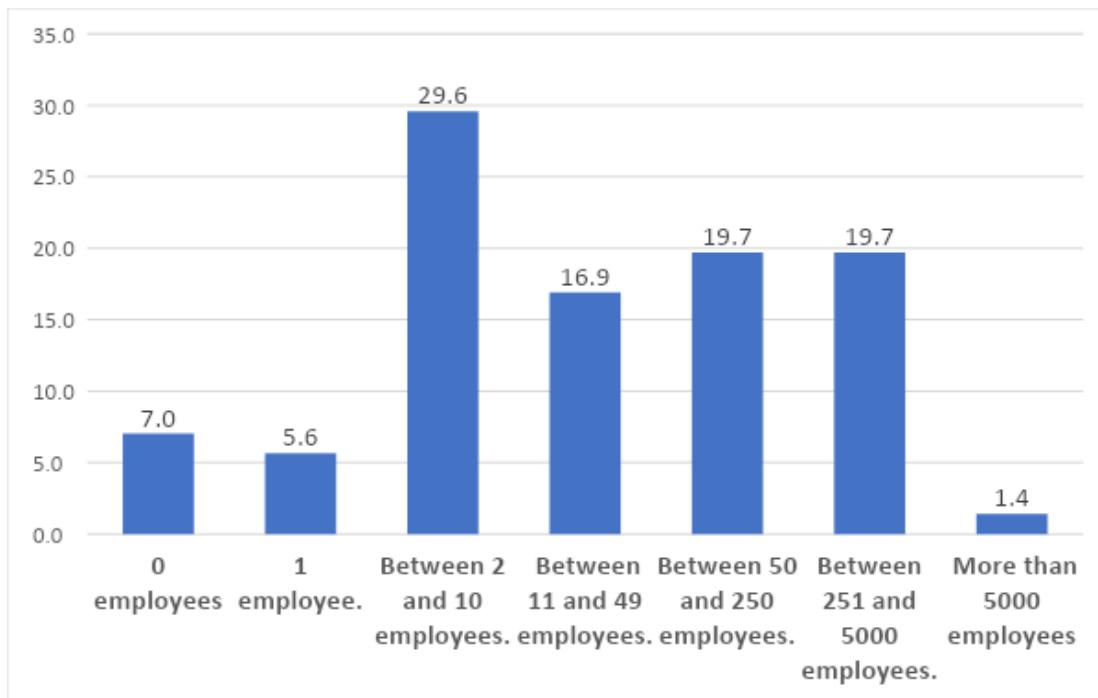
### 3.3. Number of employees in your company and variation in the next years

As for the number of employees, around 30% of the companies surveyed (29.6%) have “between 2 and 10 employees”. They are followed by companies with “between 50 and 250 employees” and by those with “between 251 and 5000 employees”, both groups with a percentage of 19.7%. The companies with “between 11 and 49 employees” are in third place, with 16.9%. Likewise, 7% of the companies surveyed have no employee, and 5.6% only have one employee. Finally, 1.4% of the companies have “more than 5000 employees”.

**Table 4: How many employees does your company have?**

	Frequency	Percent
0 employees	5	7.0
1 employee.	4	5.6
Between 2 and 10 employees.	21	29.6
Between 11 and 49 employees.	12	16.9
Between 50 and 250 employees.	14	19.7
Between 251 and 5000 employees.	14	19.7
More than 5000 employees	1	1.4
Total	71	100.0





**Figure 3: How many employees does your company have?**

As for the expected variation of the number of employees in the companies in the next 5 years, almost 20% considered that the number will not vary. However, 16.9% stated that other 5 employees could join their staff, and 9.9% stated that other 10 employees could join their staff.



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**Table 5: What is the expected variation in the number of employees of your company within the next 5 years (numbers can be positive or negative)?:**

	Frequency	Percent
-10	1	1.4
0	13	18.3
1	4	5.6
2	5	7.0
3	5	7.0
4	1	1.4
5	12	16.9
8	2	2.8
10	7	9.9
15	3	4.2
20	2	2.8
30	2	2.8
50	5	7.0
65	1	1.4
100	3	4.2
150	1	1.4





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200	2	2.8
250	1	1.4
5000	1	1.4
Total	71	100.0

**Table 6: What is the expected variation in the number of employees of your company within the next 5 years**

N	Mínimum	Maximum	Half	Standard deviation
71	-10	5000	94.77	592.56

### 3.4. The closest university

As for the university that is closest geographically to the companies surveyed, 26.8% of the companies stated that the University of Split, Croatia, is the closest university, and also 26.8% stated that the University of Cádiz, Spain, is the closest one. On the other hand, 11.3% of the companies chose the University of Brest, France.

**Table 7: Which of the following Universities is the closest geographically to your company?**

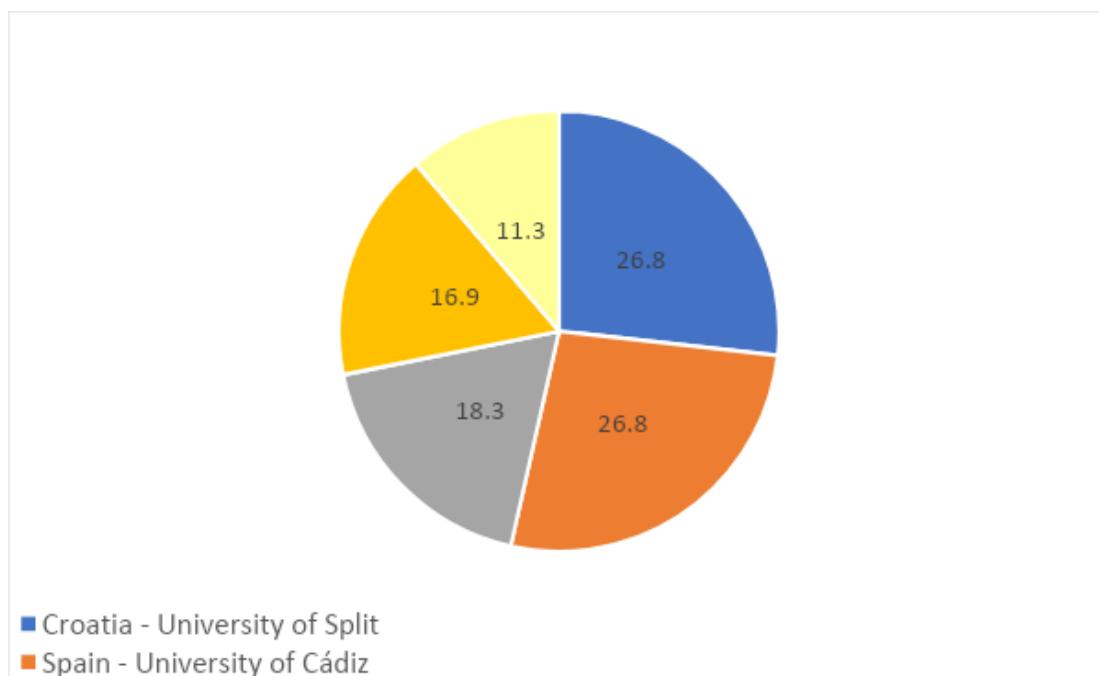




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	Frequency	Percent
Croatia - University of Split	19	26.8
Spain - University of Cádiz	19	26.8
Poland - University of Gdańsk	13	18.3
Germany – University of Kiel	12	16.9
France - University of Brest	8	11.3
Total	71	100.0



