



Conclusions and Recommendations

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"Research Doctorates for the European Knowledge Society"

The core component of doctoral training is the advancement of new knowledge through original research. It is essentially 'training by, not training for research'.

Research Doctorates should be clearly discerned from other types of postgraduate education.

"Doctoral Programmes differ from the first and second cycle"

The proper assessment for the result of the doctoral process is the quality of the research work as evaluated by peer review, not the performance in coursework. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is not an appropriate measure for the scale and complexity of core research work (though it is applicable to transversal skills components).

"Commensurate Rights for Early Stage Researchers: Social Security, Involvement in the University and the Scientific Community"

Doctoral Candidates are Early Stage Researchers. They should be recognised as professionals and should at the very least be provided with social security that is transferable throughout Europe.

The common European goal should be to offer them a competitive income. There should be a proportionate representation of Early Stage Researchers on the institution representative bodies.

Doctoral candidates should be actively involved in the decisions on both form and content of doctoral programmes.

"Supervision and Training of Early Stage Researchers"

Supervision and Training of doctoral candidates should be improved and structured, moving from the highly individualized apprentice model for Master level degrees to a more team-oriented and collective form of supervision. Suitable differentiation between supervisors and examiners should thus be implemented. Rights and duties of both the doctoral candidate and supervisor should be clearly established at the start of the doctoral process. The PhD-candidate should have appropriate freedom in filling his/her training requirements to suit his/her needs with the support of his/her supervisor.

Minimum requirements should be adopted in the assessment of, and on standards in a doctoral programme to facilitate international recognition of doctoral degrees within Europe.

"Fair Working Conditions: Implementing the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers"

The Charter and the Code of Conduct should be promoted and implemented. Furthermore, it should be made possible for each country to implement good practice in supervision, training and labour conditions as outlined in the charter in a way appropriate to them, so as to maximize mobility while still supporting diversity as a strength.

"Mobility – removing 'mobstacles' "

Mobility is a means for research excellence, not a goal in itself. Therefore, it should be encouraged by removing obstacles to prevent it from being a burden for the researcher.

In order to facilitate geographical mobility and the international recognition of diplomas, the compilation and implementation of tools like Diploma Supplements should be pushed forward, both for Masters' as well as for PhD degrees.

The awareness of other types of mobility, such as Inter-Sectoral and Inter-Disciplinary mobility should be increased, and the regulatory frameworks for them developed, in order to obtain cross-fertilization –at all career levels, including, but not limited to Early Stage Researchers– between disciplines and the academic and non-academic worlds. This increased flexibility should in no case come at the expense of job security.

"Promoting Researchers' Careers for the European Knowledge Society"

In order to attain the Lisbon goals it is necessary to encourage more Masters to aim for a career in research. For this a re-structuring of the research career in academia and public research centres is necessary, creating professionally recognised positions for all researchers, including those at the initial stages of their career, who presently are recruited and employed under various and often precarious conditions throughout the EU.

The access to doctoral programmes should be in no way restricted due to financial motives. Promising candidates with a research project of suitable quality should be appropriately funded without exception.