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A Five-Year Journey of Doctoral Education in Poland: Harnessing Diverse Data for Quality Assurance

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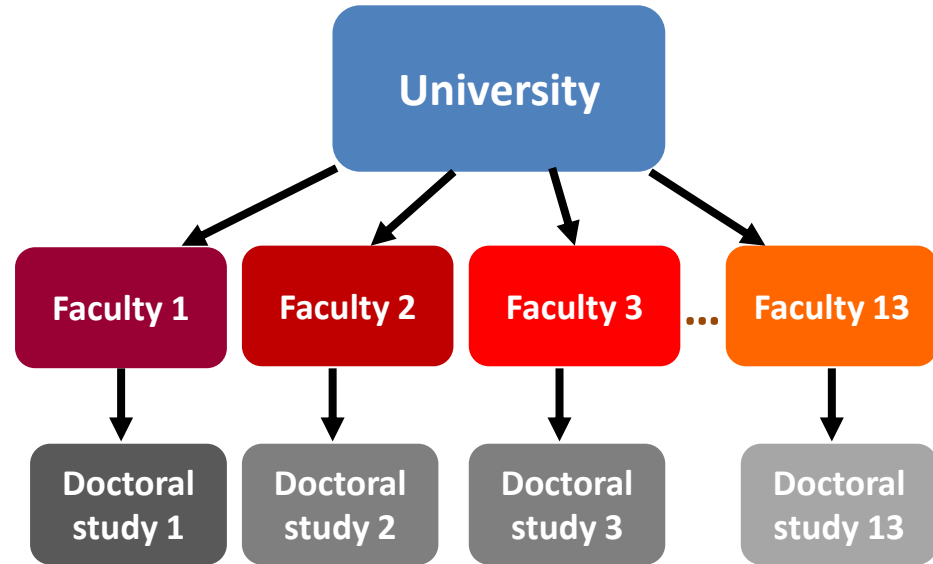
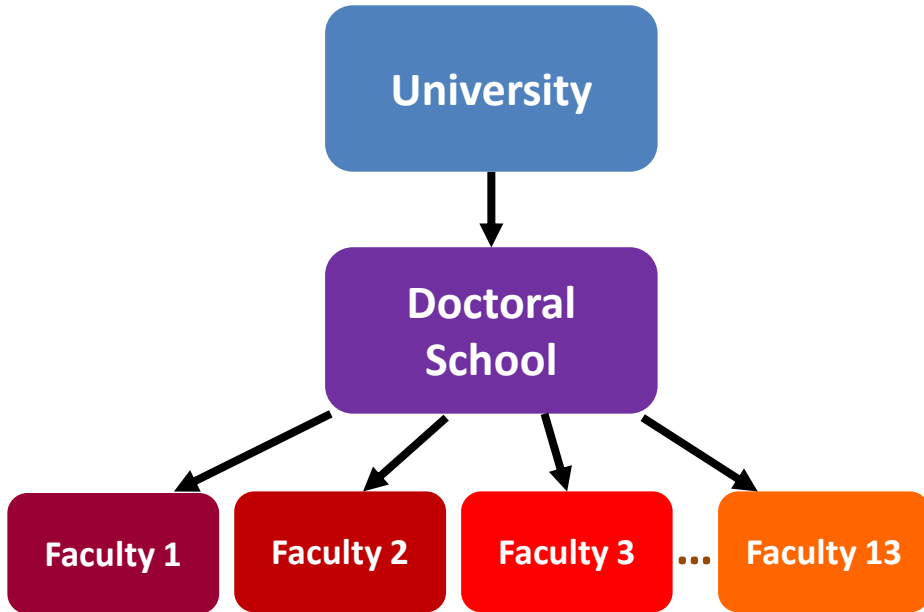
Jaroslaw Korpysa, University of Szczecin, Poland

Introduction

- **In 2019**, Poland launched a **new doctoral education system** through the **establishment of *doctoral schools*** to replace the previous system called *doctoral studies*
- Among the significant changes brought by this legislation was the introduction of **external quality assurance system** for these institutions
- **By 2020**, we started to **organize an informal community of practice** by arranging **monthly meetings of doctoral school directors** to encourage collaboration and the exchange of varied data and best practices
- Subsequently, **in 2023**, we initiated a **formal organization** which presently **comprises over 40 doctoral schools** across Poland
- The **Polish Ministry of Higher Education** collects in **special database** called POLON various data from universities including **data on doctoral education**

