

# Increasing employability of doctorates in emerging sectors with soft skills training

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# Overview

- importance of soft skills training
- increasing employability of doctorates
- project OUTDOC: <https://outdoc.usal.es/>
- research:
  - employers' expectations
  - perceived soft skills levels
- doctorates prefer employments in academia

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# Study goals

- increasing employability in emerging economic sectors
- simplified transition PhD → labour market
- reducing mismatch between employers' expectations and doctorates' skills
- growing numbers of PhDs – stagnating numbers of PhDs in industry
- inability to find employment in the industry

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# Importance of soft skills

- stand out during job search
- competitive advantage over other doctorates
- career development (team leadership, relationship with colleagues)
- PhDs often occupy managerial positions
  - Communication skills
  - Leadership skills
  - Management skills (organise work)
  - Personal effectiveness (punctuality, work ethic, flexibility)

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# Soft skills in workplaces

- modern workplaces based on interpersonal skills:
  - active listening
  - collaboration
  - presentation of ideas
  - communication with colleagues
- employers demand employees with developed soft skills
- soft skills training:
  - trained by Universities
  - trained by employers (mentoring, learning-by-doing)

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# Soft skills in companies

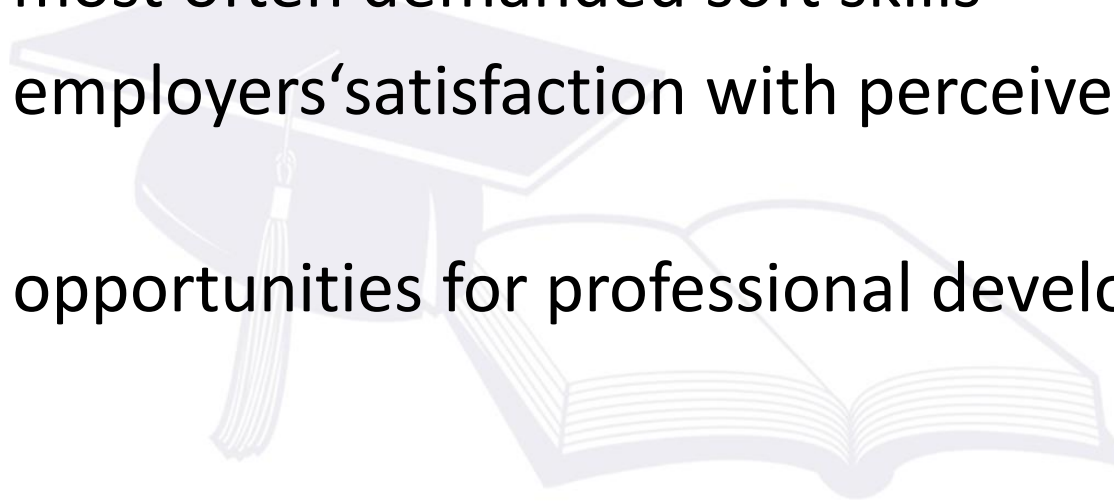
- reducing mismatch between employers' demands and expertise of doctorates
- identifying employers' needs
- doctorates' benefits: unique skills sets (research skills)
- emerging economic sectors: need for highly skilled researchers

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# Study structure

- part 1: most often demanded soft skills
- part 2: employers' satisfaction with perceived soft skills
- part 3: opportunities for professional development



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# Most demanded skills

1.	Teamwork
2.	Willingness to learn
3.	Verbal communication
4.	Accountability
5.	Work ethic
6.	Self-motivation and initiative
7.	Professionalism
8.	Writing
9.	Problem-solving and decision-making
10.	Organisation

