



**EUA-CDE**  
EUA Council for Doctoral Education

# Fostering a Quality Culture in Doctoral education

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## Overview

1. Introducing EUA-CDE
2. Towards a quality culture
3. Quality culture in Doctoral Education
4. Some specific aspects of QA in doctoral education
5. Some final messages



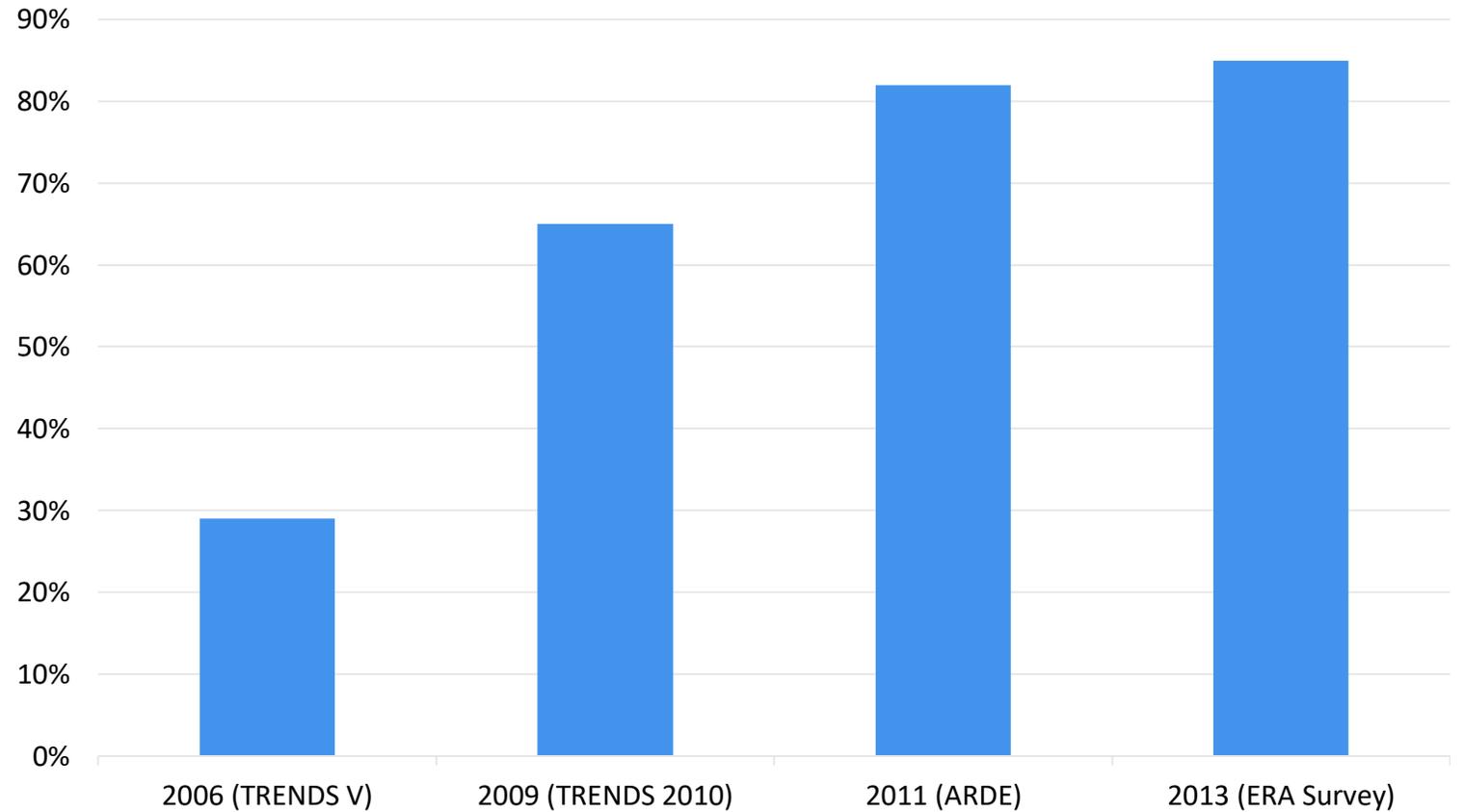
# EUA-CDE

### The European voice for doctoral education

- ***Launched*** in 2008 by the European University Association, ***celebrating*** our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018
- ***Bringing together*** a community of academic leaders and professionals from more than 230 universities in over 30 countries
- ***Working on*** doctoral education policies and good practices of common interest to our members



## The rise of the doctoral school



Sources:

[TRENDS V](#), [TRENDS 2010](#), [ARDE](#) and [ERA Survey](#)



# Fundamentals remain the same...

**Definition** “Doctoral studies are training through independent research under supervision aiming at creating new knowledge, leading to a doctoral degree.”

