



# **Comparison of PhD Salaries Values and Advancement Criteria at Swedish Universities**

By PhD Chapter at KTH on September 25th, 2023

# The Perception of KTH Students





# Our Student Sample

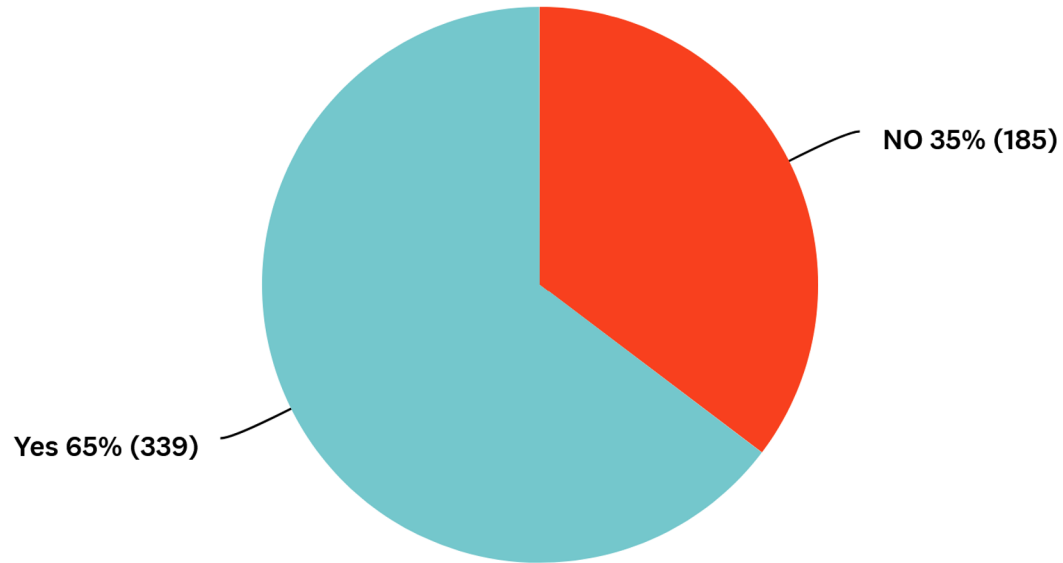
- **638 responses** ≈ **40%** of PhDs registered with at least 1% study pace in Ladok;
- Percentage of PhD students weighted by registered students within each school:
  - ABE ≈ **30%**
  - CBH ≈ **44%**
  - EECS ≈ **44%**
  - ITM ≈ **37%**
  - SCI ≈ **41%**
- **The sample is diverse in gender**, citizenship, year started, as well as over all schools.
- Due to the very small group of students having started in 2010-2016, **no statistically significant comparison can be made when comparing by year started** and they are therefore excluded from this kind of analysis.
- Notice that the answers included here also includes the ones provided by Industrial PhD students (which obtains a slighter higher salary).



