

GGNB Survey 2020

Abstract

This report provides the results of the 2020 GGNB PhD student survey and its interpretation by the student survey group. 384 GGNB students (almost three quarters of the enrolled students) completed an online questionnaire with 40 questions on PhD supervision, funding, work conditions, motivation, work-life balance, and personal experience with bullying, harassment and mental health. In the report, the survey group visualizes the students' answers and correlates topics of particular interest to the survey group with proxies for satisfaction, work environment, and motivation. The results are also discussed in comparison to the Max Planck PhDnet Survey 2019.

The survey finds that GGNB's procedures regarding the structured PhD in the natural and life sciences in Göttingen are well-established and overall appreciated by the students. PhD students with work contracts on average receive a higher remuneration than those with stipends. There are strong statistical associations of work-life balance with life satisfaction, and supervision quality with students' motivation and life satisfaction. While some of the survey participants reported experiencing or witnessing some form of harassment, discrimination, bullying, sexism or racism at the workplace or indicated PhD-related issues and conflicts, the majority of them did not seek help from official institutions beyond their institute.

Overall, the large majority of students is satisfied with their choice of joining GGNB and their supervision. Interestingly, the correlation analysis suggests that ensuring high supervision quality and well-managed working environments may have a substantial impact on the motivation and satisfaction of doctoral students. With only a minority reporting conflicts and issues to the GGNB Office, GGNB management may currently not have a complete overview of all the challenges faced by their students. The survey group concludes that expanding existing reporting structures while fostering the trust in the procedures, as well as promoting good supervision practices, might further improve conditions for students, ensuring excellent doctoral education in Göttingen.

If you would like to receive the complete version of the Survey Report, please send a short e-mail to ggnb@gwdg.de.