

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication: an anticipatory experience (born in 1993) in the perspective of the Bologna Process

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Main conclusions from the action 6 of the EUA Doctoral Program Project coordinated by the European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication

The internationalization of the doctorate is not the same as the international doctorate. A joint International/European doctorate commits institutions to the integrating all the phases of planning, implementing and awarding a joint diploma, which is quite different from the cumulative or additional model of a local PhD plus joint certificate.

A joint International/European doctorate is something more and something different from an additional certificate (about international mobility or joint supervision) to a local Ph.D.

If from the outset there is a strong, shared commitment for planning a joint program, it is important that the award of a joint certificate be part of the network mission's build-up.



NETWORK BUILDING-UP bottom-up approach brought at the top

- The creation of a well-established institutional network of I.E. institutions in at least 3 European countries
- Greater access to expertise than would be possible at a national level.
- Benefits of a variety of methodological approaches and complementary cluster of competences.

JOINT CRITERIA

- The European standards developed on the basis of joint criteria about the whole process related to:
 - candidate selection;
 - training of participants from different nationalities;
 - research activity and training in an international environment;
 - intensive didactic "stages" in multilingual and multicultural settings;
 - adoption of E.C.T.S. specifically designed schemes;
 - language policy and format for Ph.D. dissertation;
 - evaluation of the whole training process and quality system;
 - formal recognition of the degree and award of joint diploma.

STRUCTURED TRAINING

- Tutoring and co-tutoring triadic system: done monitoring by three tutors in three different European Countries.
- The structured international mobility of both research trainees and teaching staff: stage abroad (minimum six months), yearly International Summer School, International Lab meetings.
- The linkage between international physical and virtual mobility.
- The Thesis - or part of it - should be published or at least evaluated ready to be published in International Journals by the International Evaluation Board of the Final Jury.
- European Credit System as a system for credit accumulation, rather than transfer (E.C.T.S. without T)

INFRASTRUCTURE

- The installation of adequate infrastructure and dedicated facilities including "common web site" and common e-learning platform.
- Proven skills in network management and good practice in the administration Obligations and Rights.
- Transparency in defining the code of conduct both for research trainees and tutors. Working rules for participants: Obligations and Rights.
- Jointly agreed policies for fundraising and financial resource management.
- A common fee structure: enrollment of the candidates at the network level and not at the individual institutions: the "end" starts from the beginning!

The "musts" for establishing a Joint European Doctorate

What we mean by "the end starts from the beginning" is a joint programme involving a joint diploma starts from the recruitment of applicants, entry criteria, admissions procedures and registration at network level. If the recruitment and selection of new candidates is not made by a centralised committee, the candidates' involvement continues to operate at the level of individual institutions.

Even before selection, access to information is very important in the recruitment process and in stimulating applications by potential candidates. When the admission process is decentralised - for example, via different websites rather than a common portal - information can be inconsistent.

Background

The European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication is a well-established, approved training structure which since 1993 has been successfully training post-graduates from EU and non-EU countries.

It is an International doctorate requiring a Ph.D. dissertation (3-year) and involves a network of prestigious EU universities supplying advanced research training in the area of social representations and communication.

The European Ph.D. came into being as a natural outgrowth of a pre-existing community of researchers at work with the Laboratorio Europeo de Psicología Social (LEPSA-S.R.), and with similar research goals and epistemological interests. This common historical background greatly contributes to the complementary nature of the European Ph.D.'s research interests and the training skills that have been developed since its foundation.

AIMS

Selection of candidates from all over the world according to shared quality criteria.

High level training through joint European curricula, bringing physical and virtual mobility of both the research trainees and teaching staff.

Research in an international environment.

Research activities, stages in multilingual and multicultural settings.

Adoption of a specifically designed scheme of mobility.

Multiple evaluation of a language policy and format for dissertation.

Validation of the whole training process.

High status of the qualification and formal award of joint diploma.

Map on the European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. network

The European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. network includes 18 partner Universities and "International Partners" in 12 European countries:

Germany, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom, Sweden, Netherlands.

Map of the European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. Marie Curie Multiparty Training Site

The European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. Marie Curie Multiparty Training Site includes 8 partner Universities in 6 European countries:

Finland, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom.

Scientific and Organizational Structure of the European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. program and Marie Curie Multi-Party Training Sites

The Core Executive Committee is composed of the Programme Director, the Scientific Coordinator, and the representative partners of the three universities who confer the joint degree (La Sapienza, Aix-Marseille, Alexander von Humboldt).