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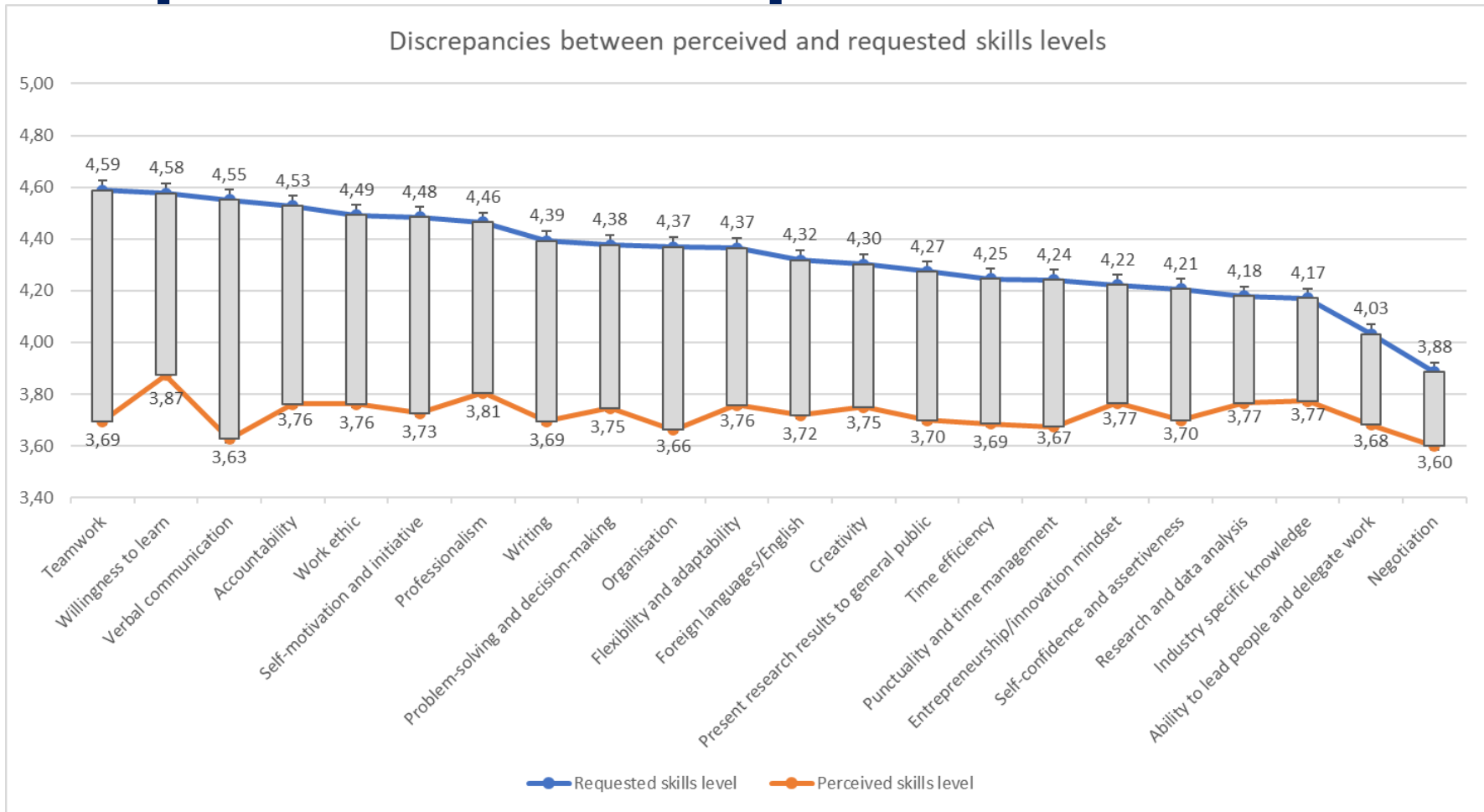
# Employers' satisfaction with perceived skills

	Exceed expectations		Short of expectations
1.	Willingness to learn	1.	Negotiation
2.	Professionalism	2.	Verbal communication
3.	Industry specific knowledge	3.	Organisation
4.	Research and data analysis	4.	Punctuality and time management
5.	Entrepreneurship/innovation mindset	5.	Ability to lead people and delegate work
6.	Accountability		
7.	Work ethic		
8.	Flexibility and adaptability		
9.	Creativity		
10.	Problem-solving and decision-making		

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# Discrepancies between expectations and perceived skills



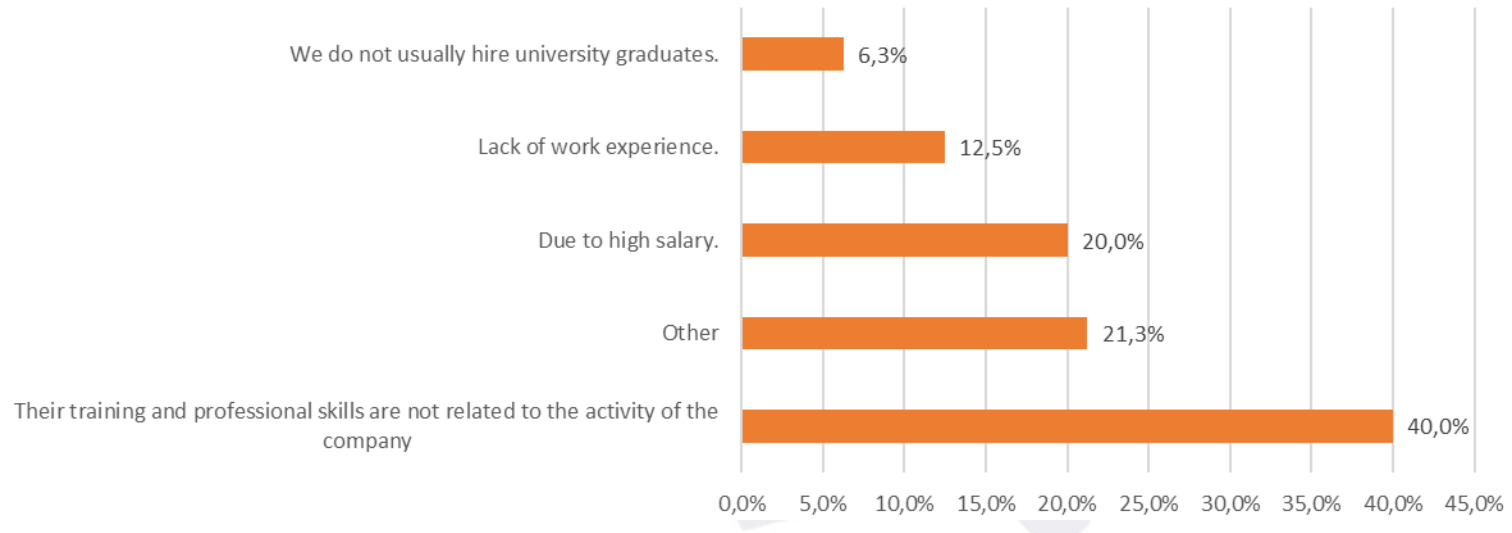
# Company size and employment of doctorates

