



**EUA-CDE-**  
EUA Council for Doctoral Education

# news

## THE EUA COUNCIL FOR DOCTORAL EDUCATION: A Welcome Word

by Prof. Jean Chambaz  
Chair of the EUA-CDE  
Steering Committee  
Vice-President for Research,  
Université Pierre et Marie  
Curie - Paris VI



*Dear colleagues,  
Dear members of the EUA-CDE*

*This first Newsletter from the EUA Council for Doctoral Education is dedicated to our CDE Launch Conference, which many of you attended. This conference, hosted by the University of Lausanne on 1-3 June 2008, was the first event organised within our new structure. It gathered together colleagues interested in the field of doctoral education from across Europe, and was a wonderful opportunity for us to present this new platform, and to define more precisely our common challenges in the near future.*

*When it comes to the European Research Area, doctoral education certainly constitutes a core issue. This was made increasingly clear to EUA during its various projects in recent years to improve the discussions on doctoral reform across Europe. The time is now ripe to move from a mere reflection on doctoral education in general, to actually implementing this new vision.*

*EUA-CDE must be seen in this context, as a platform that offers services to institutions, and helps them improve their doctoral structures and foster their institutional development. It is vital to enhance discussions within a common reflection framework, as well as exchange good practices, in this respect. The working groups in Lausanne also underlined the importance of some recurrent topics, which EUA-CDE will tackle in the near future: ways (both academic and non academic) of using training and research to offer creative workers to society and connections between academia and society/labour market; supervision in doctoral training; etc. You will find an analysis of the surveys gathered in Lausanne in this issue.*

*In addition, EUA-CDE will add an important dimension to our European voice: by expanding our window on the rest of the world and seeing what is happening there. It is essential to look at what has been done elsewhere and to exchange good practices – just as it is essential to unite our forces in order to participate in global exchanges on doctoral education in the most efficient way.*

*EUA-CDE is thus still work in progress, and is progressing thanks to your input in Lausanne as well. My first conclusion after this inaugural event would therefore be: thank you. Thank you for having expressed your interest and support, and for your enthusiasm to progress together in fostering our doctoral education in Europe.*

The launch conference of the EUA Council for Doctoral Education took place at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland. Almost 300 academic leaders, researchers, policy makers and other stakeholders from 35 countries participated in this event.

**The objectives of the conference were:**

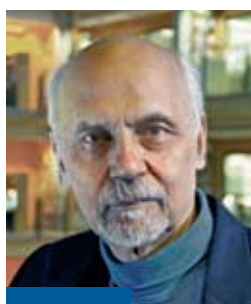
- to introduce EUA-CDE to European universities;
- to take stock of developments in doctoral education since the last major EUA conference on the topic (Nice, December 2006);
- to agree on priorities for EUA-CDE activities and topics in the years to come;
- to situate the work of EUA-CDE from the outset in an international context – one of the tasks of this new body being to represent and enhance the visibility of doctoral education in Europe at international level.

## PLENARY SESSION I: Welcome addresses and keynote speech



The conference was opened by Dominique Arlettaz, Rector of the University of Lausanne who warmly welcomed all participants. He stressed the importance of the establishment of the Council for Doctoral Education and expressed his pleasure at hosting its launch.

EUA Vice-President and CDE Steering Committee ex-officio Member, Jean-Marc Rapp presented the history of EUA activities in the development of doctoral education leading to the establishment of the CDE. He mentioned EUA projects and milestones that influenced the process of transformation of doctoral education in Europe, especially the Salzburg Principles that have been the starting point for further implementation of new models and practices in doctoral education at European universities. He underlined main trends and emerging issues in the development of doctoral training such as new models of organisation and structure, innovative practices in supervision, transferable skills training, the importance of research careers and career development, and institutional focus on internationalisation and mobility. Professor Rapp concluded his speech with the introduction of the CDE and its role in academic as well as policy debates on doctoral education in Europe and worldwide.



