

Questionnaire Denmark

General questions and Discussion

1. No significant changes in the situation of Danish PhD candidates have taken place since last year.
2. At present Denmark is not fulfilling its obligations towards the Lisbon Strategy and we would like to see an increase in the number of PhD candidates as well as post-docs and other junior researchers. However, we emphasize that these initiatives must be followed up by an increase in permanent research positions to avoid brain-drain. A second goal is to work towards a set of guidelines for supervision and training for Danish PhD candidates and to obtain an official evaluation of the PhD training practice.
3. During the general elections campaign in January-February 2005 research and development was one of the focus areas, and the public awareness of the need to invest for research is high. However, after years of cut backs major investments in research and development are needed to do more than just fill the voids. Most focus has been/ is on the applied research field and our ability to compete in an increasingly globalized world. Fundamental research and university training in small subjects are still suffering severe cut backs.
4. Within the last year we have joined Eurodoc and participated in the meeting in Greece 2004 as well as in the Bologna seminar "Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society" in Salzburg February 2005. On the national level one of our workgroups is dealing with supervision and training conditions. The first results were presented at the national board meeting recently and dealt with identification of the main problems experienced by Danish PhD candidates. The key issues were defined as: high workload and difficulties combining work and family life, social and professional isolation, supervision problems and lack of guidelines for the project/ process. The next step will be to formulate a set of guidelines for supervision and training based on this report and PhD surveys performed by local PhD associations. The workgroup responsible for public outreach has succeeded in making contacts to the political system and recently produced a feature article on research policy from our point of view to be submitted to newspapers. Changes in the PhD training practice in Denmark are coming up and we will follow the political process closely.
5. We are a network organization currently representing nine local PhD associations at universities across the country. We serve as a forum for discussions and exchange of views and experiences between local associations. In addition to that we are aiming to be the national voice of PhD students towards the political system. We are currently engaged in Eurodoc, national guidelines for training and supervision and establishing contacts to the political system.
6. One of our local PhD associations has just completed a thorough survey of PhD candidate work conditions, supervision and training, which also included the supervisors. We do not have any current plans about a national survey, but more local

associations are interested in similar initiatives at their university/ faculty. We intend to use this/ these surveys in our work towards national guidelines for training and supervision.

7. We are presently engaged in the Eurodoc workgroups on “Mobility” and “Supervision and Training” and would like to keep these focus areas.

Bologna Process and Lisbon Strategy

8. The “Bologna Process rules” are in many ways in line with our existing structure of the doctoral education in Denmark, and therefore the doctoral level would be affected in the sense of increasing the opportunities to gain experiences from travelling to other institutions in Europe and not only to institutions in the United States as it is often the case at the moment.

9. Our national association is positive about the insertion of the doctoral level as the 3rd cycle in the Bologna Process. The expectations are that the 3rd cycle would affect a more harmonised level of doctoral studies throughout Europe.

10. There has not yet been a seeable effect of the Lisbon strategy on the policy of recruitment of young researcher in Denmark. Hopefully that will come.

Supervision and Training

13. We haven't discussed this in our association yet.

14. Doctorial examinations in Denmark are public – The exact format of the defence may vary between institutions but usually consists of an oral presentation of the thesis followed by a session, where the three people in the assessment committee get to ask questions and comment on the thesis. The defence should take place within 4 months after the thesis has been handed in.

The assessment committee should consist of two professors from outside the institution (preferably from abroad) and one professor from the institution (not the supervisor). This committee evaluate the thesis and after max 2 months should give a preliminary assessment of the thesis recommending whether or not the quality of the thesis is, so that a PhD can be awarded.

The thesis is an official publication, and are being made available to the public in due time before the defence.

15. Almost all PhD's in Denmark are employed by their awarding institution. To be accepted as a PhD- student you need a master degree or equivalent. The employment contract of the PhD- student vary depending on which union the student is a member of, but most of them are three year contracts with very little chance of be extended. The length of PhD is three years and most finished within half a year of that, especially since you usually don't get paid after three years.

All PhD students must take courses during their PhD equivalent to 30 ECTS; these courses may vary from one week intensive PhD courses to normal full term courses.

