

Training, Supervision and Scientific Work

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Supervision in a changing context

- **De-privatisation of doctoral education**
 - ✓ New institutional responsibility
- Political pressure (Bologna and Lisbon/Europe 2020)
- 3-4 years time frame for completion
- Increased number of doctoral candidates
- Changing nature of doctoral candidates
 - ✓ Diversity - more international candidates from different cultures, but often no international staff; more demanding doctoral candidates
- **Tougher evaluation criteria**
 - ✓ Push on more publications, more citations, more transparency, closer tracking

Improving Supervision

- Most available surveys show a large satisfied group of supervisees, and a small – but too big – completely unsatisfied group –
- What can institutions do to live up to their responsibility?
- Focusing on the supervisor
 - ✓ Professional development ('teaching the teachers')
 - ✓ Monitoring track record (sticks and carrots)
 - ✓ Incentives (financial, time)

Supervision Culture

- Away from the carrot and stick-mentality
- Towards the creation of a **supervision culture**
- Supervision should be recognised as part of career development
- Provide supervisors with skills that they need rather than incentives
 - ✓ Bottom up perspective, meet them where they are
 - ✓ Communication as key part of the supervision culture
- Dialogue
 - ✓ Between supervisors within the institution
 - ✓ Involving doctoral candidates in a structured manner

Principles for supervision

- **Transparency and inclusion**
 - ✓ not a matter of the number of people involved but of meeting the needs and requirements for a quality thesis
 - ✓ Using co-supervisors in a way that fits the research environment
 - ✓ strengthening the role and qualification of postdocs in supervision
necessity of sharing experiences and developing code of practices

- **Contractual relationship**
 - ✓ Managing expectations from three sides (candidate, supervisor, Institution)

Disciplinary differences

- Different levels of dependence and independence of the doctoral candidate
 - ✓ Mixed role of supervisor and employer (found in the labs of the hard sciences)
- Differences in time to degree
- Differences in mobility
- Differences in contacts (meetings) with supervisors
- Finding a good supervisory culture for the disciplinary culture

Taught courses and transferable skills

- Taught courses have a supporting function in doctoral education
 - ✓ Danger of exaggerating the taught component through the 'hunt for credits' and through incentives for staff (growth from 49% of all institutions in 2007 to 70% in 2009, TRENDS)
 - ✓ Introducing taught courses is not central to the reform of doctoral education

- Transferable skills
 - ✓ Many transferable skills are not teachable (creativity, flexibility etc) but part of the research mindset
 - ✓ Awareness is the key



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Thank you for your attention

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