

20 Years of Salzburg Principles

Principles of Good Supervision

Melita Kovacevic
University of Zagreb
Former EUA CDE SC Chair
Vice-Chair of PRIDE Network



Institutional experience



Some personal info

- Professor Emerita, University of Zagreb
- Former head of research laboratory
- Director of interdisciplinary doctoral programme
Language and Cognitive Neuroscience
- Presently supervisor – 3 doctoral candidates

International experience



- PRIDE Association, Vice Chair (2017 -)
- EUA CDE, Former Chair (2009-2011 member, 2011-2016 Chair)
- Worked on doctoral education and research with EC, WB, DAAD
- Besides Europe, as an expert for doctoral education worked in Asia, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America
- Contributed and prepared number of documents related to doctoral education

Personal level

- Still did not manage everything I talk about
- Wandering who developed some documents...once, I did!
- Pondering from time to time what to do as a supervisor
- Overseeing visible facts (by others)

Professional level

- Gap between read and observed
- Gap between said and done
- Still...globalisation is happening, but what does it mean?

- Back to history
- Where are we now? Is the job done?
- What are the future challenges for doctoral education and supervision?





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Doctoral education has attracted a high level of attention from a number of institutions in Europe and worldwide. Results of their initiatives confirmed new trends in doctoral education in terms of organisation and management, but also brought recommendations for higher education institutions and policy-makers that reflect changes in a complex and competitive global world.

(EUA CDE, 2018)



*A structured PhD generally includes the research training of a conventional degree, together with other elements that **keep students on track and help to prepare them for a variety of post-PhD careers**. Students have **multiple advisers and administrators to guide them, receive formal training in scientific and soft skills and have opportunities for travel and interdisciplinary study**. In principle, they receive **a broader education than any single supervisor could provide.**”*

Cited from *Graduate students: Structured study*, Nature 493, 259-261 (2013)

Milestones

[Back to history](#)

2005

2010

2016



Salzburg Principles



Salzburg II, Recommendations



Salzburg III, Taking Salzburg Forward

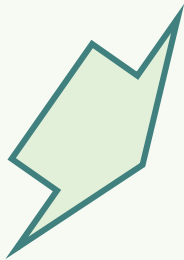
What did the doctoral landscape look like 20 years ago?

- 1 to 1 relation:
supervisor and doctoral candidate
- predominantly one supervisor
- no institutional support structures
- longer duration to complete PhD programme
- no discussions about supporting supervisors
to develop necessary supervision skills



What did the doctoral landscape look like 20 years ago?

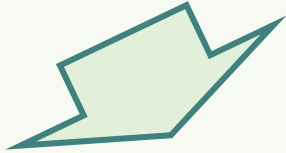
- there were huge differences across European universities in terms of how doctoral education was organised
- institutional involvement was minimised
- the relationship between supervisors and doctoral candidates was privatised
- the number of doctoral candidates was much smaller



"I'm coordinating five different R&D projects, but SURE, I can spare a minute."

Some of the triggers to initiate changes in doctoral education

A lot!



on a structural level



- Relevant documents, common policies
- Establishing a framework for doctoral education
- Establishment of doctoral schools

- Only 3 % of students are enrolled in third-cycle (59% in BA, 22% in MS)
- Decrease in tertiary education enrolment in many countries (EHEA, 2018)
- Doctoral education globally has been experiencing changes
- Identity crisis? Educating new scholars and/or new professional workers

The economic value of doctoral degree has declined as the number of graduates has increased (Smaglik, 2014)

Source of data and information

EUA CDE Survey, 2018

**Doctoral education in Europe today:
Approaches and institutional structures
311 institutions, Nov. 2017 – Feb. 2018**

The logo for the Council for Doctoral Education (EUA CDE) is displayed on a blue rectangular background. The text 'eua cde' is written in a lowercase, sans-serif font, with 'eua' in white and 'cde' in yellow. To the right of this, the words 'COUNCIL FOR DOCTORAL EDUCATION' are stacked vertically in a smaller, uppercase, yellow sans-serif font.

eua cde COUNCIL
FOR DOCTORAL
EDUCATION

Salzburg principle

The core component of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research



Facts

75% reported to be “*extremely important*”

22% “*important*”

The rest?

Salzburg principle

Duration



Facts

**15% - time to complete increased,
compared to 10 years ago**

**28% - graduates need 5 or more years
to complete full-time doctoral studies**

Still a weak spot of the system?



Suggestions to introduce

- Mentoring system for new supervisors
- Supervisory team
- Mandatory initial professional development

(S. Taylor, Eligibility to Supervise, A Study of UK Institutions, 2019)



Criteria:

51% require supervisors to be research active

40% require a supervisor to have a research degree equivalent to the degree being supervised

78% require previous supervisory experience

39% require mandatory continuing professional development

(S. Taylor, Eligibility to Supervise, A Study of UK Institutions, 2019)

Overall small proportion of institutions have any rules or guidelines on supervision and supervisors

68% do not have obligatory training for supervisors

19% do not have contracts btw supervisor-candidate-institution

27% do not have defined minimum number of meetings

20% do not have any rules in case of the conflict
btw supervisor and candidate

(EUA CDE, Survey, 2018)

As stressed in **the fifth Salzburg Principle**, **supervision plays a crucial role. Supervision must be a collective effort** with clearly defined and written responsibilities of the main supervisor, supervisory team, doctoral candidate, doctoral school, research group and the institution, leaving room for the individual development of the doctoral candidate. **Providing professional development to supervisors is an institutional responsibility**, whether organised through formal training or informal sharing of experiences among staff.

Salzburg II Recommendations, 2010



2025 SURVEY – REPORT 1

**Doctoral education
in Europe today:**

enhanced structures and
practices for the European
knowledge society

By Simon Marti and Ana-Maria Peneasu

June 2025

Where are we now?

*....that rules or guidelines have been implemented
for most aspects of doctoral supervision
in 'all' or 'in most' doctoral programmes...*

still

... The results for supervisors' obligatory training attracts attention due to the relatively low rate of rules or guidelines implemented at responding universities. Obligatory training for supervisors is regulated only in 17% of responding institutions...

Doctoral education in Europe today, EUA CDE Report, 2025

Where are we now?



PUSHING
THE FRONTIERS
OF INNOVATIVE
RESEARCH

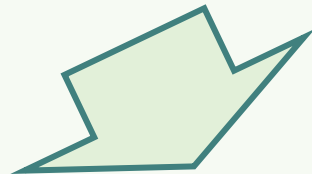
ADVICE PAPER
no.29 – February 2023

LERU's view on holistic doctoral supervision

Dr Helke Hillebrand, Dr Claudine Leysinger

UniWIND, Jahrestagung 2025, Karlsruhe, 8-9 October

- The impact of AI on supervision
- The impact of AI on research
- Interdisciplinarity and supervision
- University alliances and supervision



The role of academic leadership will be greater again

Thank you
For your attention!

In light of the PRIDE 2025 Conference
**'BACK TO THE FUTURE. THE NEXT TWO DECADES
OF DOCTORAL EDUCATION'**
on 9-10 April 2025 in London, we invite you to join us

WEBINAR
The Emergence of Ten Salzburg Principles 20 years ago
Feb 3, 2 pm CET

Speakers: Georg Winckler and Melita Kovacevic



BG image by Dimitris Vetsikas from Pixabay

Vielen Dank!

melita.kovacevic@unizg.hr

