

1. Doctoral Studies and the Synergy between Higher Education and Research



Working languages:	English and French, with simultaneous interpretation
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Higher Education and Research are seen as core elements in the knowledge society. In March 2000, at the Lisbon European Council, the European Union adopted the strategic goal of becoming the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010, at the same time endorsing the creation of a European Research Area. At the Barcelona Council in March 2002, the EU set the target that investment in research and development in member states should reach 3% of GDP by 2010, and that European education and training systems should become a world quality reference by the same date.

While the Bologna Process spans a wider Europe, it shares a number of goals with these EU processes. In the Berlin Communiqué, Ministers stressed the need to promote closer links between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area. Emphasising the doctoral level as the third cycle in the Bologna Process, the Ministers underlined the importance of research and research training for the quality of higher education. Mobility at the doctoral and postdoctoral levels and increased cooperation between institutions were seen as important means to achieve the goals.

To achieve the 3% objective the EU member states will have to recruit an estimated 700,000 new researchers. At the same time the interest in science and technology among students is declining. Highlighting the question of how to make doctoral studies and a career in research attractive, the Bologna Seminar on “Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society” in Salzburg on 3-5 February 2005 made a series of recommendations for doctoral studies, including the need to meet the requirements of an employment market that is wider than academia through the development of transferable skills, and to further increase mobility.

Against this background participants are invited to discuss the following questions:

1. What can national/regional authorities and higher education institutions respectively do to make doctoral studies more attractive?
2. Should a common core be defined for European doctoral programmes, and if yes, what should it consist of?
3. Within the policy areas of Ministers responsible for higher education, what are the most important obstacles to mobility for doctoral students, and how can these obstacles be overcome?
4. In what ways can the development of transferable skills, and a stronger professional awareness of such skills, be integrated in doctoral programmes as training for the wider society? E.g., should transferable skills be taught separately or through “learning by doing”?

Summing up the discussion: What may be the most important elements to follow up in the Bologna Process in the period leading up to 2007?