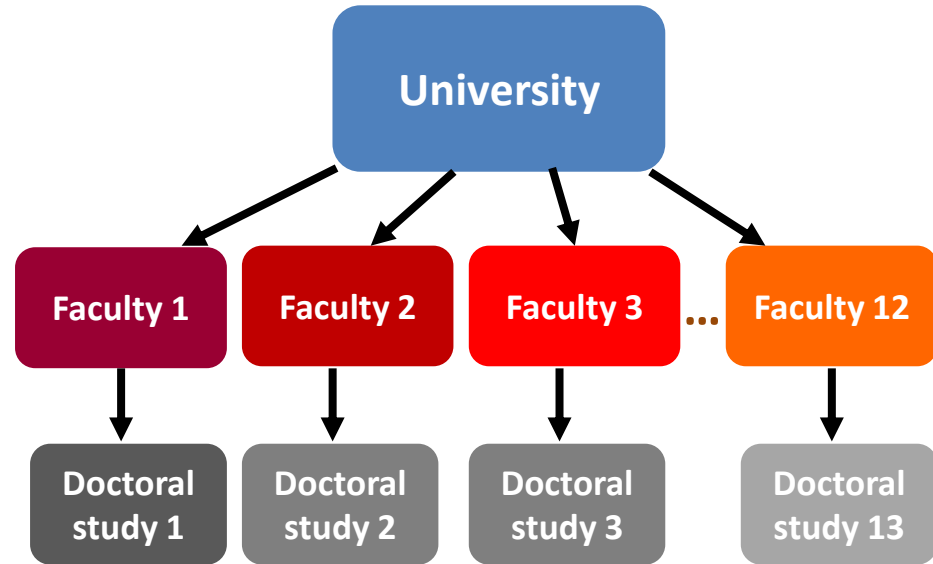
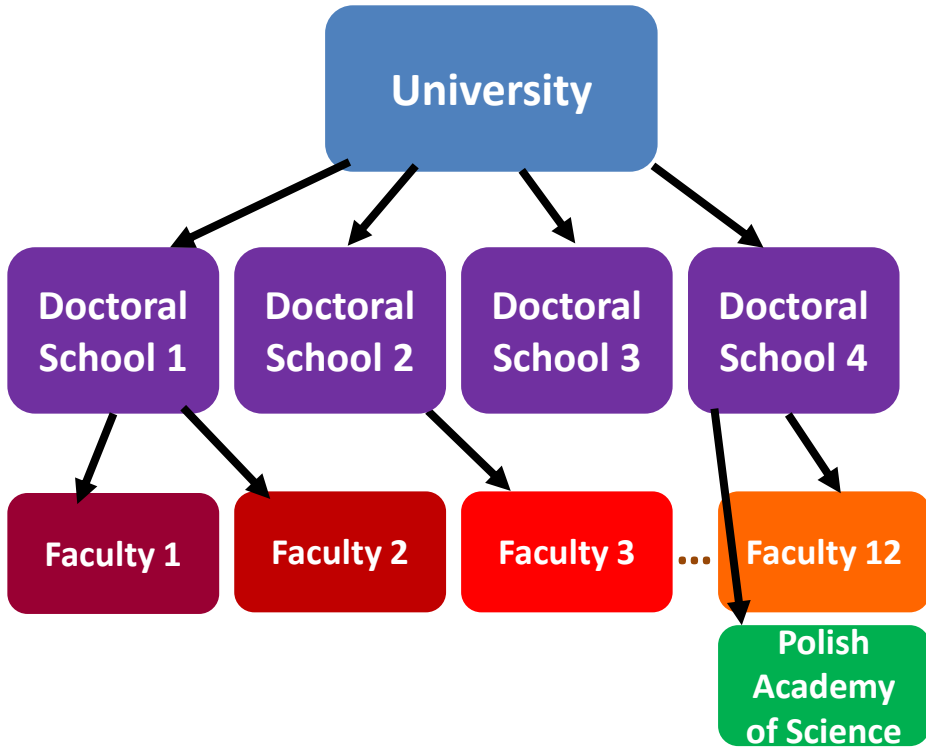
Doctoral Schools vs. Doctoral Studies

