

# Doctoral Education in Europe: Emerging Issues and Challenges

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## Structure

- EUA Profile
- Activities of EUA in the third cycle: from projects to the Council for Doctoral Education
- Results of the EUA Projects: Emerging issues, trends, challenges and continuing priorities
- EUA - CDE

## Brief Profile of the EUA

- Established in 2001 in Brussels
- Non-governmental membership organisation
- 800 individual University Members
- 45 countries
- 35 National Rectors' Conference Members
- Independent Voice for the University Sector:
  - ✓ participation in policy dialogue (focus: EHEA and ERA)
  - ✓ provide input to policy dialogue through projects and surveys
  - ✓ provide services to its members

## Doctoral Education in the European context

- Doctoral education - main link between the EHEA and ERA
- Doctoral education in Europe – in a process of major transformation
- Drivers of change:
  - ✓ Bologna Process
  - ✓ policy objectives of the EU (especially ambitious Lisbon objectives, ERA Green Paper, Modernisation Agenda for universities)
  - ✓ challenges of the fast growing global competition and changing labour market
- EUA has played a key role in setting the new vision for Doctoral Education in Europe

## EUA and Doctoral Education

- **Berlin Communiqué (2003):** Doctoral Programmes = the third cycle
- **EUA Doctoral Programmes Project 1 (2004-2005):** aim to link its activities to policy debate and to feed into recommendations for Bergen 2005 (Salzburg Principles, Report 2005)
- **Bergen Communiqué (2005):** BFUG invites EUA to prepare a report on the further development of the Salzburg Principles, to be presented to Ministers in London 2007
- **EUA Project 2: Doctoral Programmes in Europe (2005 – 2007, Nice conference 2006, Report 2007)**
- **London Communiqué:** EUA asked to continue to support the sharing of experience among HEIs on the range of innovative doctoral programmes and other crucial issues
- **DOC-CAREER Project (2006-2008)**
- **Lausanne June 2008:** Launch of the Council for Doctoral Education

## Key Issues Emerging from the Projects: Organisation and Structures (1)

- Trend towards **structured programmes and doctoral/research/ graduate schools**
  - ✓ Doctoral/ graduate/ research school is an independent organisational unit with a clear effective administration, strong leadership and specific funding supporting this structure
- **Models:**
  - ✓ master students & doctoral candidates & provide crosscutting administrative and transferable skills developed support
  - ✓ doctoral candidates only, often organised around a discipline or research theme & may involve several institutions
- **Aim:** to achieve critical mass, stimulate research environment, enhance interdisciplinarity and interinstitutional collaboration, improve quality while keeping diversity
- One goal, different routes

## Organisation and Structures (cont.)

- **TRENDS V survey (920 responses):**
  - ✓ 30% of institutions in Europe have established doctoral schools
  - ✓ only 5 of 46 countries (22%) have solely individual-based programmes
- **Doctoral/ Graduate/ Research Schools are an efficient, but not the only way of organising doctoral education. We need to preserve diversity of organisational models and to avoid prescribed models and overregulation.**
- **To improve collaboration of European universities, we need coherent and compatible structures, but at the same time to preserve diversity & promote flexibility.**



## Access and Admission (2)

- Flexibility in admission procedures and full institutional autonomy - important to keep (as there is growing diversity of university missions and increase importance of lifelong learning) provided fairness and transparency is ensured
- The Master, with its growing diversity, remains the main, but not the only entry point to doctoral training (fast track possible for excellent students)
- Greater attention has to be paid to social dimension of the third cycle (equality of access to the third cycle)



## Supervision and Assessment (3)

- Supervision – a major topic of debate – an important aspect of quality:
  - ✓ Arrangements based on a contract btw PhD candidate, supervisor and institution with rights and responsibilities = good practice in many HEIs
  - ✓ Multiple supervision encouraged
  - ✓ Supervision should be recognised as a part of workload
  - ✓ Increased need for professional skills development for supervisors (training of supervisors)
  - ✓ Assessment of the thesis – objective and transparent, done by university expert committee (pref. with international rep) without the supervisor as a member – needs further discussion;

## Transferable Skills Development (4)

- Transferable skills training should be an integral part of first, second and third cycles
- The aim at the third cycle: to raise awareness among doctoral candidates of the importance of recognising and enhancing the skills that they develop and acquire through research, as a means of improving their employment prospects & career development inside & outside academia
- Adequate funding of transferable skills training – crucial
- Teaching transferable skills should be recognised in evaluation of academic staff involved

## Continuing Challenges: Research Careers (1)

- Universities together with public authorities share a collective responsibility for promoting attractive research careers for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers.
- Status of doctoral candidate= early stage researcher (out of 37 countries responding in survey in 24 countries status is mixed; in 10 countries candidates have status of a student, in 3 countries – status of an employee)
- Whatever the status is, it is crucial that the candidate is given all commensurate rights (healthcare, pension, social security)

## Internationalisation and Mobility (2)

- Universities are encouraged to enhance their efforts to support international institutional cooperation and mobility at doctoral level as part of their institutional strategies:
  - ✓ joint doctoral programmes, co-tutelles, European doctorates, etc.
  - ✓ transsectoral mobility (doctoral programmes and collaboration with industry)
  - ✓ internationalisation inside universities such as recruiting more international staff, organisation of int. summer schools and conferences; using new technologies for e-learning or teleconferences, etc.
  - ✓ mobility as brain circulation rather than brain drain (partnerships)
- Mobility has to be **recognised as an added value for career development** of ESRs

## Development of New Doctorates (3)

- A range of innovative doctoral programmes are emerging as a response to the changes of a fast-growing global labour market (professional doctorates, industrial doctorates, European doctorates etc.)
- Diversity of doctoral programmes reflects diversity of European HEIs that have autonomy to develop their missions and priorities
- Consensus: **original research** has to remain **the main component of all doctorates**
- No consensus on new doctorates in Europe (esp. professional doctorates in the UK - further debate on new doctorates as well as new vision of the doctorate is needed).