**Figure 4: Which of the following Universities is the closest geographically to your company?**





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### 3.5. Perception of your company's innovation degree

Another question made to the companies was to what extent they consider that their company or initiative is innovative regarding their products, services, technologies, processes, or novel perspectives. From 1 to 7, the highest average is related to "novel perspectives", with a score of 5.22, whereas the lowest average is related to "products", with a score of 4.24.

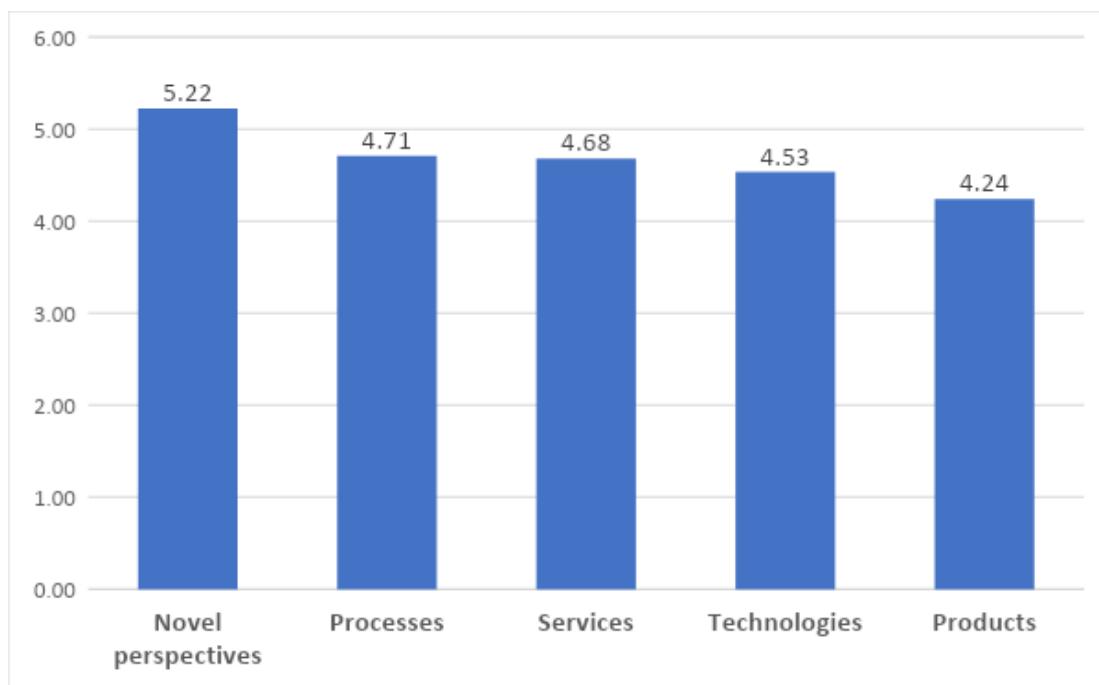
**Table 8: Pertaining to your companies' products, services and technology: to what extent do you apply established methods and processes, or continuously further develop and renew them?**

	N	Mínimum	Maximum	Half	Standard deviation
Novel perspectives	63	1	7	5.22	1.78
Processes	62	1	7	4.71	1.79
Services	65	1	7	4.68	1.88
Technologies	62	1	7	4.53	1.84
Products	59	1	7	4.24	2.18





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**Figure 5: To what extent do you apply established methods and processes, or continuously further develop and renew them?**



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### 3.6. Companies hiring doctorate holders

As for companies hiring doctorate holders in the last five years, 63.4% of the companies stated that they have not hired any doctorate holder. However, 23.9% stated that they have hired one doctorate holder with a doctorate in marine or maritime disciplines. On the other hand, 12.7% stated that they have hired doctorate holders with a different doctorate.

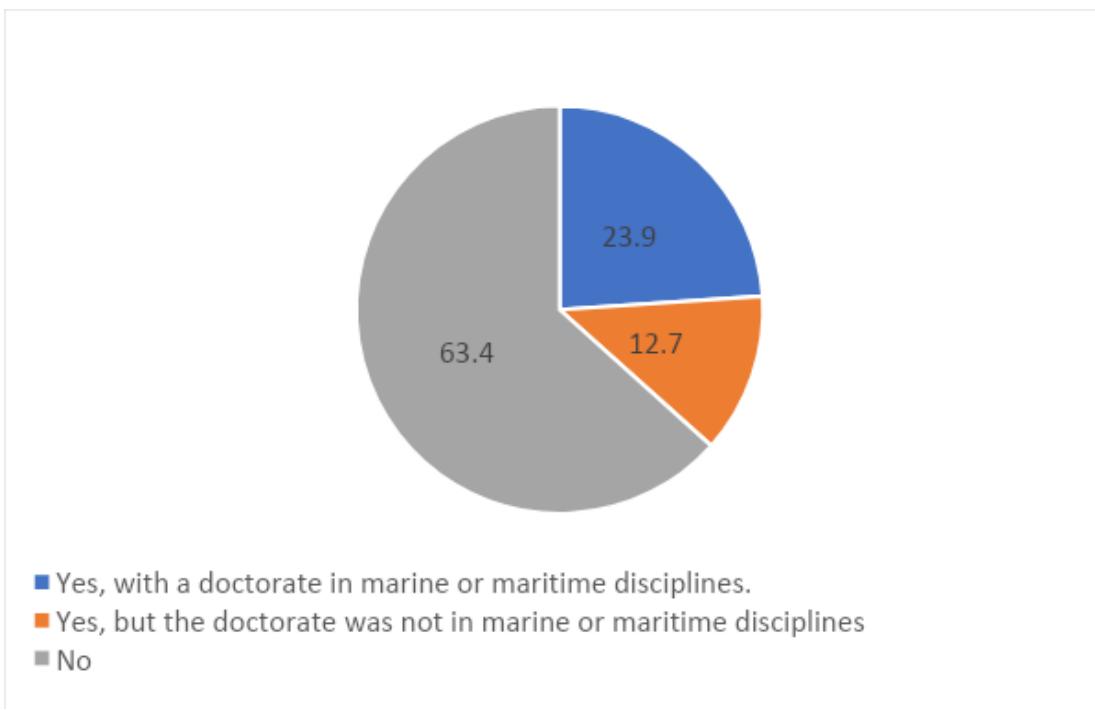
**Table 9: Has your company hired any doctorate holder within the last 5 years?**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, with a doctorate in marine or maritime disciplines.	17	23.9
Yes, but the doctorate was not in marine or maritime disciplines	9	12.7
No	45	63.4
Total	71	100.0





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**Figure 6: Has your company hired any doctorate holder within the last 5 years?**



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The companies that have hired doctorate holders in the last five years, whether related to marine or maritime disciplines or not, were asked whether hiring them has been useful. From 0 to 7, 42.3% of the companies gave a score of 7, indicating that hiring a doctorate holder in the last five years has been very useful. The average for the companies surveyed is a score of 5.46.