The keynote speaker, President of the European Research Council Fotis Kafatos linked EUA-CDE and ERC by emphasising their common missions: to support excellent researchers and excellent research performed at European universities. He described universities as natural allies of ERC and expressed strong support for the EUA-CDE. His key messages addressed both higher education institutions and the European knowledge society and its policy makers.

Professor Kafatos underlined in particular the need for massive investment in education and research training; and the importance of focusing on excellence – excellent institutions, excellent scientists and excellent students. He stressed the need to develop coherence and comparability in doctoral education and research, but at the same time to protect flexibility and diversity. From his own experience he also encouraged participants, with the support of the CDE, to 'shamelessly' copy and adopt good practices, indeed a key purpose of the CDE in supporting universities.

In the final part of his presentation, Professor Kafatos called for closer international and transdisciplinary collaboration and formation of joint doctoral programmes and degrees. He linked collaboration and competition by saying that good collaboration is crucial for becoming better or best in competition.

## PLENARY SESSION II: Introduction to EUA-CDE Objectives and Proposed Activities

The second plenary was dedicated to the CDE itself.



Chair of the CDE Steering Committee Jean Chambaz presented the mission and objectives of CDE as the Europe-wide platform to develop and advance doctoral education in European universities which also included enhancing visibility at international level within the overall framework of EUA activities. He focused on the reasons why reform of doctoral education is needed and what are the main drivers of

the change: changing contexts in the knowledge society and the globalised world, need for an increased strategic role of higher education institutions as well as remaining challenges such as academic conservatism, poor recognition of the doctorate in Europe and fast growing numbers of holders of doctoral degrees with limited career perspectives.

The ten Salzburg principles (2005), based on the broad consensus of European universities, are the starting point

for further implementation of doctoral reform at every university. Professor Chambaz emphasised the European diversity of organisational structures in doctoral education, the need for critical mass, skills training and career development of young researchers, and strong support for quality improvement. European universities have one goal: to improve the quality of doctoral education, and it can be reached through different routes within a common framework.

Mary Ritter, Vice-Chair of the CDE Steering Committee, presented the objectives of the conference with the focus on the working group sessions. She introduced an overview of proposed activities and topics for CDE in the next two years. All participants received this overview in the form of a questionnaire which would be filled in by participants during the working group sessions, as a means of providing direct feedback from members on their priorities for the work of CDE.



## PLENARY SESSION III: Examples of successful implementation of new practices in an institutional context

### DOCTORAL STUDIES @ UNITN



**Davide Bassi,**  
Rector of University of Trento,  
Italy

The University of Trento was established in 1962 by local authorities, and became a state university in 1983. It has 15 000 students, and awards on average 130 PhD every year. Its annual budget is 150 M EUR.

The profile of the university has to be seen within the system of Italian higher education. Italian university reform is still incomplete, and, with a few exceptions, universities have had to adopt a unique organisational model, with no clear separation between teaching and research institutions. Although the system is under-funded, the distribution of funds is not selective. PhD programmes were introduced in Italy about 25 years ago, and are mostly academe-oriented,

with weak connections to the world of private enterprise. PhD stipends are not competitive at international level, and the system in general does not prioritise the recruitment of international students (5.4% in the total number of PhD students).

University of Trento's development is driven by international competition, as well as by institutional development. The University aims to double the number of PhD students by 2012 (it has so far grown by one third and counts about 20% international students from all over the world). It also settled upon a priority: developing PhD programmes which are competitive at international level and, by doing so, avoiding dispersion of resources. It actively promotes fund-raising from both public and private partners for supporting PhD programmes.

ICT is the pioneer scientific area in reformed doctoral studies, where reforms started 10 years ago. Cooperation with private enterprises (e.g. Microsoft) and with research institutes (e.g. Fondazione Bruno Kessler) have been launched in this field.

Several issues however remain open. Although there is a real success in fund-raising, the level of stipend is still not fully competitive on a global scale, and internationalisation is only partly supported by national funds. The governance of Italian universities also constitutes a point of weakness. Finally, there are problems related to the mobility of non-European students and researchers.

