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UZDOC Recommendations for national standards for quality assurance: idea, concept, structures

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WHAT ARE THE *RECOMMENDATIONS*?

Recommendations, together with the *Guidelines* presented yesterday, are a final outcome of the UZDOC project, and are **the results of the third and last phase** of the project implementation.

They are a **tool to develop the national standards for quality assurance** in doctoral education (Specific Objective 4), aimed at Uzbek HE policymakers

They complement the *Guidelines*, and should be read together – one is dependent on the other, and together they present a valuable source of information to the Uzbek HE stakeholders

HOW WERE THEY CREATED?

Concept of the *Recommendations* was created in close cooperation with project partners and Uzbek higher education stakeholder - the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education, State Testing Centre, Academy of Sciences - during visits to Uzbekistan on June 2015 and during additional meetings in Brussels in December 2015.

As the Guidelines, *Recommendations* are based on the previous project activities, performed in the first two years of the project, mainly on the:

- Analysis of the legal and regulatory framework on doctoral education in Uzbekistan
- Four study visits and the discussions on the organization of doctoral education in EU
- Detailed comparative analysis of Uzbek doctoral education vs EU system

ANALYSIS OF THE UZBEK SYSTEM – WHAT HAVE WE FOUND?

- new legal regulations characterized by significant change in structure and culture of doctoral education
- getting closer to European system (3 years vs six years)
- keeping some features from the previous system (e.g. high number of requested publications; relationship between basic and applied research and connection to practical side of research.)
- significantly influencing long lasting culture of value of the doctoral education

ANALYSIS OF THE UZBEK SYSTEM – WHAT HAVE WE FOUND?

Results of the analysis lead to a conclusion that there is space for change and adaptation, but also for improvement

How to get there?

- requires understanding and full recognition of a new system of doctoral education
- asks for a public acceptance of different systems, as a result of social, economic and academic change (vs. difference in quality)
- needs to lower tension between the old and new system
- Improvement can happen with a full understanding of the system (both Uzbek and EU) and with a more intense implementation of the changes

DRAFT OF THE PROPOSED CONTENT

Structure of doctoral programme

- what does it mean to structure the programme (format vs content)
- how many programmes should you have (issue of research capacity and critical mass)
- who is responsible for the structure and content (university, government)
- how to link stakeholders and align them in their missions (cooperation with the industry)

DRAFT OF THE PROPOSED CONTENT

Recruitment and Admission

- extremely relevant for the whole process
- directly linked to the completion rate and the quality of the doctoral education in general
- who does the recruitment?
- what are the criteria; who sets them up?
- how to attract the best candidates?

DRAFT OF THE PROPOSED CONTENT

Status of the doctoral candidate

- young researcher or early stage researchers (need to adjust different terminologies)
- employed vs student
- to identify duties and responsibilities

Critical mass

- to adjust doctoral education to actual availability of resources
- to be focused on the quality, not quantity (e.g. number of study areas vs their quality)
- to have realistic number of doctoral candidates
- to opt for slow, but good quality development

DRAFT OF THE PROPOSED CONTENT

Supervision

- critical for the whole outcome of doctoral education
- define criteria who can be a supervisor
- develop institutional support for supervisors
- develop new formats for supervision (international cooperation and mobility)

Publications

- to define how many / what is optimal
- to respect field-discipline differences-specificities
- to provide institutional support – access to databases, but also support to the candidates, provide training for data search, scientific writing etc.

DRAFT OF THE PROPOSED CONTENT

Other relevant issues

- career development and employment of doctoral candidates
- international mobility (sandwich model)
- applicability of research
- institutional support – doctoral education needs to be part of institutional or national strategy

All the relevant aspects of doctoral education need to be further elaborated and disseminated on the:

- institutional level
- governmental level (decision making bodies)
- and all the stakeholders need to be acquainted with the rationale for the reforms

FOR THE END:

Doctoral education became a global topic and it has been identified as a core mission of the universities across countries.

The reform of doctoral education is not easy, but is crucial, not only for universities but for the society in general.

What is encouraging is that our dialogs on doctoral education converged – we are more and more „on the same page”

Thank you!

Questions?