Doctoral Education
&
Research Capacity

Melita Kovacevic
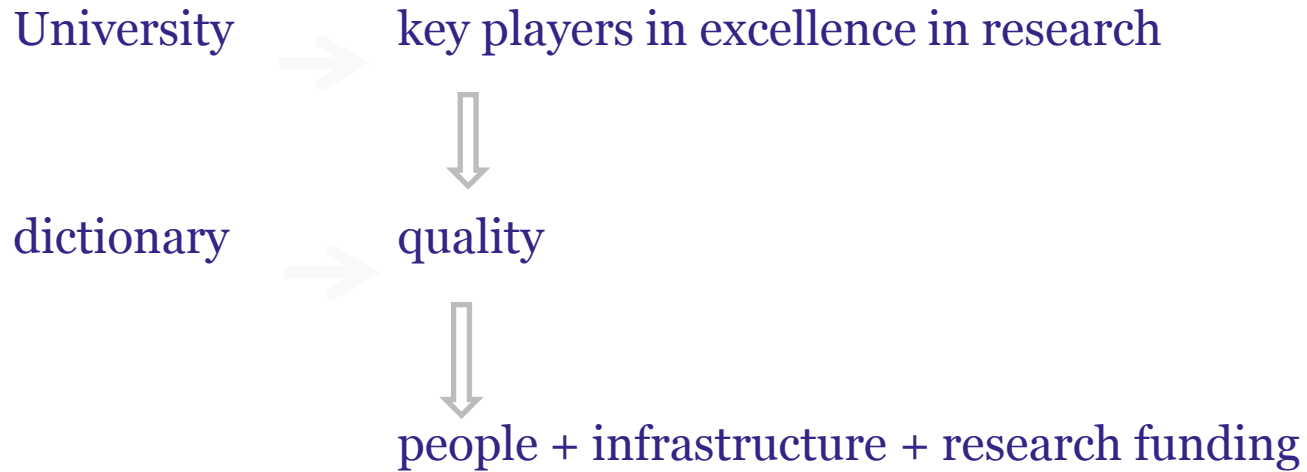
EUA-CDE Steering Committee Chair

Former Vice-Rector for Research and Technology

University of Zagreb

HERE Seminar on Doctoral Studies

Podgorica, Montenegro, October 29-30, 2015

University ⟶ key players in excellence in research

⇩

dictionary ⟶ quality

⇩

people + infrastructure + research funding

The key concept is **capacity**

- Do we have it?

- In what areas?

- What does it mean a critical mass?

- How to improve it?

- doctoral education
- good quality research
- recognition of research groups
- to make a research profile of the institution
- better usage of existing infrastructure

Regional efforts:

- establishment of joint and collaborative doctoral programmes
- shared infrastructure
- research cooperation
- collaborative research programmes
- mobility of researchers
- establishment of regional centres of excellence with mutual funding

regional research feasibility ⟹ **trigger of regional development**

putting doctoral education to work

→ real challenge to academic work

→ PhD as a hallmark of university

→ the core role of it's mission

Challenges:

→ impetus for new forms of doctoral education

→ the process itself

→ new divisions/distributions of roles
institution – supervisor – doctoral student

- doctoral education is a global issue
- the needs of local education and research
  → **towards solving global problems**

global research community

co-operation   competition

brain – circulation

spreading research mentality

to be flexible
to be creative
to be autonomous

Salzburg II - main points

- The doctorate is and must be **research based**

  - It has a specific nature that makes it different from the types of education in the first and second cycle – research must be the leading principle

  - Important to stress that training through research creates a certain mindset for many sectors and careers – but it is cultivated by having done original research

Salzburg II - main points

- Space for **individual development**

  - Doctoral education obtains a large part of its value from the unique and individual paths that doctoral candidates take. They meet unforeseen problems and obstacles and learn to tackle them

  - Doctoral holders have individual career profiles as a product of their research experience and/or exposure to different environments

  - Academia, management, NGO, industry and much, much more...

Salzburg II - main points

- **Supervision** is central to doctoral education – and a problem where serious problems can arise

- At the heart of **'de-privatisation'**
  - Taking institutional responsibility by making it a collective effort
    - Formally by having clear rules and guidelines on responsibilities, rights and duties
    - Informally by stimulating a 'culture of supervision' and making it a source of professional pride

Salzburg II – main points

- **Outcomes:**
  - The outcome is the doctorate holder – the person trained through research with an individual professional profile
  - Important to have developed a high level of autonomy and ability to 'manage the unknown'
- **Credits**
  - Can be used to measure workload
  - … but not research
  - A 'hunt for credits' does not bring the right outcome

Salzburg II - main points

- **Autonomy** for the institution to choose mission and strategy and to set up the appropriate structures

  - Universities have demonstrated their will and capacity for reform; they have the most extensive experience in how to develop doctoral education

  - Autonomy will secure the **critical diversity** needed to sustain a vibrant European environment for doctoral education

  - However, this requires a large degree of accountability for the institutions

Funding-related issues

- Financing of doctoral schools

  - Securing and developing critical mass of research (excellence and capacity building)
  - Funding for experiments such as physical space, inventive career development etc.
  - Funding for grants/salaries for doctoral schools with excellent research and structures

  - Matching funding with research and supervisory capacity

Thank you!