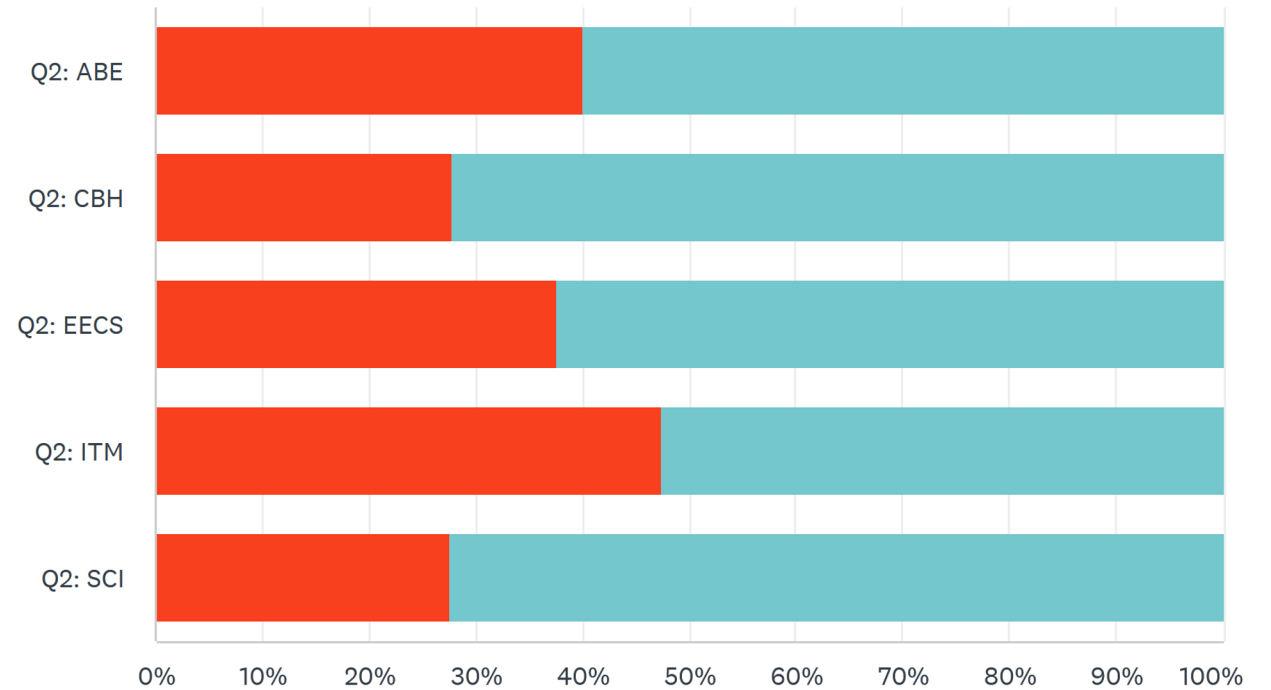


# Salary and Benefits (Data)

**Q91:** Do you think your KTH-salary as a third-cycle student is fair?



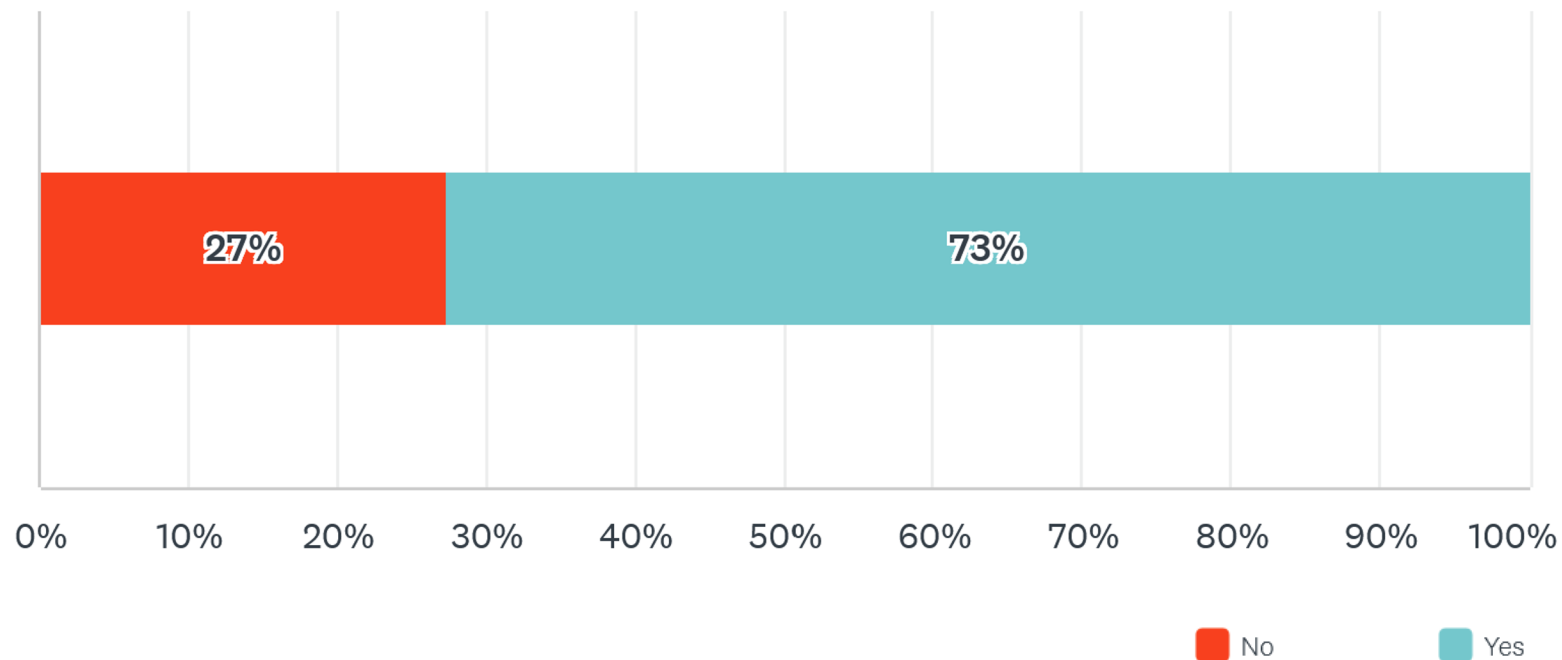
## Correlation Per School





# Salary and Benefits (Data)

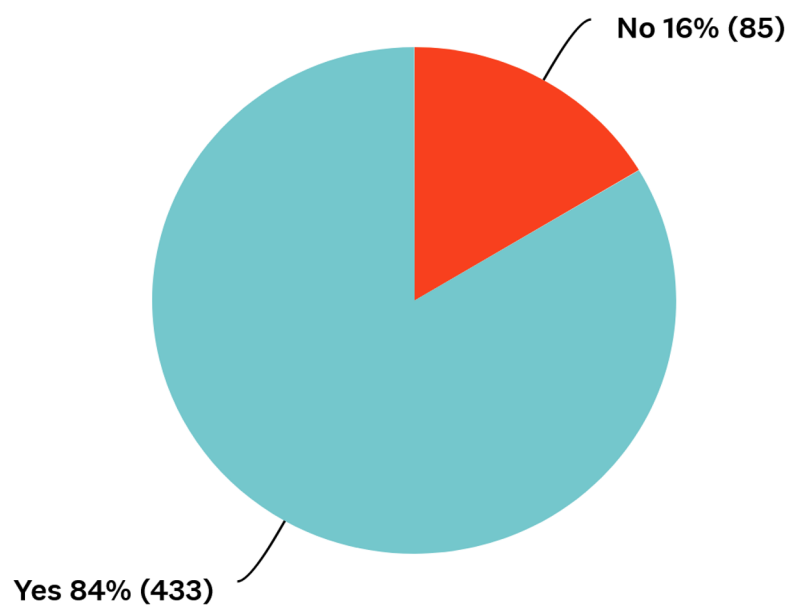
**Q92:** Do you feel that your KTH-salary is sufficient for an adequate living-standard in Stockholm (for a third-cycle student)?





# Salary and Benefits (Data)

Q94: Are you happy with the KTH-benefits (i.e. the Benify-portal / KTH for me)?