Wroclaw University of Science and Technology

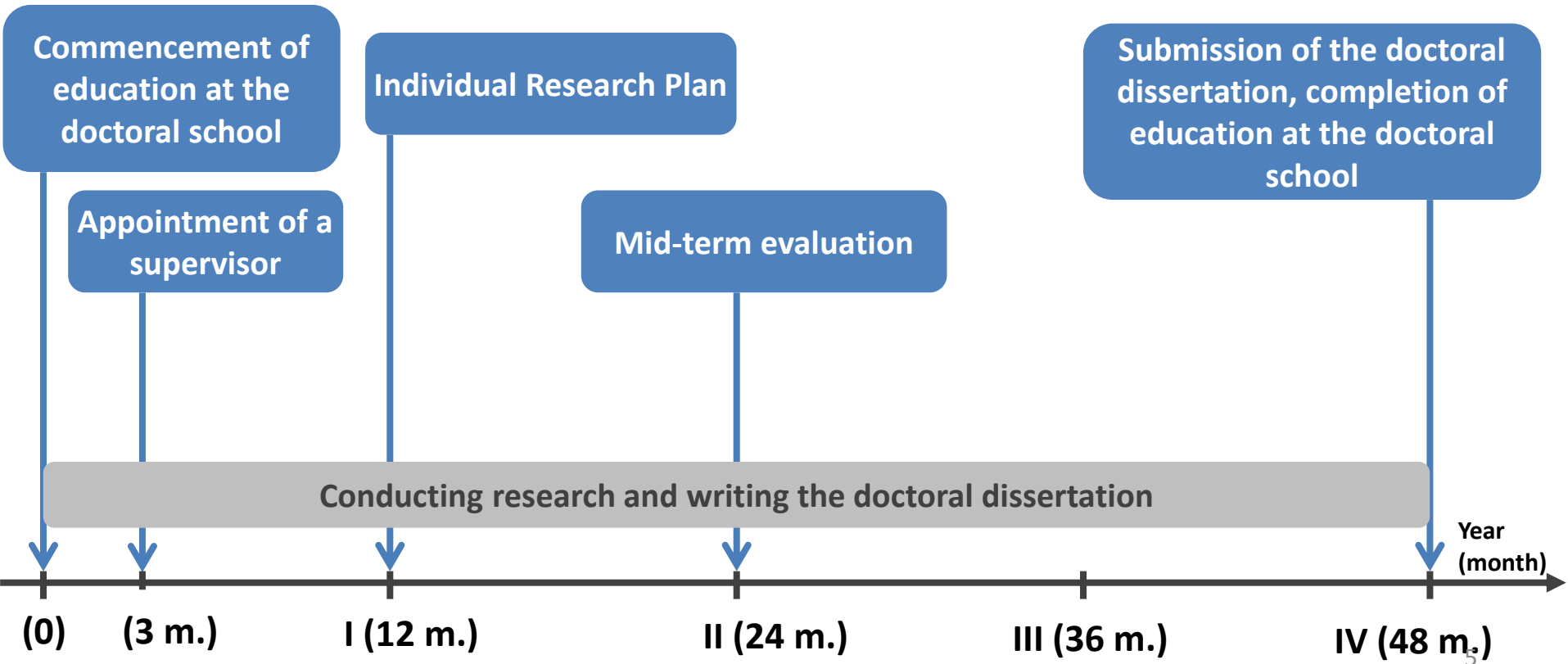


Doctoral Schools vs. Doctoral Studies

University of Lodz



Doctoral School Timeline



Doctoral Schools vs. Doctoral Studies

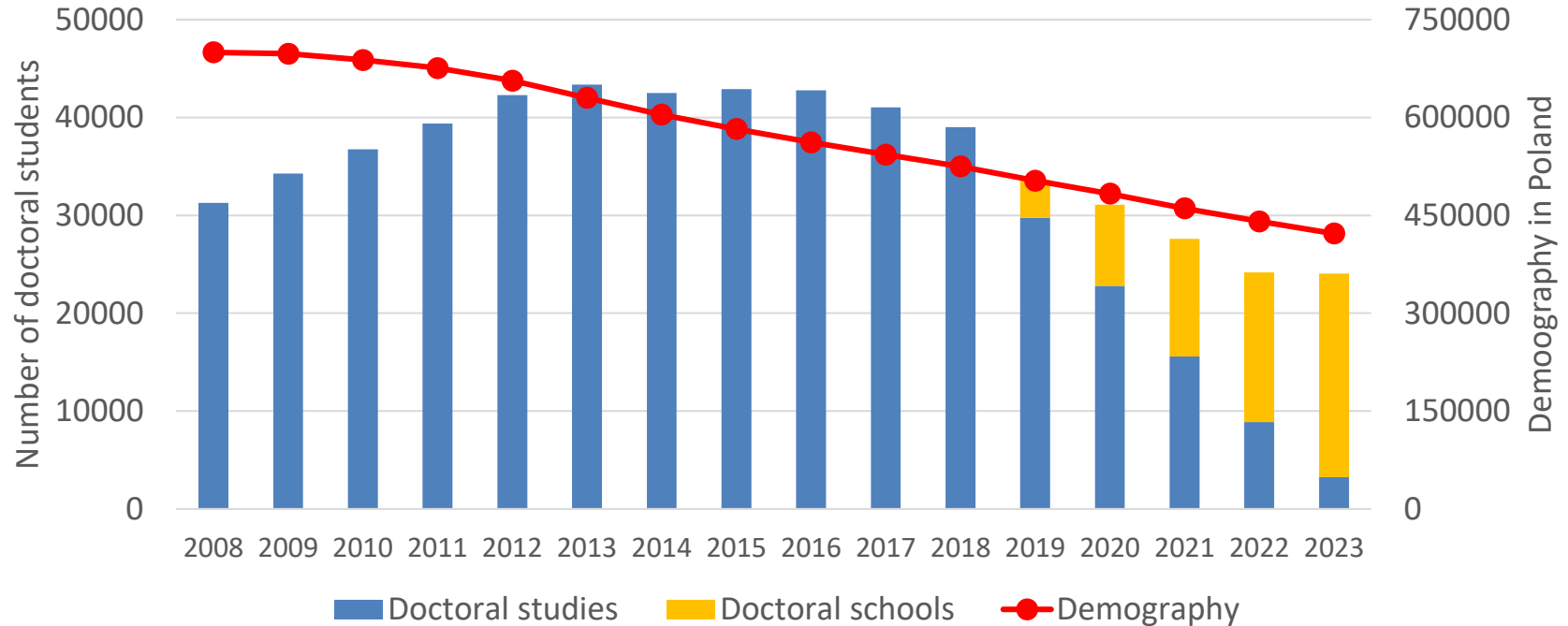
Doctoral Schools

- Scholarship:
 - Mandatory scholarship for all PhD students
 - Quite high amount based on the professor salary (37% before mid-term evaluation and 57% after mid-term evaluation)
 - Social insurance included
- Tuition free for all doctoral students
- Supervisor assigned after 3 months
- Individual research plan after 12 months
- Mid-term evaluation after 24 months
- Evaluation of doctoral school every 6 years

