

## Part II

# Outlooks and Questions Pertaining to Doctoral (PhD) Programs in Ukraine

### MODERNISING PhD TRAINING IN UKRAINE: TEMPUS PROJECT <sup>1</sup>

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#### **Bologna and doctorate training**

Universities in Europe are experiencing great structural changes. From being elite institutions educating the few, mass education today is the rule. The Bologna process, now comprising 46 countries in Europe is the main driver of these structural changes. Since 2003, doctoral training has been one of the central ten themes that are monitored by the Bologna movement. Universities are coping with the following changes: the organizational setup of “the third cycle” degree training with greater weight on supervision and the introduction of research schools, “training by research and not only for research” with inclusion of PhD students in research groups with a common theme, increased focus on international collaboration and mobility of the doctorate students, quest for joint degrees from politicians and governmental bodies, and a growing discussion of transferable and professional skills in the doctorate training that prepare the candidates not only for academic careers but also for work in industry and other organisations.

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While these structural changes are strategic challenges for Western European universities, they have revolutionary significance for many Eastern European institutions, with a heritage of research training from the Soviet Higher Education system, with a sharp distinction between research at the Academy of Sciences and education at the universities. Post-Soviet Ukraine is a typical illustration of such a divorce between research and education. Yet, Ukraine has signed the Bologna agreement, and has stated in her national report prepared for the 2007 London ministerial meeting that she will comply with the Bologna degree structure also for the doctorate level. Until now, seekers of an advanced academic degree (candidate of science) must either be admitted to the aspirantura or secure a special affiliation status at one of the research or educational establishments licensed to supervise such activities. Although the post-Soviet aspirantura and the Western-type PhD programme are designed to pursue similar objectives, their underlying philosophy is vastly different. A lack of proper supervision and assessment, virtual absence of research groups and close collaboration between aspirants and their academic advisers, disallowing joint degrees lead to a low quality research, widespread plagiarism, and extremely low publication record of young Ukrainian researchers in Western refereed journals.

Latest documents issued by the Ukrainian Ministry of Science and Education state that Ukraine has committed to introduce the third, doctoral level of training by 2010. However, many educational institutions in this country as well as ministerial bureaucracy lack a clear understanding of organization and philosophy of the Western-type PhD degree and basic differences between this programme and the archaic aspirantura. Some experts believe that this state of affairs poses a serious obstacle for further reform of the higher educational system in Ukraine. To put it simply, by 2010 when Ukraine is supposed to institute doctoral training, the aspirantura may be merely renamed to a PhD programme without introducing any major changes into the system of preparation for advanced academic degrees.

### **Project objective**

This note reports on a TEMPUS-TACIS structural measure project: "Training for the Implementation of the Higher Education Area Third Cycle in Ukraine, 2005–2007," which perhaps is the first significant attempt of a major Ukrainian university to put into practice the doctoral degree. It is stated in the project application: "Management of aspiran-

tura at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA), as in other Ukrainian universities, is ineffective. Though well-trained before, many doctoral students are not able to fulfil a dissertation and complete a programme successfully. Thus, excellent master and undergraduate students become poor doctoral students or go abroad to fulfil their doctoral training". According to the 2005 Bergen Communiqué, Ukraine government has made a commitment to coordination its policy "through the Bologna Process to establish the EHEA", in which "doctoral level qualifications need to be fully aligned" and listed "creation of new principles of training at the three-level cycle degree" as the main challenge ahead of the country".

NaUKMA, one of the most prestigious (2<sup>nd</sup> national rank) and possibly the most progressive university in Ukraine, has made a decision to transform the existing aspirantura into a new innovative educational model of training professionals of the highest quality. The respectability and innovative spirit of the university could make it a leading actor in transforming the third cycle education system in Ukraine. "To achieve this goal, NaUKMA needs partnership from European universities to set up a novel management of doctoral programmes. The present project will significantly improve training of doctoral students at NaUKMA. It will impact on transforming aspirantura in Ukraine within the Bologna Process".

## **TEMPUS Consortium**

The TEMPUS Consortium consists of three universities involved in the European University Associations Doctoral Programme 2004-2005: Université Pierre & Marie Curie in Paris (grantholder); Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and the University of Bergen (associate partnership), with the European Council for PhD candidates and junior researchers (EURODOC) as a partner institution. The project has appointed two external experts:

Professor Alfredo Moscardini at the School of Computing and Technology at the University of Sunderland who has deep knowledge of global trends of graduate programmes development through his participation in GIGP-Conferences ("Global Integration of Graduate Programmes") and higher education system in Ukraine through participation in several previous TEMPUS projects. The second expert in the project is David Salinger, a professor at the School of Mathematics at the University of Leeds who participated in the EUA Doctoral Programme Project. NaUKMA is the coordinator of the TEMPUS-TACIS project, which was awarded a structural measure grant by the TEMPUS programme in 2005.

## **Project site visits and output**

In May 2007, NaUKMA hosted a two-week workshop for university faculty and administrators. Speakers from Universite Pierre & Marie Curie, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, the University of Leeds, and the EURODOC gave a solid overview of the Bologna reforms in the sphere of PhD programme and shared their experience of doctoral training in their respective universities. In September, two groups of Kyiv-Mohyla representatives including the university president, vice-presidents, deans, and department chairs visited Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and the University of Bergen to study on site the organization and practical activities of the third educational level. For Ukrainian educators both site visits proved to be highly informative and productive.

The overall project has two main goals: (1) to gain and disseminate knowledge about PhD training abroad and (2) to establish a doctoral programme at NaUKMA. A major conference on the subject will be held in November, 2007, at Kyiv-Mohyla. Along with international guests and NaUKMA faculty, administrators of leading Ukrainian universities and representatives of the Ministry of Science and Education will be among the conference participants. A volume that contains contributions from NaUKMA professors and their international colleagues and focuses on different aspects of PhD training will be distributed among all participants. Discussion at the conference will help to better understand possible obstacles to establishing the third level of education at Kyiv-Mohyla as well as in Ukraine in general. Experience gained by NaUKMA will benefit other institutions of higher education in Ukraine which in few short years should implement the Bologna principles.