- medium-sized and large companies more likely to employ doctorates
- research and development departments
- funds for higher salaries
- positions of doctorates in companies:
  - managers
  - researchers
  - less often specialists, consultants or analysts

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# Reasons against employment of doctorates

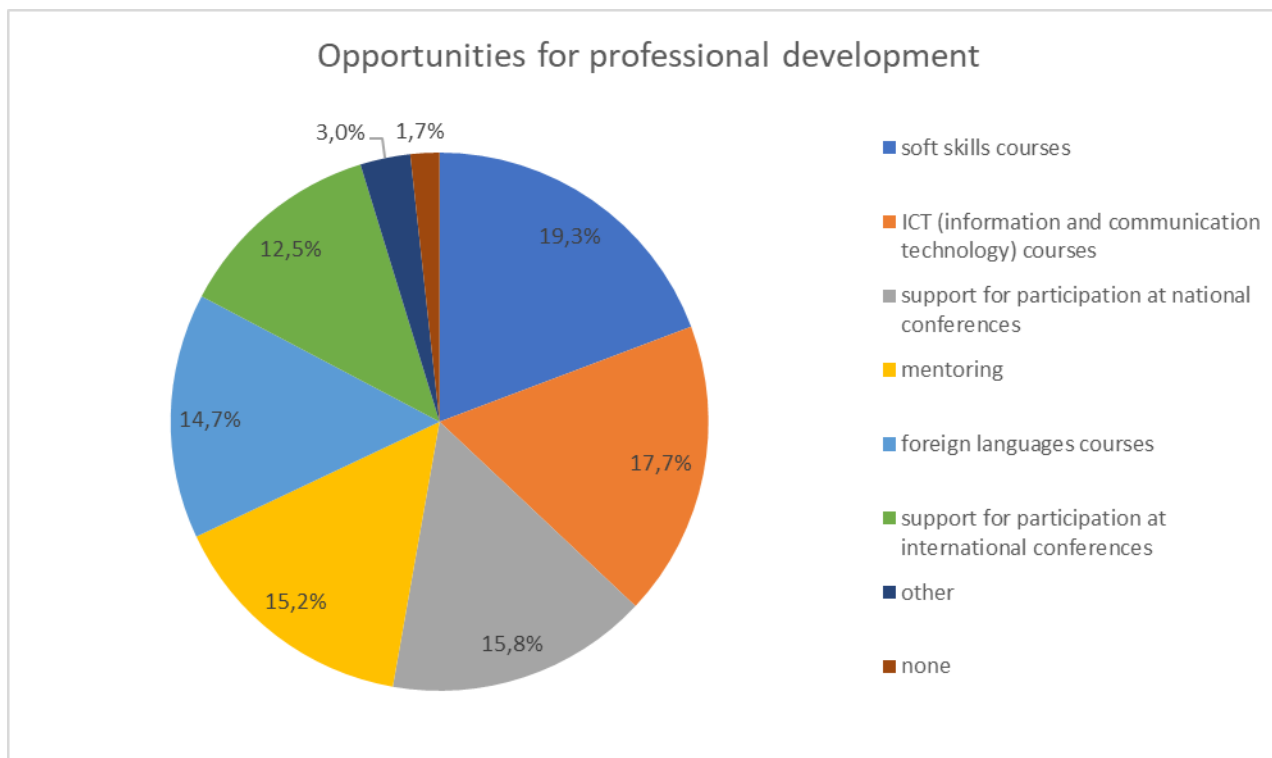


- do not plan to stay long-term
- want to occupy higher positions very soon
- small companies: lack of funds
- companies prefer multidisciplinary employees

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# Opportunities for professional development



# Project OUTDOC

- development of an online soft skills training programme
- training ten skills with the highest discrepancies
- testing and mobility period

1.	Verbal communication
2.	Teamwork
3.	Accountability and work ethic
4.	Self-motivation
5.	Organisation and punctuality/ time efficiency
6.	Writing
7.	Problem-solving and decision-making
8.	Flexibility
9.	Ability to present results to the general public
10.	Creativity

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