**Table 10: Do you think that hiring a doctorate holder has been useful for your company?**

	Frequency	Percent
2	2	7.7
3	1	3.8
4	5	19.2
5	4	15.4
6	3	11.5
7	11	42.3
Total	26	100.0

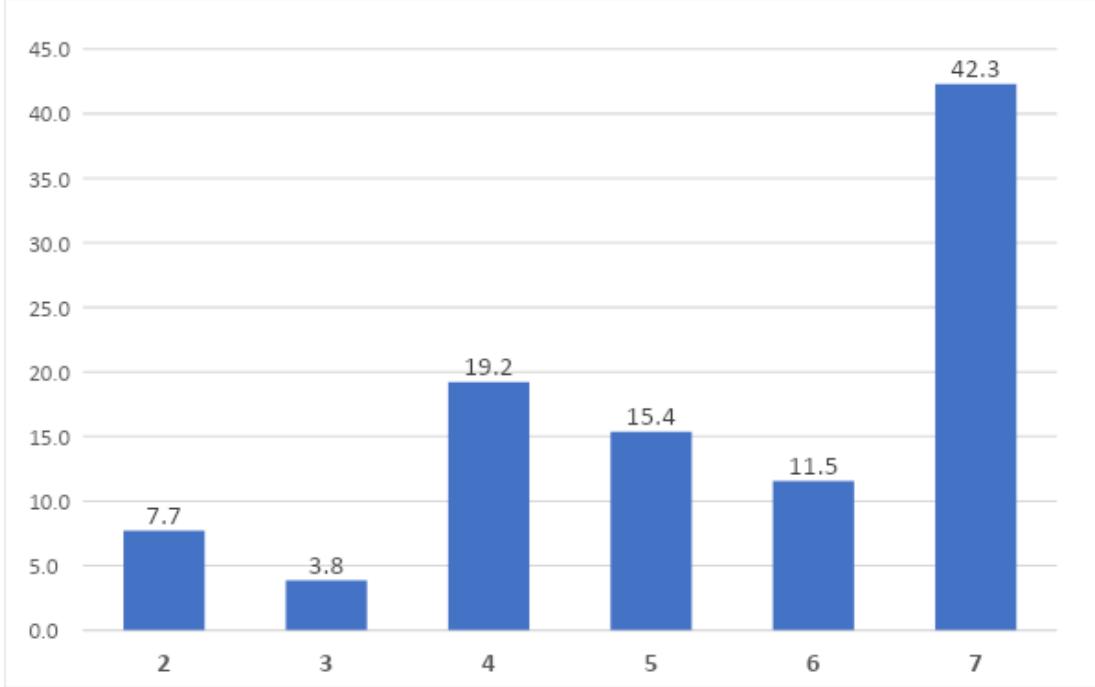
**Table 11: Do you think that hiring a doctorate holder has been useful for your company?**

N	Mínimum	Maximum	Half	Standard deviation
26	2	7	5.46	1.65





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**Figure 7: Do you think that hiring a doctorate holder has been useful for your company?**





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As for the level at which doctorate holders are or have been employed in the companies, 34.6% stated that they hold or have held “leadership positions” in their companies. Likewise, 30.8% stated that doctorate holders fulfil or have fulfilled tasks related to “administration”, 19.2% chose “consultancy”, and 15.4% stated that they are or have been related to “senior management”.

**Table 12: At what level are (or have been) doctorate holders employed in your company?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Leadership positions	9	12.7	34.6
	Administration	8	11.3	30.8
	Consultancy	5	7.0	19.2
	Senior management	4	5.6	15.4
	Total	26	36.6	100.0
Missing	Sistem	45	63.4	

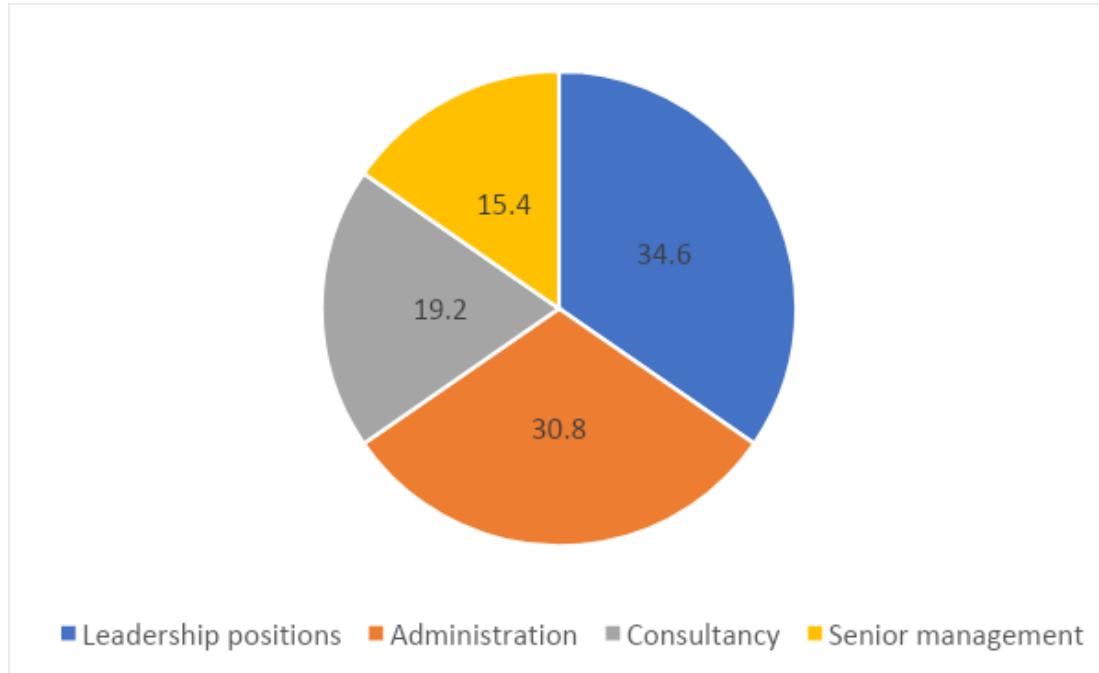




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Total	71	100.0	
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**Figure 8: At what level are (or have been) doctorate holders employed in your company?**