**Principle** “core component of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research” *Salzburg Recommendation*.

1. Doctoral education rests on the practice of research
2. Doctoral candidates must be allowed independence and flexibility
3. Doctoral education must be developed by autonomous and accountable institutions

Source (definition):

Jørgensen, T.: Doctoral Education, in: Encyclopedia of International Higher Education...



... but rising expectations and new challenges

‘Taking Salzburg Forward’ (2016) reflects a consensus on **new challenges and rising expectations for doctoral education:**

1. Developing an ethos of research integrity
2. Harnessing the digital transformation
3. Fostering international collaboration
4. Contributing innovative research to society

Source:

EUA-CDE, 2016, [Taking Salzburg Forward](#)



## Why do we need quality assurance in doctoral education

- Dependency between doctoral candidate and supervisor leads to increased institutional responsibility
- The future of the doctoral candidate is related to the quality of doctoral education
  - Career depends of the quality of the research of the PhD candidate
  - Doctoral candidates need the appropriate capacities and experiences for their future career
- Accountability to the society
  - Funds need to be invested wisely

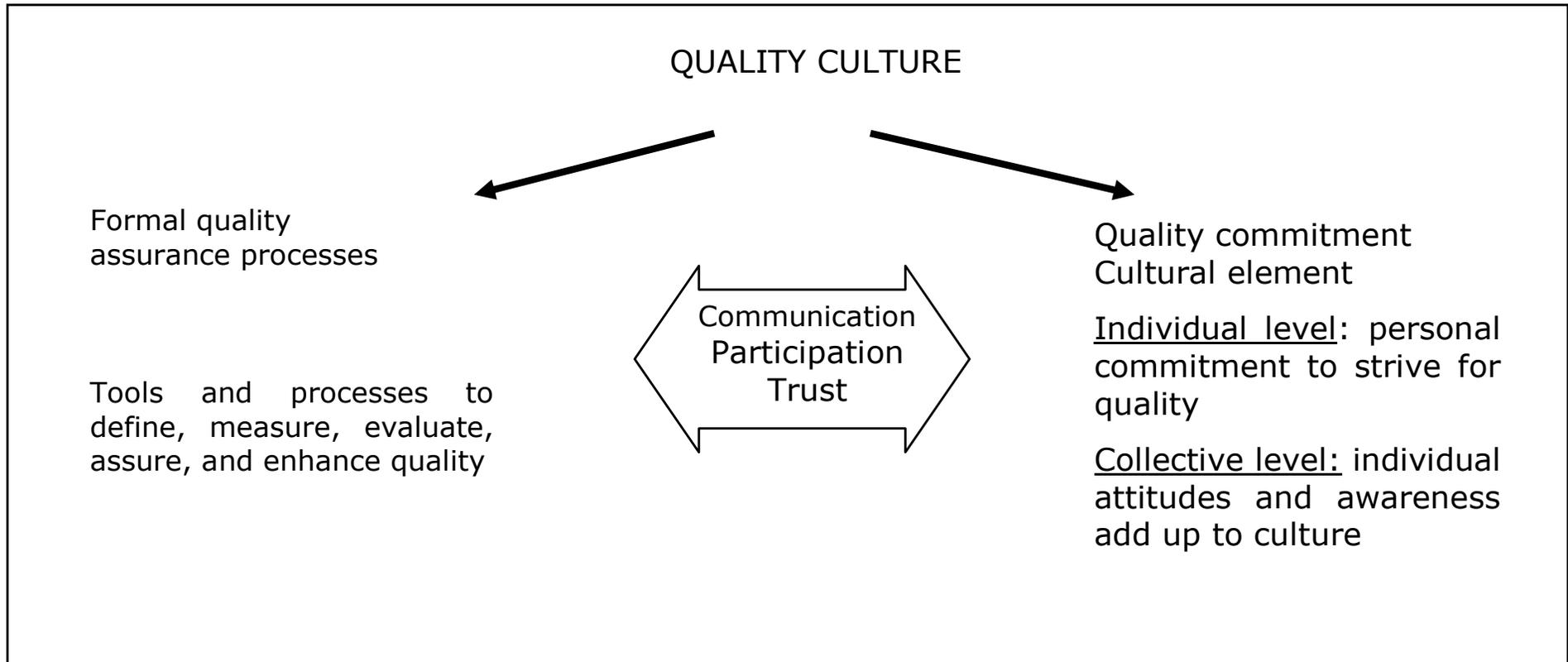


### Some principles of Quality Assurance in HE.

- Main responsibility for QA lies with the institutions
- Context sensitive (institutional and disciplinary diversity)
- Fitness for purpose approach
- Enhancement oriented
- Transparency and co-operation