## Funding, Legal & Regulatory Frameworks (4)

### EUA Funding Survey 2006 sent to ministries (46)

- Doctoral Education is under major reform in many countries – hence responses were incomplete in many cases: few provided funding information
- Survey data demonstrate quite **varied jurisdictions and responsibilities** for the funding of doctoral education in European countries between ministries, research councils and other funding agencies
- **Funding support is moving towards more structured doctoral programmes** with focus on doctoral schools, on a competitive funding basis.
  - ✓ 17 countries reported on the increase of funding levels in recent years
- **substantial gap** between the Bologna 3rd Cycle “policy push” and the limited availability of data on essential issues, eg funding, necessary to develop evidence-based policy
  - ✓ only 18 countries monitor completion rate



## Running Projects: DOC-CAREERS Project

- **EUA DOC-CAREERS Project** (From Innovative Doctoral Training to Enhanced Career Opportunities, 2006-2008)
- Objectives:
  - ✓ Development of transferable skills and competences in the context of employability and career perspectives in private and public sectors
  - ✓ Nature and extent of university and industry collaboration in doctoral programmes
  - ✓ Mobility strategies for doctoral career development (cross-border, inter-institutional, inter-sectoral)
  - ✓ Requirements for more systematic collection of data at the university level to provide the basis for analysis of doctoral candidate's career paths
- Final Report expected in autumn 2008



## New EUA Activity: EUA Council for Doctoral Education

- **EUA Council for Doctoral Education (EUA-CDE)** – a new membership service of EUA. This initiative builds upon continuous efforts to provide a forum for cooperation and exchange of good practices among doctoral programmes and schools across universities in Europe.

## **EUA-CDE Aims and Objectives (1)**

*EUA-CDE will contribute to the development, advancement and improvement of doctoral education and research training in Europe, by:*

- Promoting cooperation and exchange of good practices on issues of common concern;
- Encouraging and supporting the development of institutional policies within member institutions;
- Identifying and monitoring the trends in doctoral education, inside and outside Europe;

## **EUA-CDE Aims and Objectives (2)**

- Improving the availability of data and information on doctoral education in Europe;
- Acting as a representative voice for doctoral education in European universities in dialogue with stakeholders;
- Contributing to strengthening the international dimension of doctoral programmes & enhancing the visibility of doctoral schools & programmes, in Europe and internationally.
- Providing policy advice to the EUA Board and Council.

## Benefits of CDE membership (1)

- Access to member-only on-line forum and exchange and to exclusive events on crucial issues affecting doctoral education in your institution
- Unique opportunity to network and benchmark with colleagues from across Europe
- Regular and exclusive information on developments and trends in doctoral education, policy issues, 'must attend events', etc.
- Directory of all other members and database of interlocutors across Europe.

## Benefits of CDE membership (2)

- Participation in activities aimed at enhancing the quality of doctoral education in your institution:  
Opportunity to take part and to give significant input in targeted workshops/research projects/studies that will be organised/carried out by the CDE
- Opportunity to increase your institution's visibility in an international context:  
Global events either organised by EUA-CDE or where EUA-CDE is represented thus contributing to the internationalisation of European doctoral education.

## Membership

- Open to all full members of EUA
  - ✓ Annual membership fee: 1.000 €
- Open to universities awarding doctoral degrees which are not EUA members
  - ✓ Annual membership fee: 4.000 €
- Application procedure: see [www.eua.be/cde](http://www.eua.be/cde)
  - ✓ Application form to be downloaded on [www.eua.be/cde](http://www.eua.be/cde)
  - ✓ Signature by the Rector/President/Vice-Chancellor of the applicant institution

## EUA-CDE Launch Conference

- EUA-CDE Launch Conference: 1 – 3 June 2008 in Lausanne
- Aim of the conference: to set the CDE agenda for next 2 years (questionnaire on topics and activities given to all participants)
- Survey results:
  - ✓ **Preferred types of activities:**
    - data collection and data sharing
    - thematic conferences
    - thematic workshops
    - thematic and regional seminars
    - working groups
    - newsletter
    - publications.



## EUA-CDE Launch Conference (2)

- **Survey results:**
  - ✓ **Preferred topics (highest preference)**
    - Quality control, evaluation and review
    - Quality criteria for doctoral programmes
    - Institutional cooperation
    - Supervision requirements and conditions
    - Joint doctoral programmes
    - Doctoral programmes assessment
  - ✓ **Topics with lowest preference:**
    - Doctoral candidates' organisation
    - Thesis defence
    - Viva
    - Graduation
    - Thesis format, length and language
    - Assistantships
    - Attrition rates and time to degree
    - Ethical issues

## Next EUA-CDE Event

- **Workshop *Enhancing of Supervision: Professional Development and Assessment of Supervisors***
- **Dates: 8 – 9 January 2009**
- **Venue: Imperial College, London, UK**
- **More information and registration: [www.eua.be/cde](http://www.eua.be/cde) in autumn 2008**

[www.eua.be](http://www.eua.be)

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION**