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**Table 13: [Other] At what level are (or have been) doctorate holders employed in your company?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	All levels	2	1.4	37.5
	Technicians	2	2.8	25.0
	Development	1	1.4	12.5
	R&D	1	1.4	12.5
	Higher graduates	1	1.4	12.5
	All higher	1	1.4	12.5
	Total	8	9.8	112.5
Missing	Sistem	63	88.7	
	Total	71	100.0	

Nonetheless, all companies were asked whether they think that hiring a doctorate holder would be useful for them. From 0 to 7, 36.6% chose 0, indicating that they have no opinion on this matter. Likewise, 16.9% of the companies chose “no useful”, and 9.9% considered that it would be “very useful”. The average of both this scale and the whole of the companies surveyed is a score of 3.22.

**Table 14: Do you think it would be useful for your company to hire a doctorate holder?**

	Frequency	Percent
0	26	36.6
1	12	16.9
2	6	8.5





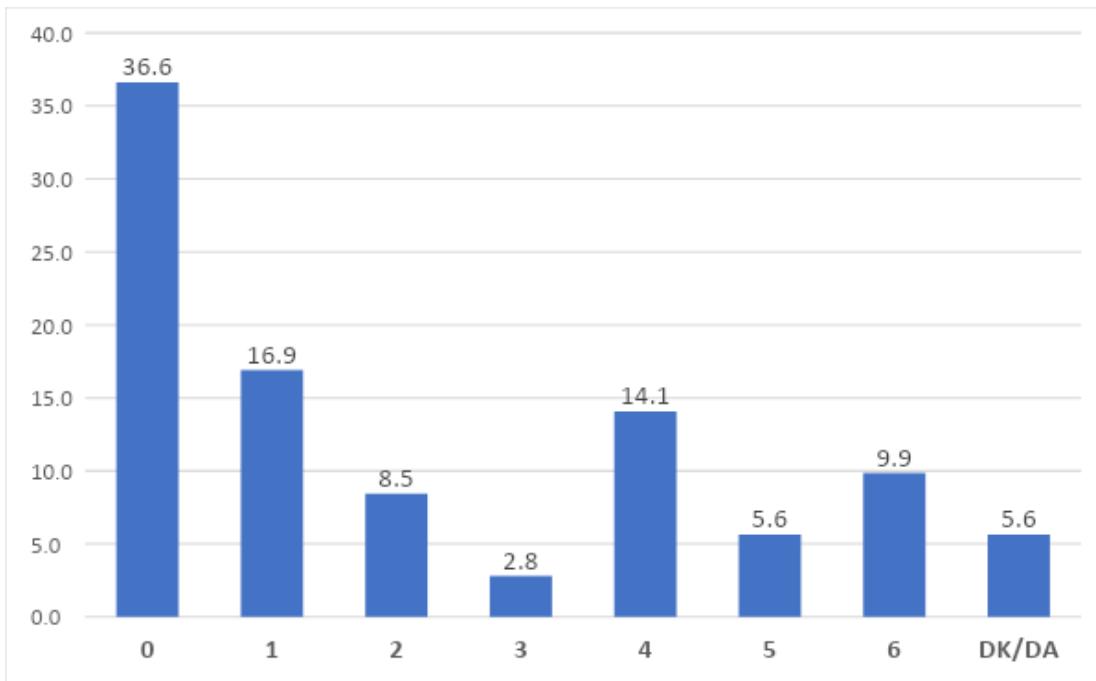
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3	2	2.8
4	10	14.1
5	4	5.6
6	7	9.9
DK/DA	4	5.6
Total	71	100.0

**Table 15: Do you think it would be useful for your company to hire a doctorate holder?**

N	Mínimum	Maximum	Half	Standard deviation
41	1	6	3.22	1.88





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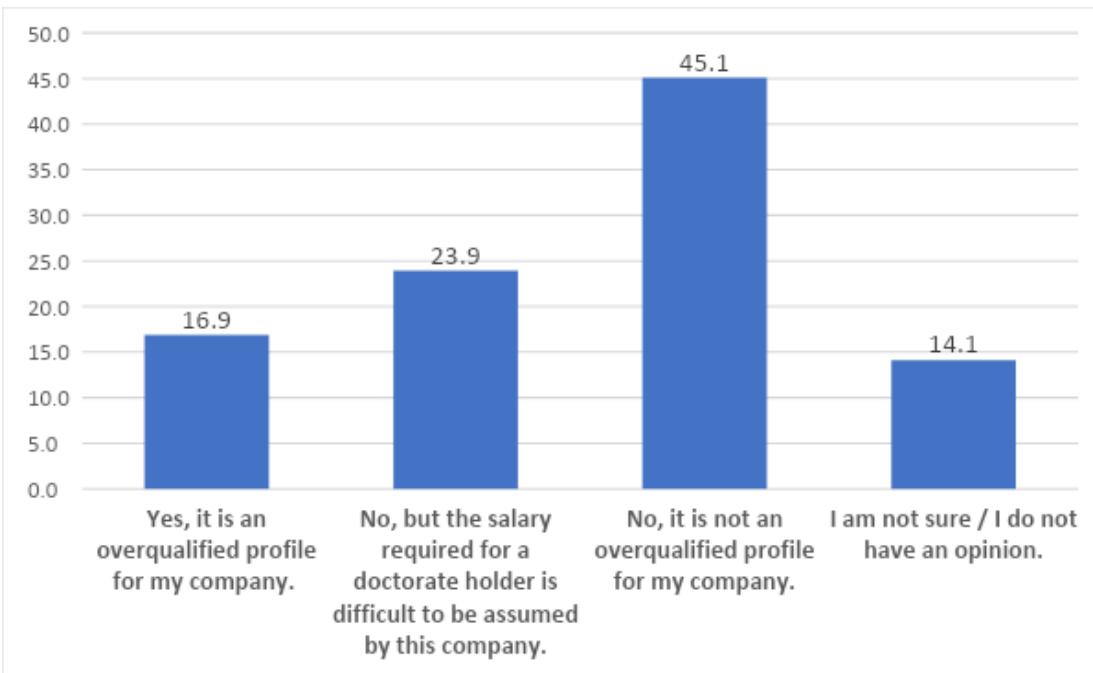


### Figure 9: Do you think it would be useful for your company to hire a doctorate holder?

In relation to the previous question, we wanted to analyse whether the companies considered that a doctorate holder is an overqualified profile for their company or initiative. In this regard, 45.1% considered that “no, it is not an overqualified profile for my company”. Likewise, 23.9% stated that “no, but the salary required for a doctorate holder is difficult to be assumed by the company”, and 16.9% stated that “yes, it is an overqualified profile for my company”.