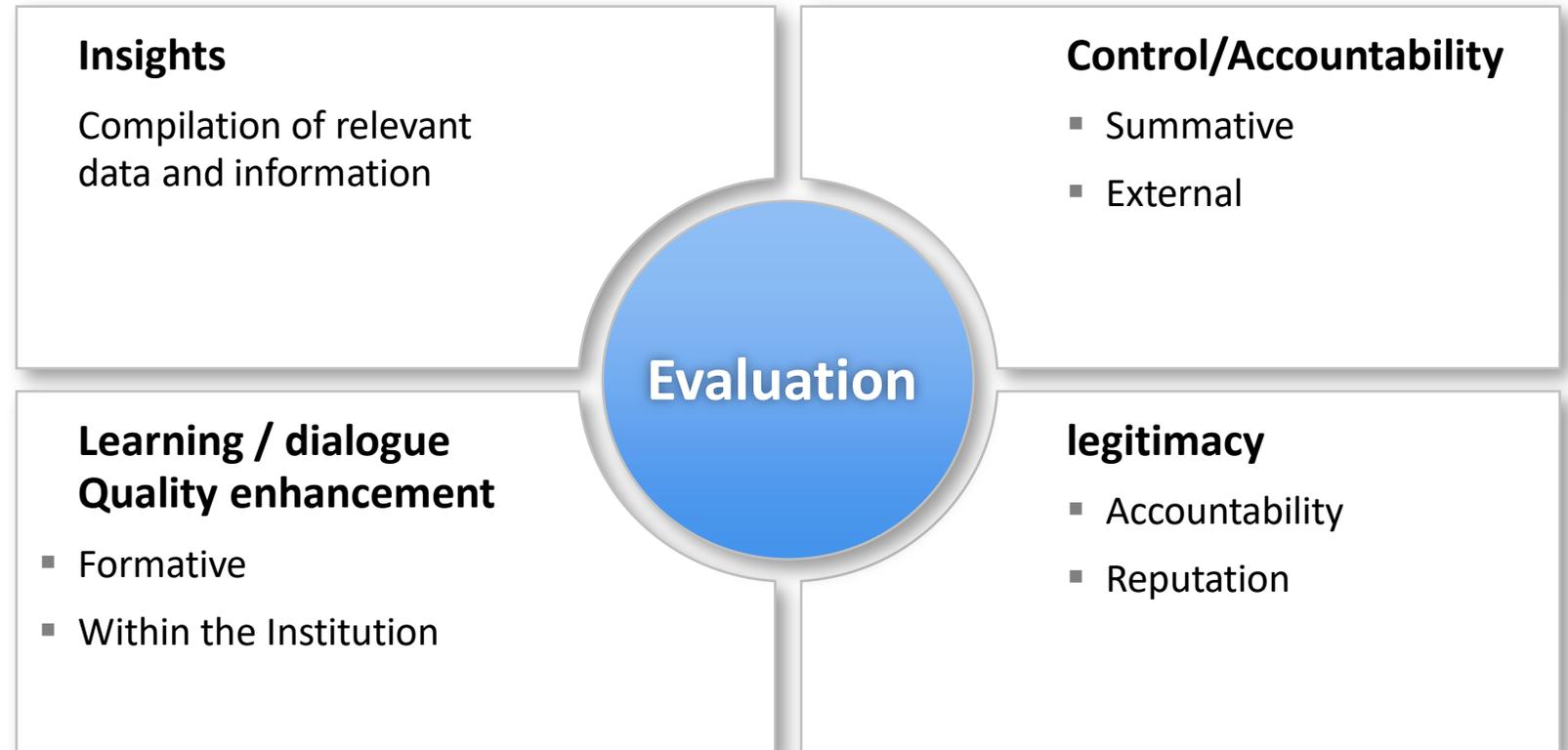


# Quality Culture





# The two functions of evaluation



Stockmann 2009: «Evaluation, eine Einführung», UTB.



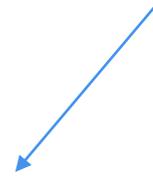
# Principles of quality-culture

- Aim for improved quality, not just compliance
- Adapt to context
- Address the procedural and cultural aspects
- Balance formal and informal elements
- Invest in follow-up actions
- Communicate



# 3. Quality culture in Doctoral Education

**Doctoral education**



Research



Education





## „Secret quality- assurance“ in Doctoral education

Wilson, L., & Sursock, A., 2010, p. 29 - 44,  
“Reform in European Higher Education with a  
focus on quality assurance and the changing  
nature of doctoral education”, in RIHE  
International Seminar Reports, No. 14,  
Hiroshima University. Additions A.H.

How is quality assured in doctoral education?

- **Supervision**
- Professional development for supervisors.
- Agreements between doctoral candidate, supervisor and institution.
- Standards of the process of thesis defence.
- Standards of access, recruitment and selection.
- Research integrity and research ethics.
- Monitoring progress of doctoral candidate.
- Flexible and optional transferable skill training.
- Support for internationalisation and mobility.
- Monitoring indicators like „time to degree“, completion rate or tracking doctoral graduates.



## Who assesses doctoral education

1. Doctoral education is targeted by **various assessments due to its nature as both research and education** (Institutional audit and programme accreditation systems)