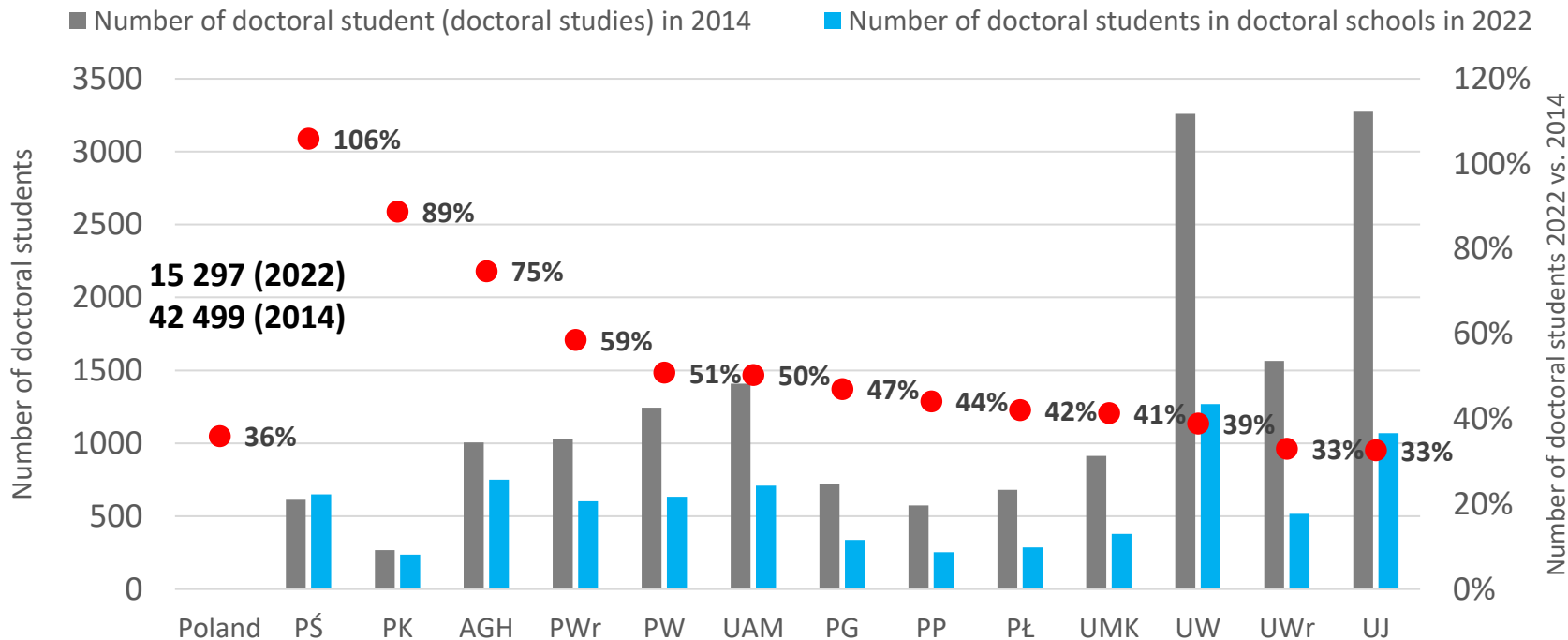
Doctoral Studies

- Scholarship
 - Not all PhD students receive scholarship
 - Quite low amount
 - No social insurance
- Tuition fee for foreigners
- Supervisor assigned after 24 months