Table 16: Do you believe that a doctorate holder is an overqualified profile for your company/initiative?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, it is an overqualified profile for my company.	12	16.9
No, but the salary required for a doctorate holder is difficult to be assumed by this company.	17	23.9
No, it is not an overqualified profile for my company.	32	45.1
I am not sure / I do not have an opinion.	10	14.1
Total	71	100.0



**Figure 10: Do you believe that a doctorate holder is an overqualified profile for your company/initiative?**

### 3.7. Doctoral students' training within the company

As for whether the companies are willing to train doctorate students within an industrial PhD programme or to host them within an internship programme, more than the half, particularly 50.7%, stated that they would be willing to. However, 8.5% stated that they would not be willing to, and 40.8% had no opinion on this matter.

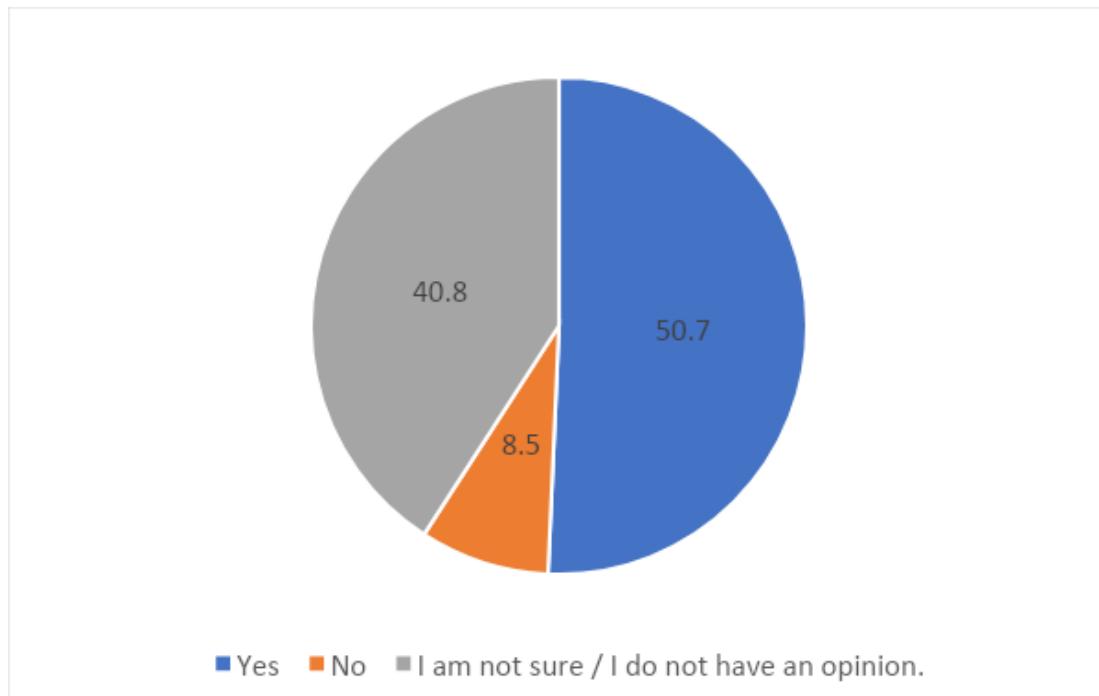


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**Table 17: Would you be willing to train a doctorate student at your company within an industrial PhD programme or host an internship programme?**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	36	50.7
No	6	8.5
I am not sure / I do not have an opinion.	29	40.8
Total	71	100.0

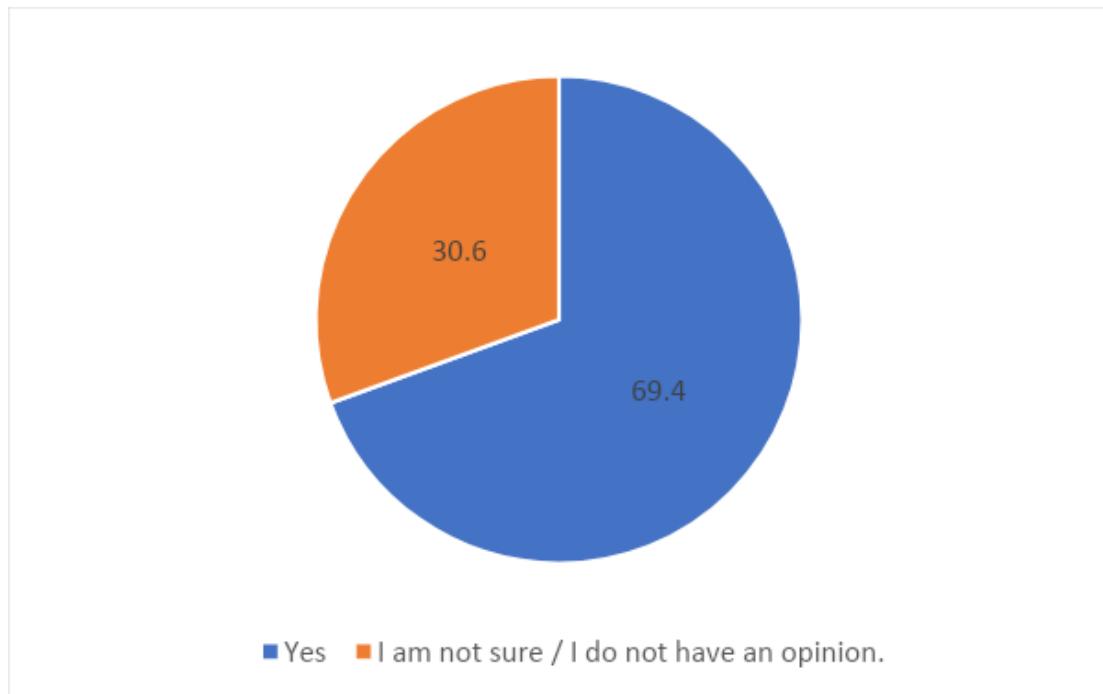


**Figure 11: Would you be willing to train a doctorate student at your company within an industrial PhD programme or host an internship programme?**

In relation to the previous question on training doctoral students within the company, the companies were asked whether they would be willing to employ these doctorate students once they have obtained the PhD: 69.4% stated that “yes”, that they would be willing to employ them, and 30.6% had no opinion on this matter. No company chose “no”.