In conclusion, positive results have been achieved, but cooperation with private institutes and enterprises still needs further attention in the context of doctoral education. A better model of cooperation/competition between higher education institutions at regional level could also contribute to enhance the development of PhD programmes. Opportunities such as the Erasmus Mundus programme should not be neglected. And, finally, although the model of an internationally competitive model of PhD has progressively "contaminated" the University, one must not be reluctant to continue to seek enhancement in order to improve one's institutional capacity.

## DOCTORAL SCHOOLS AT GHENT UNIVERSITY



**Luc François,**  
 Director of Ghent University  
 Association,  
 Ghent University, Belgium

To Professor François, the driving forces of doctoral education nowadays are, in part, the changing nature of the PhD degree – which is not only training by research but training by and for research – and, in part, the combination of broad research skills and specific area of expertise.

The implementation of doctoral schools at Ghent University follows a timeline going from January 2006 to 26 September 2007 (official opening of the doctoral schools). The University now has five doctoral schools: Arts and Humanities, Social and Behavioural Sciences, Natural Sciences, Life Sciences and Medicine, and (Bioscience) Engineering. Each of them has a Council and a Director. Activities within the 11 faculties are gathered into these doctoral schools, which are supervised by a Steering Committee. Moreover, the University has totally renewed the doctoral training structure: whereas the old model was based on apprenticeship between a supervisor and his/her student, the new structure reinforces the role of the PhD guidance committee and integrates the PhD student within a broader training mode.

The new doctoral training programme is composed of specialised courses, transferable skills, research-related activities in equal parts and thesis defence. The transferable skills consist of competences in communication, research and development, management, teamwork and networking, and personal development. The doctoral schools are open to all PhD students, regardless of their funding situation. In Flanders, each university pays for its own PhD programme and doctoral schools.

Three strategic objectives can be underlined: increasing the (international) visibility of the PhD degree (by improving communication and cooperation with PhD candidates and external stakeholders); improving support for PhDs and researchers (by reinforcing and adapting supervision and training structures); and encouraging a quality culture in doctoral research at the University scale.

Professor François finally described the challenges for the future, the first being geared towards enhancement (even when it means changing what works well). The other questions to be tackled are the compulsory or voluntary character of the doctoral training programme, as well as a good division of responsibilities between faculties and doctoral schools. In this context, some recommendations should be taken into account: getting to know the researchers, extending existing good practices to the entire university, getting inspiration from other institutions' good practices, and being prepared to improve oneself continuously.

## BREMEN INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (BIGSSS)



**Steffen Mau,**  
Founding Dean of BIGSSS,  
University of Bremen, Germany

Graduate schools are central to the profile of research universities as interdisciplinary bodies. Establishing graduate schools in fields of excellence contributes to attracting high profile international students, to enhance the link between teaching and research, and to reduce the time-to-degree for MA and PhD students.

The graduate school of social sciences at the University of Bremen has been a pioneer model in political sciences and sociology since it was established in 2002. It proposes an integrated social-sciences education profile, with in-house faculty, a thematic focus, integration in networks of research institutions, and a better connection between MA and PhD programmes. The BIGSSS was reinforced when the partnership between the University of Bremen and the Jacobs University entered into a new stage of cooperation. The existing partnership already granted a joint third-party funded research programme in social sciences, a joint master programme, and joint professorships. The foundations of this new association were based on interaction between teaching and research, interdisciplinarity, and an optimal mix of young and experienced scientists. The BIGSSS also gained its right to grant its own PhD degree. Additionally, it enhanced its international profile: English is the lingua franca for teaching and administration, and the BIGSSS cooperates

with prestigious Anglo-Saxon universities. The recruitment and placement are also internationally-oriented.

The BIGSSS is thus an inter-university institute, funded by University resources, the German Excellence initiative and the Volkswagen Foundation. It also hosts researchers funded by third-party projects in social sciences. It provides unique training in social sciences methodology, a flexible curriculum (based on a credit point system which allows transitions between on-site projects), and an opportunity for international networking. Moreover, the BIGSSS considerably broadened its fields of research as well as its capacity: it now includes social and departmental psychology (well balanced profile with political sciences and sociology), with co-operation in law and behavioural and health economics. The school now has 110 fellows and 60 professors.