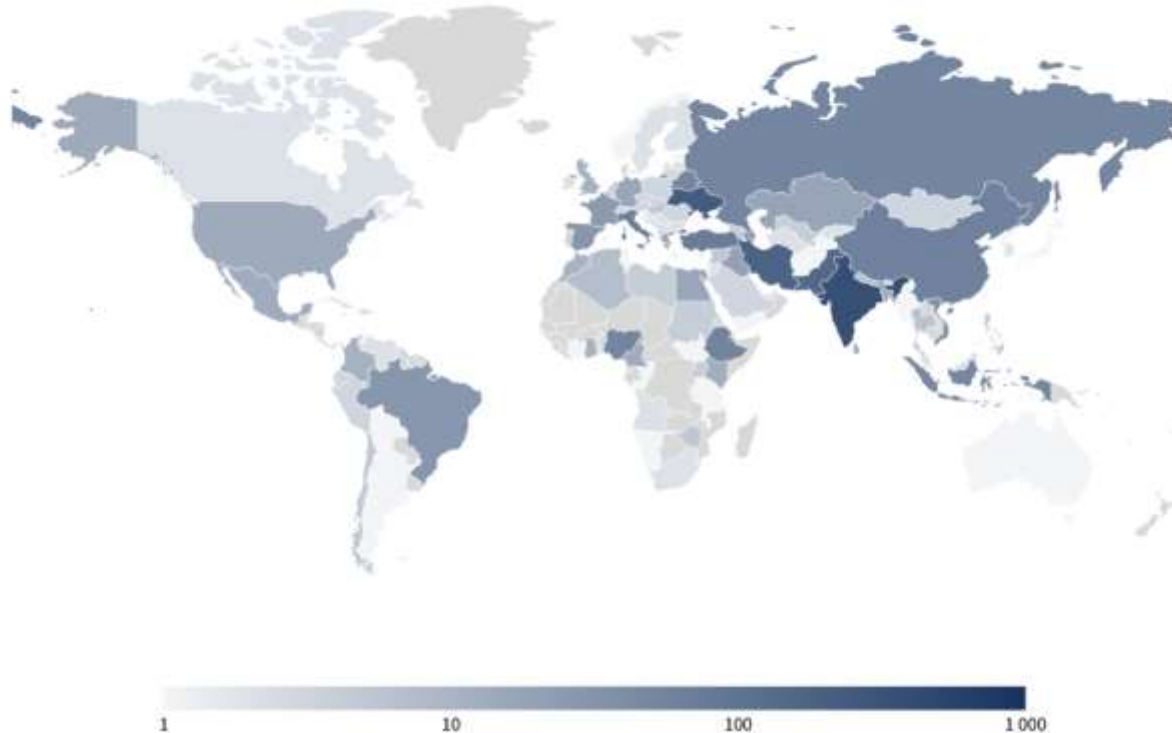
Number of Doctoral Students in Poland



Number of Doctoral Students in Poland 2022 vs. 2014 – Various Universities



Foreign Doctoral Students in Doctoral Schools – Country of Origin, 2022



India	351	18.3%
Ukraine	227	11.8%
Iran	176	9.2%
Pakistan	143	7.4%
Italy	72	3.7%
Turkey	71	3.7%
China	60	3.1%
Ethiopia	53	2.8%
Nigeria	52	2.7%
Belarus	52	2.7%

Evaluation of Doctoral School – Main Aspects

- The evaluation is carried out by the **Science Evaluation Committee** at least **every six years**
- Main goals:
 - Evaluate the **conditions for scientific development** created for doctoral students
 - Verify the ways in which the **knowledge and skills** as well as the **social competences are acquired** by doctoral students
 - **Provide feedback** on the **functioning of the doctoral schools** as well as disseminating this information in the public space

Evaluation Criteria of Doctoral School

1. The adequacy of the curriculum and individual research plans to the learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF) and their implementation
2. The manner of verifying the learning outcomes for qualifications at PQF level 8,
3. Qualifications of academic teachers or academic staff working at a doctoral school
4. The quality of the recruitment process
5. **The quality of scientific or artistic guidance as well as support in research**
6. The reliability of the mid-term assessment
7. **Internationalisation**
8. The effectiveness of doctoral education

National Association of Doctoral Schools

2019. Launching the operation of doctoral schools in Poland

2020. Creation of a **community of practice** gathering directors of **26 doctoral schools** in the social sciences to fill the information gap due to lack of Polish experience

2020-2024. Growing importance and interest of the community of practice. Regular **monthly meetings, sharing knowledge and experiences**, solving current problems. Currently, about 60 directors of doctoral schools attend each meeting

2023. We established a **National Association of Doctoral Schools** (40 signatories)

2023. **First National Conference of Doctoral Schools** in Lodz (60 participants)

2024. **Second National Conference of Doctoral Schools** in Warsaw (120 participants)

2024. **Cooperation with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.** We prepared a report *„Legal regulations for the operation of doctoral schools - recommendations for change”*