**Table 18: Would you be willing to employ that doctorate student once they have obtained the PhD?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	25	35.2	69.4
	I am not sure / I do not have an opinion.	11	15.5	30.6
	Total	36	50.7	100.0
Missing	Sistem	35	49.3	
Total		71	100.0	



**Figure 12: Would you be willing to employ that doctorate student once they have obtained the PhD?**



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After analysing whether the companies have received any information from the University regarding the advantages of both collaborating with doctorate programmes and incorporating future doctorate holders into the labour market, we observe that more than 70% (77.1%) have received no information, 20% stated that “yes”, and 2.9% stated that “it is not applicable in my country”.

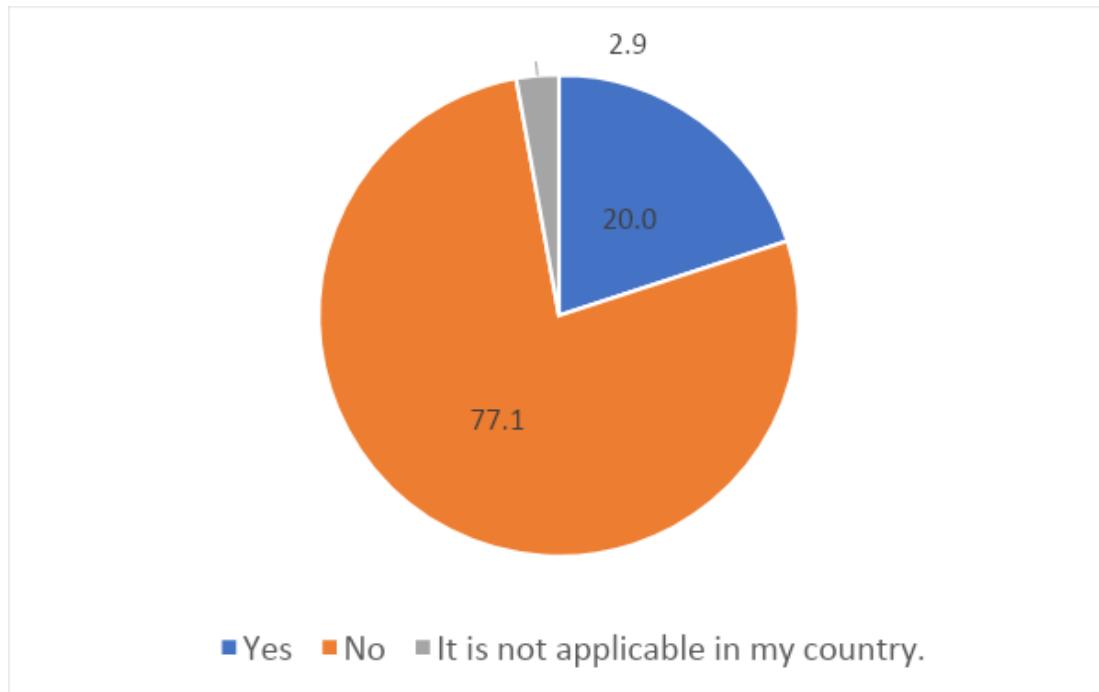
**Table 19: Has your company received any information from the University regarding the advantages of collaborating with doctorate programmes and with the incorporation of future doctorate holders into the labour market?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	7	9.9	20.0
	No	27	38.0	77.1
	It is not applicable in my country.	1	1.4	2.9
	Total	35	49.3	100.0
Missing	Sistem	36	50.7	
Total		71	100.0	





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**Figure 13: Has your company received any information from the University regarding the advantages of collaborating with doctorate programmes?**



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### 3.8. Tasks that a doctorate holder would fulfil in the company

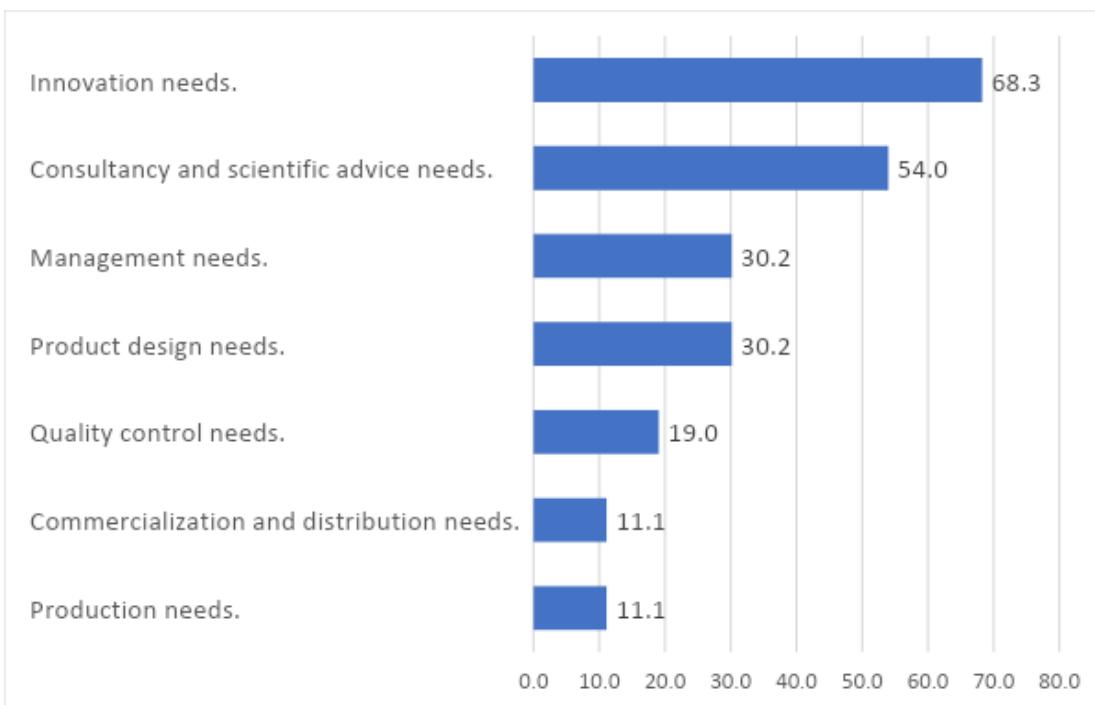
As for the tasks that a doctorate holder would fulfil in the company if they were employed, almost 70% of the companies surveyed chose those tasks that have to do with "innovation needs". Likewise, 54% considered that they would fulfil tasks related to "consultancy and scientific advice needs". Tasks related to "management needs" and "product design needs" were chosen by 30.2% of the companies. The less important tasks are those related to "commercialization and distribution needs" and "production needs", both with 11.1%.