The curriculum is flexible. After a selection process and a transition phase (consisting of a pre-programme monitoring), it proposes two core courses and a set of demand-tailored tutorials in theory and methods, supplemented by soft skills and didactic training. There is another transition phase where career planning and publication support are proposed. The end of the curriculum is accompanied by a postdoctoral programme, career placement and a network of alumni. The BIGSSS has a quality assurance system, through its progress assessment scheme, where progress is assessed in stages based on contracts – with attention to flexibility for researchers involved in specific projects. Graduation is expected in a three-to-five year period.

The BIGSSS constitutes an example of an innovative and dynamic inter-university institution, geared towards a sustainable development – which can provide input into universities' reforms as well.

## PLENARY SESSION IV: Panel on Doctoral Education in a Global Context

### EUROPEAN DOCTORAL EDUCATION IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT



**Beate Scholz,**  
Scholz CTC and DFG, Germany

All institutions are nowadays confronted with several levels of changing environments, going

from local to global. In this context, the new challenge for universities consists of educating for highly mobile knowledge resources, which are no longer exclusively anchored within a region. The German model, for instance, has shifted from a model based on nation-building strategies (growth in domestic academe) to a change of paradigm at the beginning of the 90's. After the constitution of

Research Training Groups and International Research Groups, more interdisciplinary and international-oriented, in 2005, Germany launched Graduate Schools, driven by international recognition/competition – although few of the graduate schools among the proposals were funded. This competitive model also spread to research institutes and between Länder. Equally important to this change of paradigm is the creation of international networks, essential to mutual learning, joint initiatives and policy-shaping, and compatibility of standards. In addition, the Banff strategic leaders' global summit on graduate education, in September 2007, launched an inclusive global platform.

Besides these “boundary conditions”, several elements of individual international dimension can be mentioned as core contents for a globalised doctoral education: international recruitment, career development plans (involving joint supervision, exchanges of staff...), assessment of results (internationally visible presentations/publications, international thesis review), and, more generally, mutual learning between disciplines and countries. Complementarities between national funding frameworks and European funds should also be ensured.

The implementation of these policies requires addressing several target groups. The policy makers' contribution would consist of creating attractive conditions for global

cooperation and mobility for researchers at all stages of their career (international visa/green card, appealing national salary regulations, portability of pension claims, etc.). Research organisations would mainly contribute by ensuring a good cooperation and flexible schemes of interaction with higher education institutions (HEIs), and by agreeing on a European set of excellence standards. HEIs would need to settle comprehensive approaches including career development, international cooperation and elements of doctoral education. There should be new governance schemes involving the graduate deans as well. Employers, finally, would shape doctoral education in interaction with HEIs, mainly by participating in joint initiatives, hosting doctoral candidates and involving practitioners in doctoral training.

In conclusion, the strength of Europe, in this context of internationalisation, resides in the creation of new models. Without over-standardising, European stakeholders in doctoral education should agree on a common set of principles – based on high-profile research, development of research skills and transferable skills, an employment market broader than academia, a limited duration for completing the PhD (3-4 years full time), and consideration for PhD students, who are early-stage researchers with commensurate rights.

## DOCTORAL EDUCATION AND THE GLOBAL DIVIDE



**Rune Nilsen,**  
University of Bergen,  
Norway

Professor Nilsen in his presentation addressed European universities and their responsibility towards developing countries. Whilst a knowledge-based economy is celebrated by the Lisbon Declaration (2000) as a model

for European economical and societal development, other parts of the world, subject to poverty, climate change, environment degradation, war and other issues related to the actual well-being of the population, are considered as “outside the international knowledge society”. This is for example the case of the Nile basin region, where the Nile Basin Research Programme has been based.