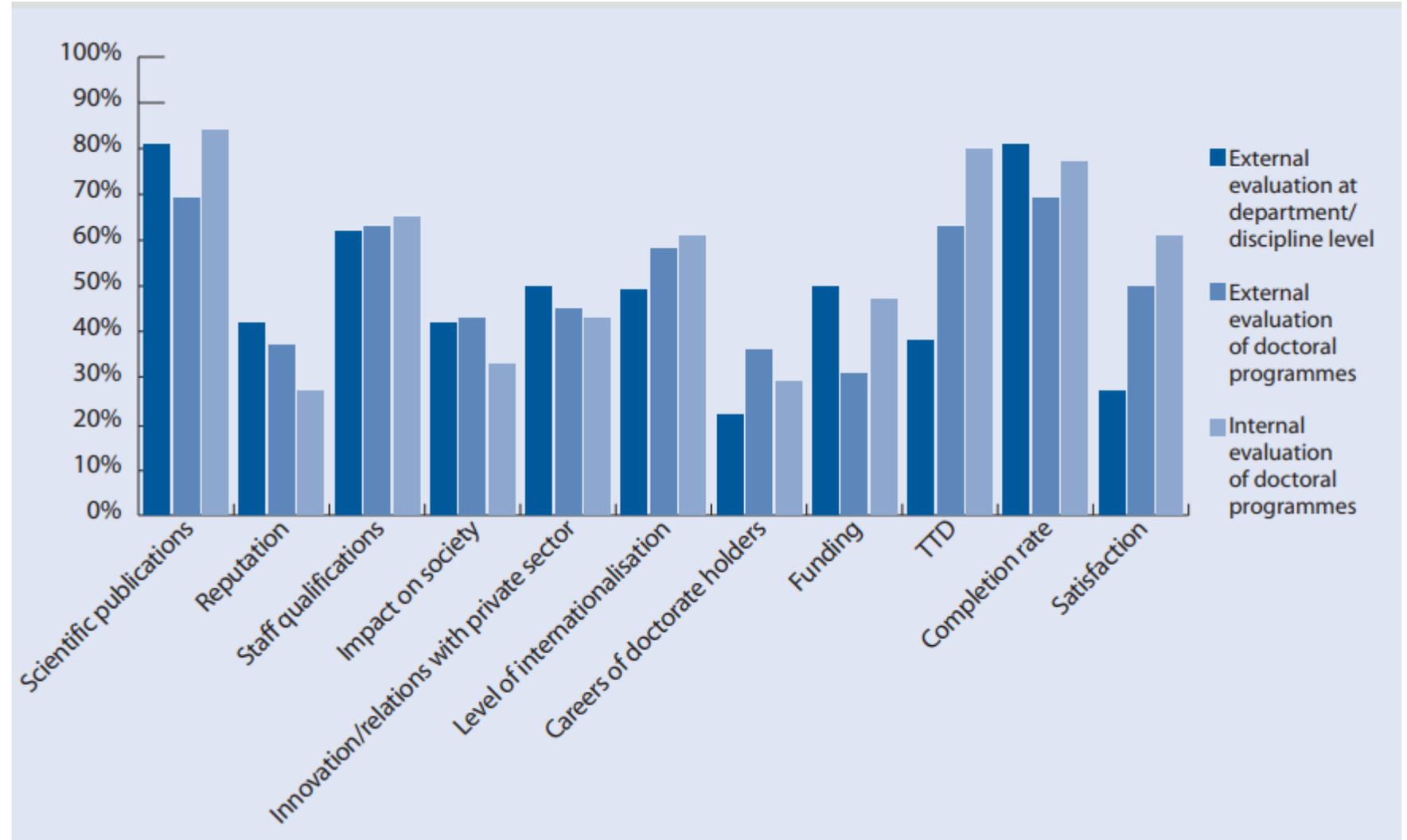
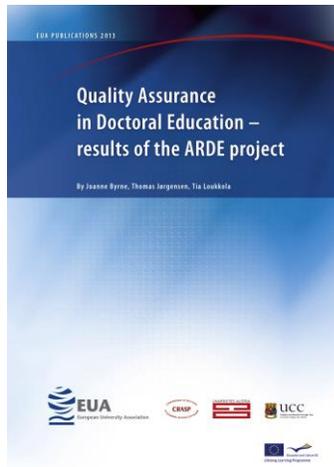
2. **Research assessments** (like the REF in UK) can sometimes include doctoral education

3. **External funding:** Funding agencies assess doctoral education sometimes as well

→ «Overassessment»?



## Diversity of Indicators





### Supervision

#### How to engage staff?

Carrots and sticks Formal tests to become supervisor (Sweden)

Disqualification (UK)

Prize for best supervisor

Bonus (the Netherlands)

#### How to increase Involvement?

Peer learning

Supervision teams

Involvement of staff in drafting guidelines

Supervision record part of promotion procedure

Train the supervisor!



# Career development

### **Career development**

- In many European countries, the vast majority of doctorate holders have careers outside academia
- The main outcome of doctoral education is no longer the thesis, but the doctorate holder
- This means that universities have a responsibility to facilitate the transition to the labour market
- The issue of skill training has become more important

→ However: Research remains in the center of the PhD!



# Career development

### **Career Tracking**

- Tracking Populations in individual institutions are too small to have significant results in terms of employment
- ... But institutions can get an idea about typical careers and employers
- Surveys at system level can be useful (UK, Flanders) –but populations are still small
- Time: Success after 1 year, 2 years, 5 years?
- What is a successful career?



### Skill training

#### **Evaluation of skills courses**

Challenge:

- Satisfaction dependent on expectations
  - Do doctoral candidates know what they need?
- Risk of being subjective

Again: Fit for purpose: Quality depends also on context.



### Some final messages

- The original research remains in the center of doctoral education.
- Doctoral education is a shared responsibility
- Doctoral education automatically includes many aspects of quality enhancement and –assurance, even when it is not always obvious.
- Diversity of doctoral education and doctoral candidates (disciplines, career perspectives, institutions etc.) is an advantage, not a problem.



# EUA-CDE

EUA-Council for Doctoral Education

## 11<sup>th</sup> EUA-CDE Annual Meeting

Excellence through diversity:

Doctoral education in a globalised world



University of Ljubljana  
Slovenia



6 - 8 June 2018



**EUA-CDE**  
EUA Council for Doctoral Education

# Thank you for your attention

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