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
- **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 development 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.)
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-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
  - Application form to be downloaded on 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
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ATTENTION