The main challenge for the knowledge-based economies such as Europe would therefore consist of wondering how

to demonstrate the openness of their higher education systems and institutions. Knowledge-based economy/society should not be a privilege goal for the richest part of the world, and exclude the “others”, who would have other quality indicators for their doctoral education, would not be included in international reforms, and would be, finally, reduced to “export” brains as it is the case for natural resources. The main question in this regard, when addressing doctoral education in a global perspective, would be: do we support and facilitate academic apartheid and the fortress Europe?

UNESCO, for example, pleads for knowledge societies for all, and “knowledge-sharing” as the cornerstone. Access to research, doctoral training and to knowledge and research literature are key elements of this approach. Knowledge should be considered as a global public good – the paradox, here, being that investment in research is not always used for public good where it is needed (only 10% of the budget spent yearly for health research and development is used for researching on the health problems of 90% of the world's people). It is the “90/10 dilemma”.

“Globalisation” still opens flows of brains to the richest parts of the world, increasing the divide on access to knowledge. The dynamic quality reforms of universities in the north hemisphere, for example, have not associated any developing country. A few small initiatives of reforms came from the South, but with weak funding. There is actually a lack of real reforms for universities in developing countries. HEIs there have very low funding, few real institutional partners, a heavy teaching load, old-fashioned degrees and governance structures. The EUA-CDE could appear as a key vehicle for global responsibility for European universities. Actions could be undertaken in order to build stronger

and more sustainable partnerships in North-South doctoral training (“brain-sharing”), to harmonise the framework and culture of research in order to avoid the fortress Europe phenomenon, and to draw up reforms, structure and quality assurance taking into account the global context. Knowledge therefore should be considered as a global public good and open access should be ensured for research knowledge. When working on the reforms of doctoral education, European and international stakeholders from the richest parts of the world should bear in mind global perspectives and concerns.

## DOCTORAL EDUCATION: VIEW FROM INDUSTRY

**Cédric Schurter,**  
Nestlé - Research Center

Cédric Schurter presented the picture of doctoral training and career development of young researchers from the industrial point of view. He drew career paths of PhD

graduates in the company such as Nestlé and described skills and competences which are most valued: management skills, soft skills (e.g. sense of curiosity, courage, result-focus, innovation, pro-active co-operation), ability to develop and lead people, ability to represent, ability to influence and convince others, etc.

## PLENARY SESSION V: Conclusions from Working Groups: Agenda for Action

Final plenary session focused on conclusions that resulted from the **analysis of questionnaires** filled in by the conference participants during the working group sessions. Questionnaires consisted of two parts: proposed types of CDE activities and preferred topics. Preliminary results were presented by Mary Ritter. A more detailed analysis of the total number of 171 questionnaires received was carried out after the conference and brought the following results:

### Priority activities selected by more than 50%

(in order of preference):

- Data collection, data analysis and data sharing
- Thematic conferences
- Thematic workshops
- Thematic seminars
- Working groups/task forces
- Dissemination: Publications

### Activities selected by less than 50%:

- Online forum
- Annual conference
- Conferences with other stakeholders
- Regional workshops and seminars
- Winter/summer schools
- Dissemination: Newsletter

### Priority topics and subtopics selected by more than 50%:

- Quality control, evaluation and review
- Quality criteria for doctoral programmes
- Institutional cooperation
- Supervision requirements and conditions
- Training of supervisors
- Requirement to be a supervisor
- Joint doctoral programmes
- Doctoral programmes assessment

### Topics and subtopics selected by 35 – 50%:

- Doctoral schools
- Models of doctoral schools
- Structured programmes
- Double doctoral degrees
- Generic skills training
- Curriculum design
- Study periods abroad
- Doctoral candidates' mobility
- Funding of doctoral schools
- Co-tutelle arrangements
- Code of conduct on supervision
- Career development
- Changing nature of the doctorate
- Recruitment
- Funding requirements and conditions

### Topics and subtopics with lowest priority:

Doctoral candidates' organisation  
 Thesis defence  
 Viva  
 Graduation  
 Thesis format, length and language  
 Assistantships  
 Attrition rates and time to degree  
 Ethical issues  
 Transition to labour market  
 Student progress

Participants also proposed new activities (such as the creation of an expert database, regularly updated bibliography of literature on doctoral education, discipline-based workshops) and topics (learning outcomes and qualification framework; inter- and transdisciplinary doctoral schools; Master- PhD route).