The European Scientific Board is composed of all the representative partners of the above mentioned member universities. Together with the coordinator of the program, they have the tasks of setting up plans, promoting the development of the European Ph.D. program at their own university and in their country and contributing to the success of any related activity, such as International Summer Schools, video-conferences, distant tutoring, etc. The European Scientific Board is kept informed of any relevant decision taken by the Core Executive Committee.

The International Evaluation Board, composed of academics from partner network universities as well as invited international experts, selected by the European Ph.D. network, assesses the students' final Ph.D. dissertations, which are written in the national language of the country where the doctorate is carried out as well as a short version in English, in a format ready to be submitted to international journals.

Moreover, at the coordinating University the programme is evaluated each year by an external, controlled Doctoral Committee for Scholarships and Quality Assurance and by the Evaluation Board on the basis of indicators on the performance rates by the National Committee for University Studies.

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The first 14 years of Institutional History and Recognition

An article published on MCFE Annals (vol. III 2004) and disseminated in Pdf format via the European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. web site (www.euophd.eu/annals) (2-8080) provides a brief history of recognition that the European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication program has obtained since its birth in 1993. This includes institutional recognition and didactic accreditation within four institutional scenarios:

- European Union (DG Education and DG Research)
- Ministry of Scientific Research
- University
- Larger Scientific Community

Didactic Structure

European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

adopted by the Euro PhD on Social Representations and Communication

The European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. program is structured according to the ECTS system, which allows for the accumulation of credits from different partner universities.

Structured "physical" and "virtual" mobility as an integral part of the European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. research training

individual and collective PHYSICAL MOBILITY

STAGE ABROAD in two different European institutions (sites of the two co-tutors) supported by Marie Curie fellowships, by grants from MIUR and University

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOLS, supported by Marie Curie awards and MIUR

individual and multiple VIRTUAL MOBILITY

- Distant individualised tutoring and research progress monitoring via personalised website for each research trainee
- International Lab Meetings via Euro PhD web auditorium
- Distant training on meta-theoretical analysis and access to specialised Virtual Library and bibliographic inventories

Marie Curie Fellow Mobility flow at each European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. host site

Marie Curie Fellows at the University of Helsinki FINLAND

Marie Curie Fellows at the University of Aix-en-Provence FRANCE

Marie Curie Fellows at the University of La Sapienza ITALY

Marie Curie Fellows at the University of Cambridge U.K.

Marie Curie Fellows at the University of Salamanca SPAIN

Marie Curie Fellows at the University of Coimbra PORTUGAL

Logistical Aspects for Candidate Selection

SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF APPLICANTS - from all over the world

Final assessment by the International Evaluation Board (Final Jury) in a format ready to be submitted to international journals.

Logistical Aspects

THE PH.D. TRAINING AND ONLINE MULTIMEDIA COURSES

THE PH.D. TRAINING AND ONLINE MULTIMEDIA COURSES

e-learning Kit

The complete package of multimedia tools to be developed and disseminated via Internet includes:

- a full bibliographic inventory
- a meta-analysed inventory
- an advanced search engine
- a specialised library in S.R. & C.

Logistical aspects

RESEARCH

PHD DISSERTATION with 3 years study

A full report of the dissertation to be evaluated by the Final Jury must be written in the national language of the country where the doctorate is being pursued or in English (or in French).

A short version to be published by the International Evaluation Board in English (or in French) upon its formal evaluation ready for submission to an international journal.

Research trainees' Obligations

When the training and co-tutoring triadic system, research trainees' obligations are:

- to attend a minimum of 6 months (distributed in two different European countries) (PHYSICAL MOBILITY)
- to submit an extensive yearly report to be presented in the didactic training sessions during the International Summer School and a critical review of the bibliography on the research undertaken.

Research trainees' Obligations

- to maintain regular communication with their national and foreign tutors.
- Depending on the country, this can be a face to face interactive and/or computer mediated communication contact through dedicated e-learning forum discussion and e-learning videoconferences (VIRTUAL MOBILITY)
- to write the full report of their dissertation in a national language of the country where the doctorate is being pursued (or in English, this is to be evaluated by the national tutor).
- to write a short version (in article format) in English, which upon agreement of the Final Jury, should be evaluated by the International Evaluation Board (Final Jury) and deemed ready to be submitted to international journals.

Spot on the European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. academic life

The ceremony of laurea honors causa to Serge Mascovia at University of Rome La Sapienza (7th June 1999).

Spot on the European Ph.D. on S.R. & C. academic life

Thematic forum discussion open to professors, European Ph.D. students and young researchers from across the world aimed at the development of critical thinking and research skills under the direction of scholars in the field, in a variety of didactic training sessions to face the small group interaction and in the virtual space via internet.

Spot on a social event at the European Ph.D. Lab

The European Ph.D. Research Centre and Multimedia Lab