16. No

International mobility

17. The most popular opportunity for young researchers to travel is by institutional agreements or individual relationships.

18. The information about travelling is often given by the advisor. The national PhD. association could maybe help with information campaigns.

19. The ordinary scholarship given to PhD. candidates in Denmark is often enough to pay for a travel abroad. That is because of the tax rules for travelling, which gives serious benefits.

20. In principle openings for PhD. scholarships are open for all nationalities.

21. I am not aware of any such joint degree programmes in Denmark for European or international PhD. candidates.

Professional Future

22. We are aware of the Charter, but being a fairly new organisation we are still working on getting every thing working on a national level. So we haven't had much time to discuss international issues, but we are generally happy that there is focus on the labour conditions for early stage researchers in Europe.

23. This is yet another subject for us to discuss in the future, when we have our national organization running smoothly.

24. We would like the contracts to have a longer duration in general, since working on one year contracts puts an unnecessary stress on researchers. Also it makes the academics career paths less attractive for young researchers since the prospect of living from one short contract to another isn't an attractive lifestyle for most especially people who want a family. Also if you are from small country like Denmark the academic path means spending at least two years abroad, without any guarantee of a position in Denmark.

The industrial career path attracts a lot of young researchers because of the better job security and it usually also means a better pay than most post doc positions.

Gender Equality

25. Are there any initiatives in your country that you estimate to have been at least partially successful in reducing gender imbalances existing at the PhD level or at later academic stages? If yes, please give details. If not, please identify the probable reasons for this and indicate what the most important steps would be towards a programme that really has a practical impact.

We do not have any specific gender balance initiatives aimed at the PhD level or later academic stages. Compared to most other countries we already have well developed system for full time working parents covering the general labour market (including

academia). Maternity/ Paternity leave is available for up to a year (first 32 weeks with full salary on academic standard contracts, the rest on social welfare). Daycare is well organized, state subsidized and available for everyone within maximum a year after the birth of the child. Most problems with gender imbalance are probably due to high work loads in academia and problems juggling work and family life; problems which are less straightforward to solve.

26. Are there notable differences in the gender distribution between comparable positions in academia and other sectors? What are the reasons for this? What is the tendency?

Women are generally represented in increasingly low numbers towards the top of the career ladder. This is also true for academia (especially for the natural sciences), applies to the entire labour market. As noted above the general conditions for working parents are quite good. Most of the gender imbalance problems probably have more indirect reasons such as women feeling more responsible towards running the home and difficulties in standing out as the only women, while climbing the career ladder.

Figures

2. The total number of PhD candidates in Denmark (2004) 4667, and the number has been slowly rising over the last years
4. These numbers are from 2002 average age of PhD's when they get awarded their degree 34.4, so average age entering about three years less.
5. The nominal length of a PhD programme is 3 years. No numbers are available about the average length a candidate spends before finishing. But some local studies show that most people finish within the nominal time and that it seldom takes more than one extra year.
9. All PhD's are workers – but there is an annual fee of about 10000 euros – this is usually paid either by the university or a grant. There is no difference between Danish and international PhD's.
11. The PhD is on the same salary scale as people holding a master degree – this means they get a salary of about 2900 euros a month + pension (350 euros).
12. As all PhD's are considered workers they have all the benefits of social security and so on. Exactly how the rules are for international PhD's are we're not sure, but they have the same right as other workers from outside Denmark.
13. All PhD's have to use 280 hours a year on work for their institution, what this means and how it is used differs. The work can be teaching, computer support, and other duties in the institution. Not all institutions take advantage of the full amount of hours.
14. As above 280 hours a year.
16. About 100 incoming PhD students a year compared to a number of 1100 new PhD students in total.
17. Stays in academia Hum. 47% ; Nat 37% ; Soc/pol 58% ; Technical 28% ; Veterinary 28% ; Health 16%
18. Industry Hum 22% ; Nat 32% ; Soc/pol 19 ; Tech 60% ; Vet. 37% ; Health 23%
19. The salary of new Doctors Government 46.000 euros a year – private sector 51.000 euros a year.
20. We have members from all the universities except one (4) and a couple of the university like institutions (2), but are working on getting more members.