# PhD Ladder (Analysis)

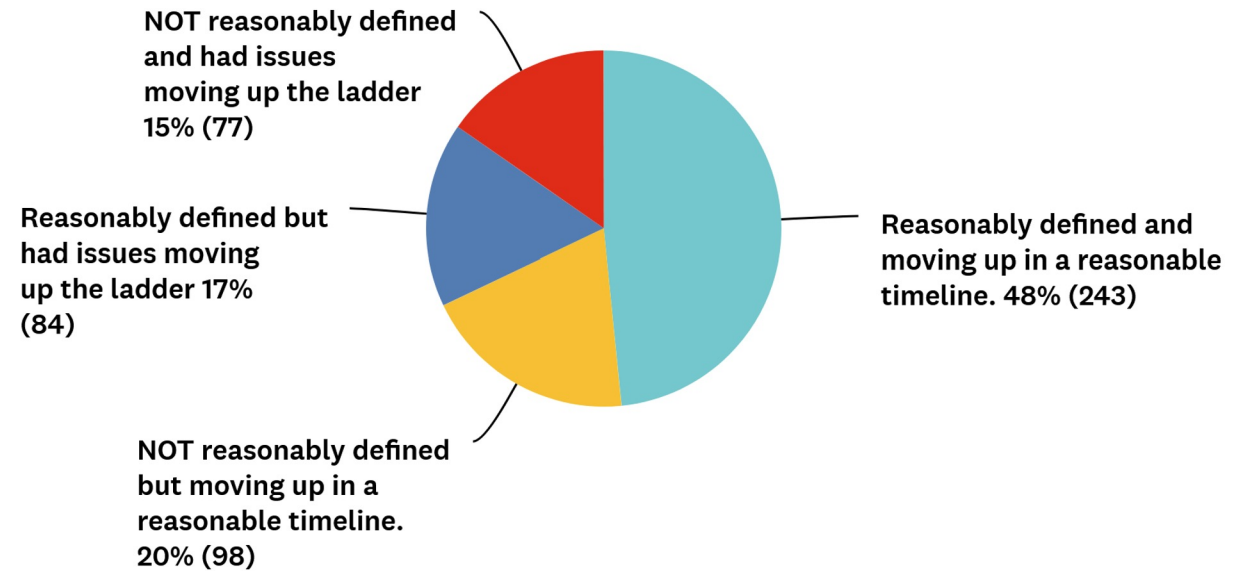
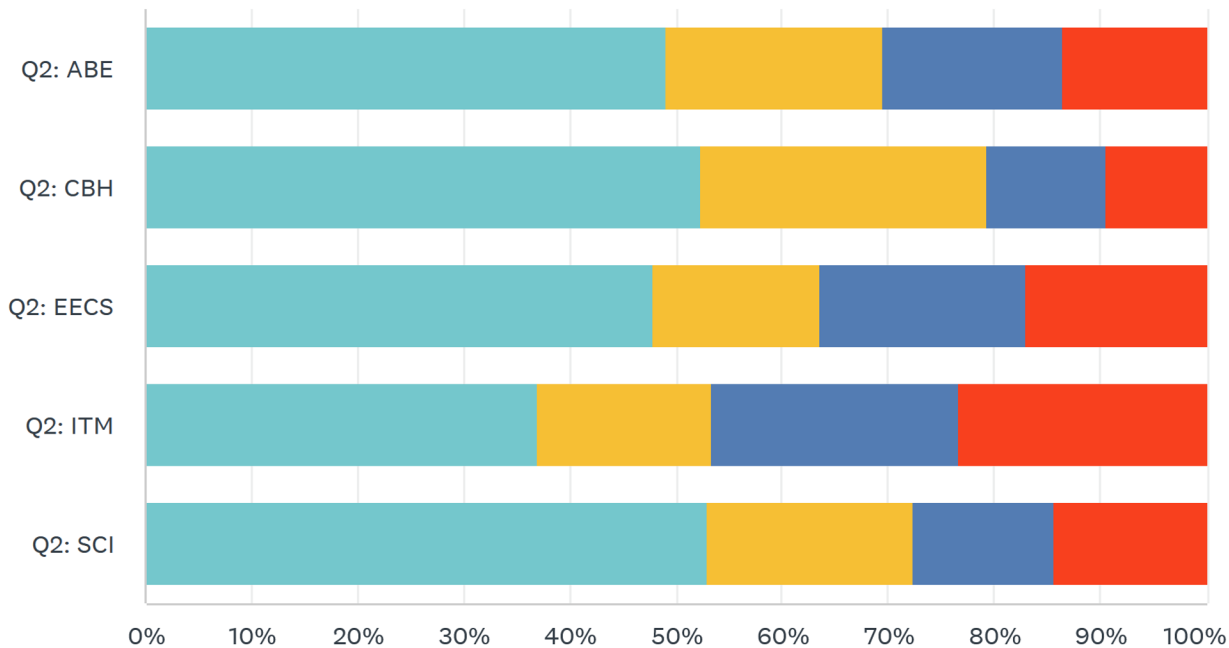
- **35%** of phd students **do not think the PhD ladder is reasonably defined;**
- **32%** of phd students **have faced issues moving up the ladder;**
- Comments (95) regarding the PhD salary ladder:
  - The ladder should be time based instead.
  - Criterias are vaguely formulated and there is no clear standardization. **This leads to each supervisor dictating the circumstances.**