A separate working group session, chaired by Lesley Wilson, EUA Secretary General, was organised with the representatives of university networks, associations and organisations with interest in doctoral education. The main outcome of the session was the agreement on further and more targeted collaboration of the CDE with other

networks and associations with the possibility of organising strategic meetings, co-organising events, and co-publishing documents on doctoral education.

The data from the survey indicate some trends in the interest in specific areas of doctoral education and will help to prepare the work programme of the CDE over the next two years. However, the survey was anonymous and reflects interests from a diverse spectrum of universities, diverse regions and countries, and diverse actors (university leaders, administrators, academics, coordinators, research advisors etc.). These factors had a major impact on the final results and cannot be ignored.

**EUA-CDE thanks all participants who took part in the survey for their input. Your interests and needs are important for us and we listen to you! Active collaboration of the CDE Steering Committee and the Secretariat with each CDE member is a crucial point of the CDE success.**

*All presentations are available on the conference website:  
<http://www.eua.be/events2/eua-council-for-doctoral-education/presentations-from-launch-conference/>*

## EUA-CDE Membership

EUA-CDE membership is growing every week. It now has about 90 members from all over Europe. We encourage European universities to join EUA-CDE. The application form can be downloaded from: [www.eua.be/cde](http://www.eua.be/cde)

### Any information you would like to share with other EUA-CDE members?

The second EUA-CDE News will be published in December 2008. EUA-CDE members are encouraged to submit their own news items for the next EUA-CDE Newsletter. Deadline for contributions: 31 October 2008.

In particular, we would be interested in:

- Events related to doctoral education organised within your institution or country, which could be of interest to other CDE members;
- Information and/or publication on developments involving your institution or country, with links to a document which can be consulted on-line;
- Book/Publication reviews: on publications/reports/articles related to the development of doctoral education or on issues of particular interest on specific aspects of doctoral education.

Please note that all items submitted are subject to review and need to comply with the following three criteria:

- In principle, we only accept items from EUA members. In EUA-CDE News preference will be given to CDE members. Exceptions are sometimes made for news items from non-profit organisations which are of interest to our members.
- Your news item should be of interest to the academic community (university staff, researchers). EUA does NOT advertise events or activities which are primarily aimed at students.
- EUA does not publish news items concerning commercial activities.

EUA reserves the right to refuse or edit the submitted news items. If accepted, your news item will be published in the next EUA-CDE newsletter (subject to available space) and on the EUA-CDE website



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS



The EUA Council for Doctoral Education (EUA-CDE) as a new and independent membership service structure being developed by EUA aims at continuing, developing and intensifying the dialogue on the reform of doctoral education in Europe. It organises workshops, seminars and conferences to provide a framework for action in which to tackle issues of common concern through discussion and exchange of good practice among universities.

**EUA-CDE cordially invites you to a workshop focused on the development of doctoral education in Europe.** The topic of the workshop is **Enhancing of Supervision: Professional Development and Assessment of Supervisors**. The workshop will take place at Imperial College in London on 8 – 9 January 2009.

### EUA - CDE Workshop

## Enhancing of Supervision: Professional Development and Assessment of Supervisors

**8 – 9 January 2009**  
**Imperial College, London, UK**

The workshop will provide insights into practices of supervision, its quality enhancement and assessment at various universities. The issues for discussions:

- Status and workload of supervisors
- Professional development (training) of supervisors
- Supervision assessment
- Multiple supervision
- Code of conduct of supervision

**Audience:** The conference targets rectors, vice-rectors, supervisors, heads of doctoral/graduate/research schools and researchers.

**More information and formal registration will be available at [www.eua.be/cde](http://www.eua.be/cde) in autumn 2008.**

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