Monthly Meetings and Annual Conferences

Our Methodology

1.
Selection of
the topic



2.
Selection of
the presenting
person



3.
Preparation of
an online
survey for
participants



4.
Analysis of the
responses and
collected data



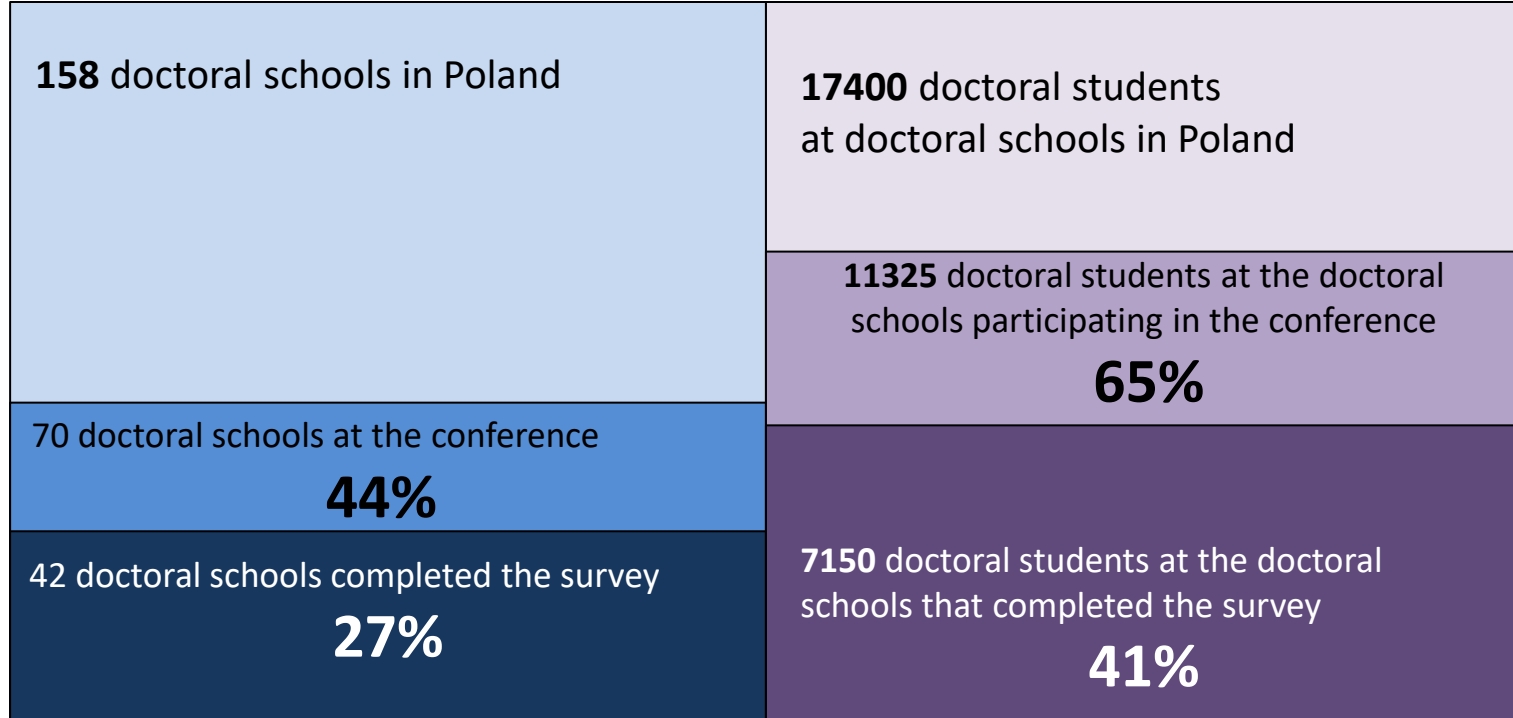
5.
Presentation
and open
discussion



Monthly Meetings – Selected Topics

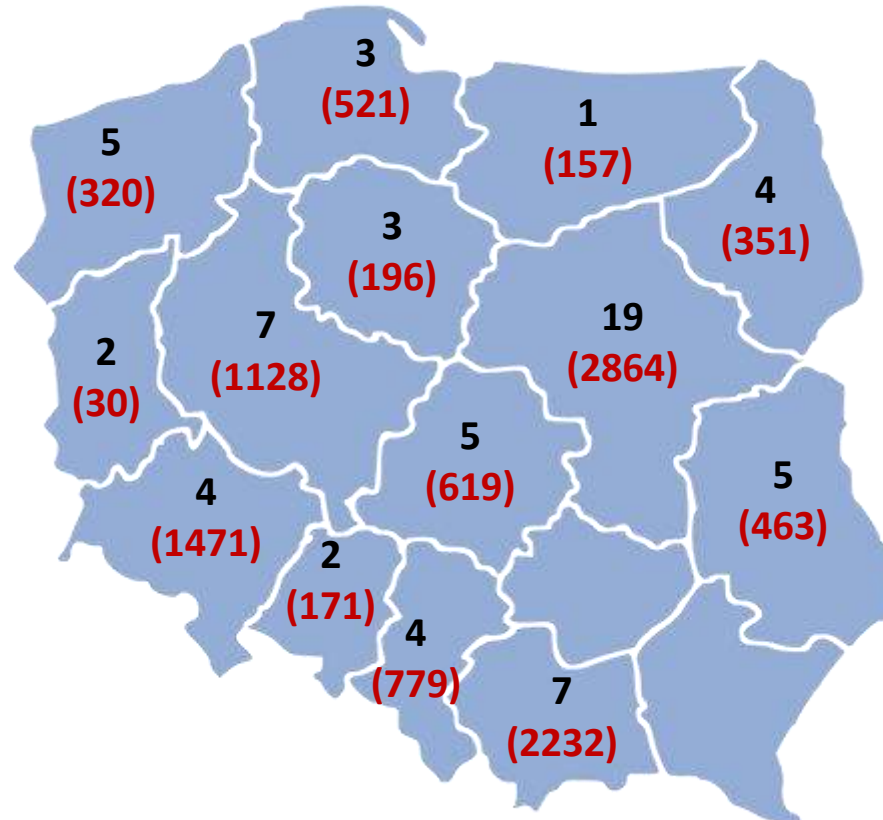
- *Mid-term evaluation*
- *Doctoral schools in the organizational structure of universities*
- *Evaluation of doctoral schools*
- *Internationalization of doctoral schools - a case study*
- *Legal aspects of doctoral schools*
- *Industrial PhDs*
- *Recruitment to doctoral schools - trends and experiences*
- *Supervision challenges and dilemmas*
- *Graduation process*
- *Soft competencies in doctoral school education*
- *Scholarships for doctoral students*
- *Psychological well-being of doctoral students*