**Table 20: If you decided to hire a doctorate holder, which tasks would that person cover?**

	Frequency	Percent
Innovation needs.	43	68.3
Consultancy and scientific advice needs.	34	54.0
Management needs.	19	30.2
Product design needs.	19	30.2
Quality control needs.	12	19.0
Commercialization and distribution needs.	7	11.1
Production needs.	7	11.1



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**Figure 14: If you decided to hire a doctorate holder, which tasks would that person cover?**



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**Table 21: [Another] If you decided to hire a doctorate holder, which tasks would that person cover? Please, select two options as maximum.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	All areas	0	0.0	0.0
	Depends on your doctorate and the needs of the company	1	1.4	12.5
	Development	1	1.4	12.5
	Team work	1	1.4	12.5
	Innovation, promotion and development of destination tourism	1	1.4	12.5
	Labor organization	1	1.4	12.5
	I would do the same job as a person with a college degree.	1	1.4	12.5
	Intellectual services, practical training	1	1.4	12.5
	Proof	1	1.4	12.5
	Total	8	11.3	100.0
Missing	Sistem	61	85.9	
	Total	71	100.0	





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### 3.9. The most important soft skills from the company's point of view

From the companies' point of view, three soft skills of a doctorate holder are stressed as the most important: "innovation and creativity", with 55.7%; "team work", with 47.1%; and "complex problems resolution", with 40%. The less important soft skills are "rationalization", with 8.6%, and "conflict management", with 4.3%.

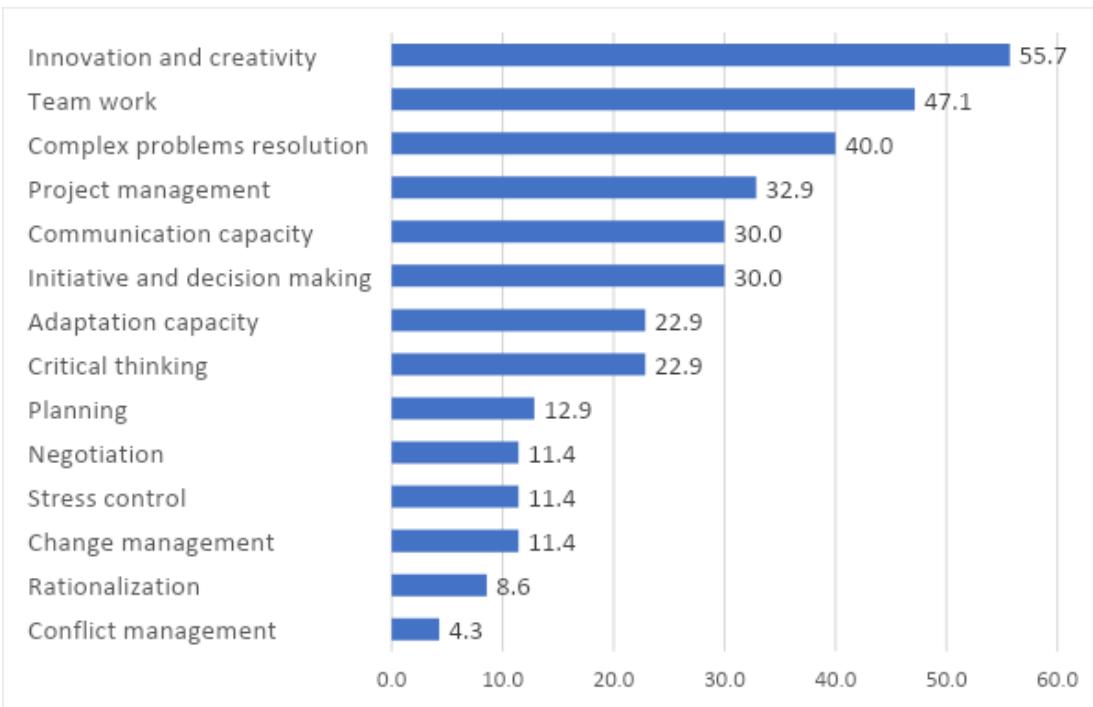
**Table 22: Please, select the three most important soft skills of a doctorate holder from your company's point of view:**

	Frequency	Percent
Innovation and creativity	39	55.7
Team work	33	47.1
Complex problems resolution	28	40.0
Project management	23	32.9
Communication capacity	21	30.0
Initiative and decision making	21	30.0
Adaptation capacity	16	22.9
Critical thinking	16	22.9





Planning	9	12.9
Negotiation	8	11.4
Stress control	8	11.4
Change management	8	11.4
Rationalization	6	8.6
Conflict management	3	4.3



**Figure 15: Please, select the three most important soft skills of a doctorate holder from your company's point of view:**

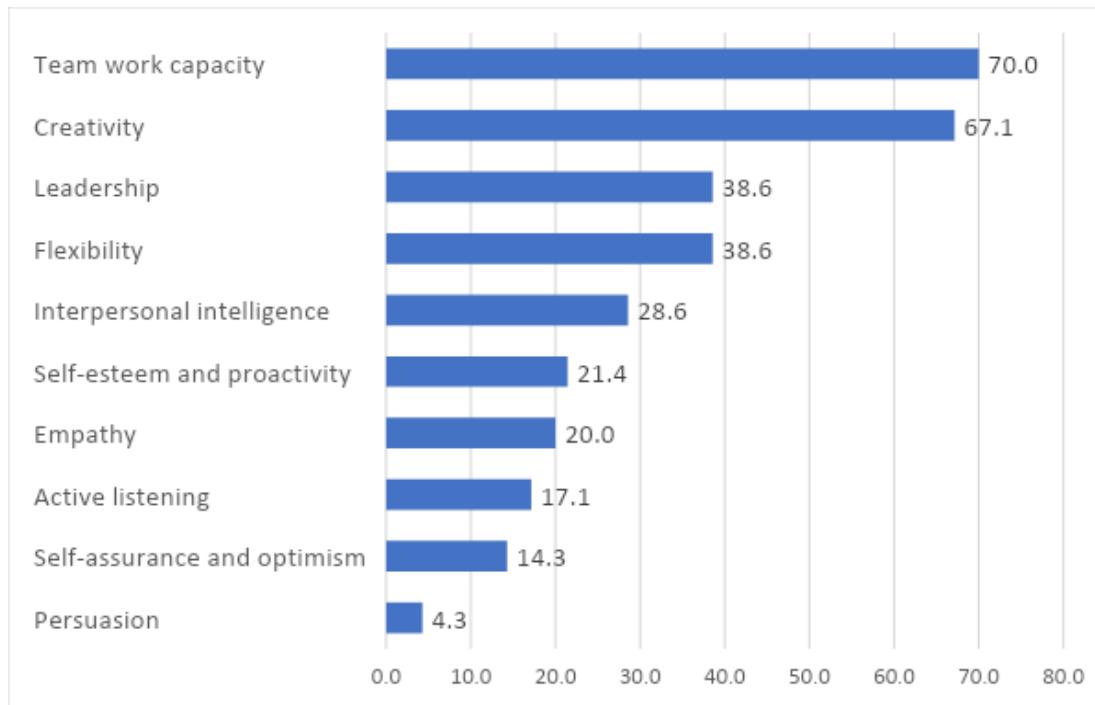


### 3.10. The most important interpersonal and social skills from the company's point of view

Apart from the soft skills, there are a series of interpersonal and social skills that the companies considered as essential to hire a doctorate holder. The skills stressed in our study by order of importance are as follows: "Team work capacity", considered as essential by 70% of the companies surveyed; "creativity", by 67.1%; and "leadership" and "flexibility", both with the same percentage, 38.6%. They considered "self-assurance and optimism", with 14.3%, and "persuasion", with 4.3%, as the less important interpersonal and social skills.

