Slide 1

EUA — European University Association

Latest Trends in Doctoral Education in Europe:
Focus on Quality

Dr. Alexandra Bitusikova
Dr. Thomas Ekman Jørgensen
European University Association

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Slide 2

EUA — European University Association

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 and challenges: focus on quality
- EUA-Council for Doctoral Education

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Slide 3

EUA — European University Association

Brief Profile of the EUA

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

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Slide 4

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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:
  - challenges of the fast growing global competition and changing labour market
  - policy objectives of the EU (especially ambitious Lisbon objectives, ERA Green Paper, Modernisation Agenda for universities)
  - Bologna Process
- EUA - key player in setting the new vision for Doctoral Education in Europe

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EUA and Doctoral Education

- **Berlin Communiqué** (2003): Doctoral Programmes defined as the third cycle
- **EUA Doctoral Programmes Project 1** (2004-2005): (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 debate among HEIs on the development of doctoral education
- **DOC-CAREERS Project** (2006 – 2008)
- Lausanne June 2008: **EUA Council for Doctoral Education**

Trends in Doctoral Education: 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

Supervision and Assessment (2)

- 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 and more transparent supervision encouraged
  - ✓ Increased need for professional development for supervisors (training of supervisors)

Transferable Skills Development (3)

- Transferable skills and competence 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 career development inside & outside academia
- Adequate funding of transferable skills training – crucial
- Teaching transferable skills should be recognised in evaluation of academic staff involved

Internationalisation and Mobility (4)

- 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 doctorate, 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 (5)

- 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 doctorate, 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

Quality in Doctoral Education

- Quality assurance (QA) in doctoral education (DE) – rather new concept
- Existing methodologies of QA not easily applicable in doctoral education
- Does QA in DE mean:
  - ✓ Institutional (internal) or external evaluation?
  - ✓ Faculty or department evaluation?
  - ✓ Doctoral programme/ school evaluation?
  - ✓ State accreditatation?
  - ✓ Doctoral candidate's work and progress evaluation?
- We have no clear answers, but we do know that improving quality in DE needs a systematic approach and new methodologies.

Examples of different practices across Europe

- UK and Ireland: Code of Practice for Postgrad Research Progs applied in an institutional context
- Germany: only Saxony has guidelines for accreditation of doctoral programmes
- France: DE can only take place in doctoral schools, accredited by the state and subject to evaluation by national agency resp for HE and research
- Finland: few governmental regulations and delegated to universities
- In many countries the state approves the establishment of doctoral programmes

Quality in Doctoral Education: challenges

- Doctoral education differs from the 1st and 2nd cycles in purpose, content and structures
- All trends (new and diverse structures, models of supervision, skills training, various funding models and different status of doctoral candidates) have an impact on quality in DE
- Specificity in nature and diversity in organisation makes DE evaluation complex as it includes two different aspects:
  - ✓ Quality of doctoral training (educational part) – closer to QA in 1st and 2nd cycle
  - ✓ Quality of research (incl. quality of research environment, supervision, research team, research performance and outcomes, international reputation, thesis) – closer to research assessment
- Main responsibility for quality in DE: HEIs
- Each HEI has to decide on its quality standards and procedures linked to its mission, functions and goals

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Internal QA

- Universities across Europe try to introduce various aspects of internal QA (often treated separately):
  - ✓ Internal regulations and codes of practice and agreements btw 3 parties
  - ✓ Improving standards of access, recruitment and selection (and registration)
  - ✓ Introducing new supervision models and providing professional development for supervisors
  - ✓ Regular monitoring of each candidate's progress
  - ✓ Supporting internationalisation and mobility
  - ✓ Offering flexible and optional skills training
  - ✓ Ensuring high and transparent standard of the process of the thesis defense
  - ✓ Following TTD (time to degree) and completion rates
  - ✓ Taking into account different funding schemes
  - ✓ Tracking doctoral graduates… and others

  It seems that it is easier to achieve and monitor internal QA if DE is organised in a structured way (doctoral schools).

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More debate needed

- The topic of quality – on the top of the priority list at many universities and the EUA-CDE.
- Important: to continue a partnership and dialogue with other stakeholders including QA agencies in order to clarify the needs and responsibilities of each stakeholder, to differentiate btw external and internal QA procedures and to increase trust and confidence among all actors in the process.

- More: in our discussions today

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EUA Council for Doctoral Education

- **EUA Council for Doctoral Education** (EUA-CDE) **– a new membership service of EUA.**

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THANK YOU VERY MUCH