

The Role of Doctoral Programmes for Academic Careers in Germany

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1. Introduction

Doctoral education and training have been changing considerably in the framework of the Bologna Process.

It has become embedded into wider policy contexts and increasingly includes preparation for non-academic labour markets.

At the same time the models and types of doctoral education have multiplied.

For academic careers we see a growing importance of the postdoc phase.

2. Doctoral Education in the Framework of the Bologna Process

From individual supervision to structured programmes.

From being an academic affair to becoming a strategic institutional resource which requires to be managed.

Becoming also an object of national policy and supra-national incentives.

(Global) Competition for best talent.

Increased public criticism of traditional forms of doctoral education.

Ongoing debates about doctoral education in the Bologna Process reforms:

- Conceptualisation as a third cycle of studies
- More structure, taught elements, skills training
- Responsibility for success, quality of supervision
- Critical mass and processes of concentration

3. The Extended Policy Field

Supra-national level:

Bologna Process (EHEA), Lisbon Strategy (ERA)

Strengthen knowledge producing and knowledge intensive sectors of the economy (additional skills and competences)

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

National policy field:

Funding and other forms of support to set up
structured programmes

More internationalisation

Role as performance indicator (also for rankings)

National report system

Table 1: Doctoral degrees awarded in Germany

Year	No. of Degrees	% Women	% Foreigners
1995	22,387	31.5	
2002	23,838	36.4	
2008	25,190	41.9	14.6
2010	25,629	44.1	15.0

Institutional policies:

Professors are encouraged to increase doctoral degree production and reduce time-to-degree

Doctoral degrees important element of institutional profile

Competition for reputation, funding and best talent

Additional resources for successful professors

4. Multiplication of Models

Altogether 8 different types:

1. The research doctorate
2. The professional doctorate
3. The taught doctorate
4. The cumulative doctorate
5. The practice doctorate
6. The „new route“ or integrated doctorate

7. The joint European doctorate
8. The cooperative doctorate

5. The Role of Doctoral Education for Academic Careers

Proliferation prevents transparency but agreement about many pathways to the doctorate.

Many doctoral candidates = growing heterogeneity of motives and interests.

Necessary: active shaping of transition phases.

Doctorate a prerequisite for an academic career but no longer the entrance ticket to it.

Currently: Reforms of the postdoc phase for quicker eligibility to a professorship.

But no unified practice yet (habilitation vs. junior professorship).

Germany lacks a proper career track model.

No transparent criteria for getting a professorship and all positions below that are fixed term (6 years).

Need to shape the postdoc phase and facilitate career planning and career management.

6. Conclusions

In many European countries distinction between research doctorate and professional doctorate.

A systematic research training needs to take into consideration that in Germany 90 % of doctoral degree holders do not remain in academia.

To improve the competitiveness of Germany's knowledge and innovation system it is necessary to further increase doctoral degree awards and attract more young talents from abroad.

Thank you for your attention!