**Table 23: Please, select the three most important interpersonal and social skills of a doctorate holder from your company's point of view:**

	Frequency	Percent
Team work capacity	49	70.0
Creativity	47	67.1
Leadership	27	38.6
Flexibility	27	38.6
Interpersonal intelligence	20	28.6
Self-esteem and proactivity	15	21.4
Empathy	14	20.0
Active listening	12	17.1
Self-assurance and optimism	10	14.3
Persuasion	3	4.3



**Figure 16: Please, select the three most important interpersonal and social skills of a doctorate holder from your company's point of view:**



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### 3.11. The most valued abilities

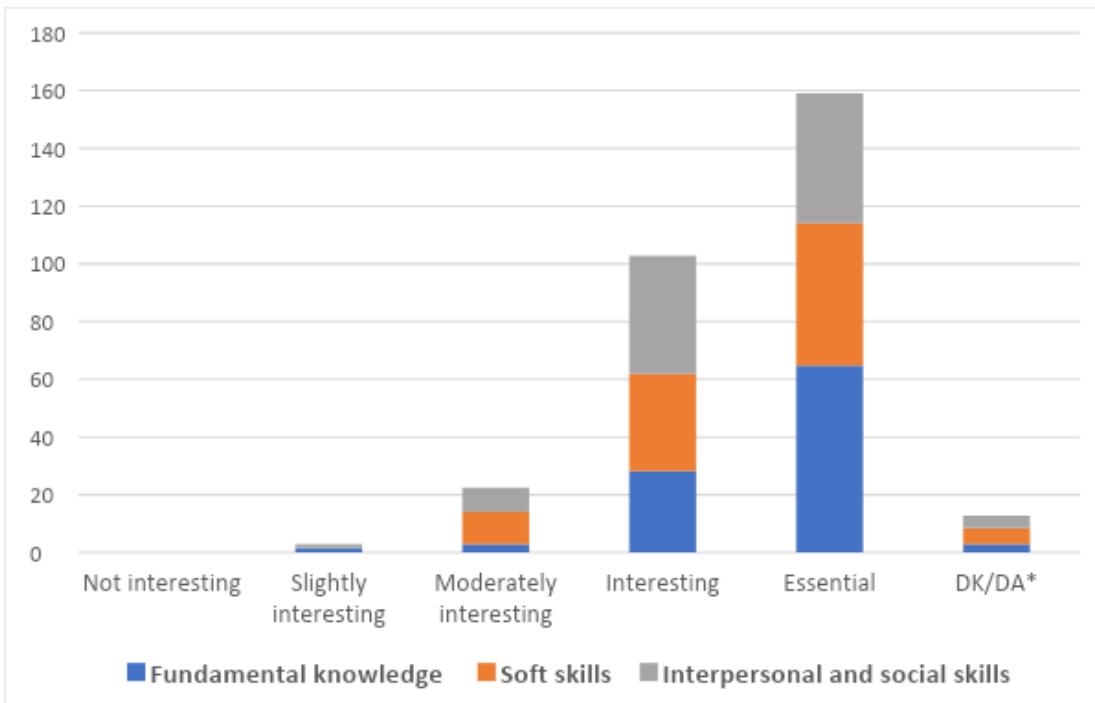
Generally, the ability most valued by companies to employ a doctorate holder was “fundamental knowledge”, considered as essential by 64.8% of the companies that have participated in this study. “Interpersonal and social skills” were qualified as interesting by 40.8% of the companies, and “soft skills” as moderately interesting.

**Table 24: If you decided to incorporate a doctorate holder, which abilities would you value the most in that person?**

	Not interesting	Slightly interesting	Moderately interesting	Interesting	Essential	DK/DA*
Fundamental knowledge	0.0	1.4	2.8	28.2	64.8	2.8
Soft skills	0.0	0.0	11.3	33.8	49.3	5.6
Interpersonal and social skills	0.0	1.4	8.5	40.8	45.1	4.2



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**Figure 17: If you decided to incorporate a doctorate holder, which abilities would you value the most in that person?**



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## 4. CONCLUSIONS.

- The sectors more related to the goals of the companies that have participated in this study are “marine renewable energy” and “shipbuilding and repair”.
- Of all the companies surveyed, 67.6% have been developing their activity for three years and a half.
- Around 30% of the companies have “between 2 and 10 employees”, and almost 20% considered that this number will not vary in the next 5 years.
- Both the University of Split, Croatia, and the University of Cádiz, Spain, are the universities that are closest to more than the half of the companies surveyed.
- The scope in which the companies considered that are more innovative is in their “novel perspectives”, and they are less innovative in the “products” offered.
- As for hiring a doctorate holder, 63.4% of the companies stated that they have not hired any doctorate holder in the last 5 years, unlike the remaining 36.6%, which have hired one doctorate holder in the last five years. Of all the companies that have hired one doctorate holder in the last five years, 42.3% stated that the decision was “very useful”, and 34.6% stated that these employees have held “leadership positions” in their companies.





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- Of all the companies surveyed, 45.1% considered that a doctorate holder “is not an overqualified profile for the company”, 23.9% stated that “no, but the salary required for a doctorate holder is difficult to be assumed by the company”, and 16.9% stated that “yes, it is an overqualified profile for my company”.
  
- More than the half of them, 50.7%, would be willing to train doctoral students within an industrial PhD programme or to host them within an internship programme. Moreover, 69.4% would be willing to hire these students once they have obtained their PhD.
  
- Nevertheless, more than 70% of the companies surveyed have not received any information from the University regarding the advantages of both collaborating with doctorate programmes and incorporating future doctorate holders into the labour market.
  
- Almost 70% of the companies considered that the tasks fulfilled by a doctorate holder in the company in case of being hired would be related to “innovation needs”.
  
- The companies considered that the most important soft skills are “innovation and creativity”, “team work”, and “complex problems resolution”.
  
- The most important interpersonal and social skills from the companies’ point of view are “team work capacity”, “creativity”, “leadership”, and “flexibility”.
  
- Generally, the most valued ability by the companies to employ a doctorate holder is “fundamental knowledge”.