# PhD Ladder (Data)

**Q93:** Has the progression in the salary steps (30%-50%-80%) been defined reasonably (what research output constitute each stage) in eISP and moving up the ladder took place in a reasonable time line (roughly one step every 12-15 months)?



# Salaries and Advancement Criteria

The chosen universities for comparison are either technical universities or ranked at QS World Rankings.



# KTH (2022/2023)

There are four steps:

- Basic salary (step 1): 30 800 kr
- 30% (step 2): 31 600 kr
- 50% (step 3): 33 800 kr
- 80% (step 4): 35 100 kr

Advancement to steps 2, 3 and 4 is done after achieving the sub targets defined on ISP, corresponding on 30%, 50%, 80%. In absence of explicit sub-targets, the criteria is time-based. Salaries are the same regardless of the programme.



# Blekinge University of Technology (2022/2023)

There are three steps:

- Basic salary (step 1): 31 200 kr
- Stage 2: (Not disclosed)
- Stage 3: 37 200 kr

Advancement to steps 2 and 3 is done at 60 and 120 credits. The main supervisor is explicitly responsible for reporting this to HR.



# Chalmers University of Technology (2022/2023)

There are two steps:

- Basic salary (step 1): 31 600 kr
- 50% (step 2): 36 700 kr

Salaries are negotiated for three years, with the salary for 2023/2024 being set at 32 150 kr (basic) and 37 350 kr (step 2). Step 2 is achieved through a licenciate or a mid-term seminar.



# Göteborg University (2022/2023)

There are three steps:

- Initial: 28 675 kr – 40 600 kr
- 50%: 30 950 kr – 41 700 kr
- 80%: 33 400 kr – 45 100 kr

Salaries depends where doctorand is allocated, with highest salaries being for medicine and lowest for humanities. Technical programmes (IT, Physics, Math) have intermediate salaries. IT ranges from 32 500 kr (initial) to 37 800 kr (80%). Advancement is subjective and dependent of division. At 100%, there is an extra salary which is individual.



# Karolinska Institute (2022/2023)

There are four steps:

- 1-12 months: 28 500 kr
- 13-24 months: 29 000 kr
- 25-36 months: 31 200 kr
- After 37 months: 31 700 kr
- Last stage: 33 200 kr (+3000 kr)

Stages are objectively based in number of months. Salaries are higher with medical degree (initial: 31 200 kr) and with experience as a doctor or dentist (initial: 33 200 kr). The last stage is a salary paid after the doctoral defense, and also includes a 3 000 kr lump sum.

# Linköping University (2022/2023)

There are three steps:

- Basic salary (step 1): 28 500 kr – 33 550 kr
- 30% (step 2): 29 050 kr – 34 800 kr
- 60% (step 3): 30 300 kr – 36 800 kr

Salary depends on which division the student is allocated. 60% step is reached either by a licenciate or by claims of achieving 60% of doctoral studies.





# Luleå University of Technology (2022/2023)

There are two steps:

- Basic salary (step 1): 32 800 kr
- 50% (step 2): 38 200 kr

Step 2 is achieved through a licenciate, a mid-term seminar or 150 credits. The doctoral student is the explicitly responsible for contacting the department administrator for salary promotion.

# Lund University (2022/2023)

There are four steps:

- Initial Salary: 30 200 kr - 33 000 kr
- Stage 2: +1 100 kr
- Stage 3: +1 100 kr
- Stage 4: +600kr

Initial salary depends on which programme the student is. Advancement is based solely on the number of högskolepoängs (hp) the student has, with Stage 2, 3 and 4 being reached at 60, 120 and 180 hp. If the student has work experience, salary can be additionally increased from 1000 kr (1 to 2 years of experience) to up to 4000 kr (4 years or more).

# Lund University (2022/2023)

PhD Programme	Initial Salary
Immunoteknologi Kemi	30 200 kr
Kemiteknik Livsmedelsteknik Biomedicinsk teknik (BME) Teknik och samhälle	31 400 kr
Arkitektur och Byggd miljö Fysik Matematik Energivetenskaper Design	32 500 kr
Elektro- och informationsteknik (EIT) Maskinteknik Byggetenskaper Bygg och miljöteknologi Reglerteknik Datavetenskap Teknisk ekonomi och logistik	33 000 kr



# Stockholm University (2022/2023)

There are three steps:

- Basic salary: 28 000 kr
- 50%: 29 900 kr
- 80%: 31 400 kr

Advancement criteria is defined by percentual of PhD completion, with no objective criteria (not stated on the source).



# Umeå University (2022/2023)

There are four steps:

- Basic salary: 29 600 kr
- Stage 2: 30 600 kr
- Stage 3: 33 200 kr
- Stage 4: 34 200 kr

Stages are objectively based in time or in number of credits. Stage 2 is achieved by 2 years or 60 hps, Stage 3 is 3 years or 120 hps. And the final stage consists of a minimum of 195 hps.



# Uppsala University (2022/2023)

There are multiple steps:

- Basic salary: 29 000 kr
- Year 2: 29 700 kr
- Year 3: 31 200 kr
- 50%: 31 700 kr
- 80% : 34 300 kr

Salaries are higher if one has medical degree (läkarexamen). "Year" is the number of years completed by the doctoral student (i.e., 12 and 24 months). Normally 50% and 80% should be achieved by 24 and 38 months.



# Remarks

- **Research of the universities located in Stockholm** (Stockholm University and Karolinska Institute) **are significantly different than KTH's** and, as such, should not be used as a metric of comparison (i.e., due to funding opportunities). In that regard, Chalmers University and Lund University would be the closest ones to KTH.
- In special, **Chalmers salaries** for the middle step **are nearly 9% higher despite the cost of living in Gothenburg being 18% cheaper than Stockholm.** This do not consider the possible gap that already exists as Chalmers has set its 2023/2024 salary already.
- **Lower salaries means that it is hard to attract the *best* talents, especially Swedish students** (roughly 70% of respondents are non-EU). Having not enough Swedish-speaking TAs leads to strain on the existing TAs, making the quality of their PhD experience and research to drop, which makes KTH less enticing as an employer, leading to fewer Swedish students applying to open PhD positions, or even existing ones dropping out.

# **Other Information**





# Taxes

City (Kommun)	Tax Rate ( <i>Kommunalskatt</i> )
Stockholm	29.82%
Uppsala	32.85%
Linköping	31.75%
Luleå	33.84%
Göteborg	32.60%
Lund	32.42%
Umeå	34.15%



## To maintain the same standard of living with 30 000 kr in Stockholm, you will need...

City (Kommun)	Equivalent value of 30 000 kr in Stockholm
Uppsala	24 151 kr
Linköping	23 060 kr
Luleå	22 485 kr
Göteborg	25 252 kr
Lund	24 785 kr
Umeå	21 991 kr