2024 Conference Participants – Overview



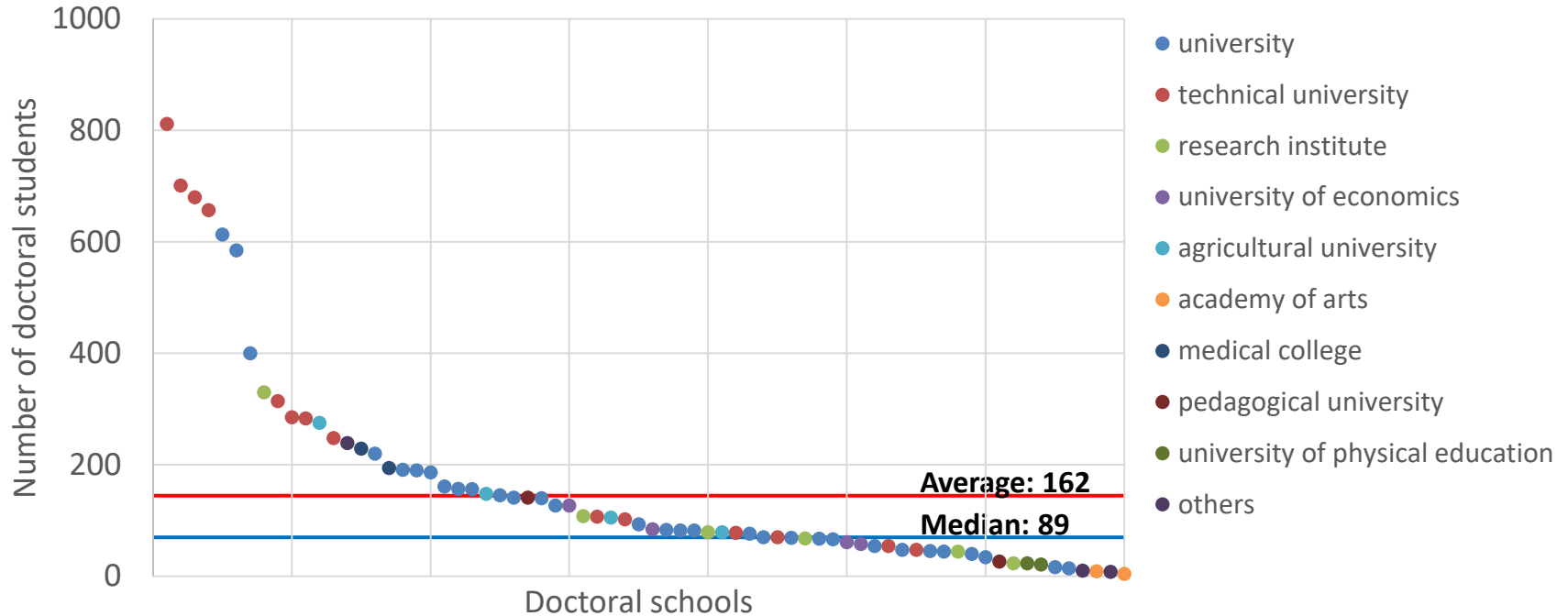
2024 Conference Participants

number of doctoral schools (**number of doctoral students**)



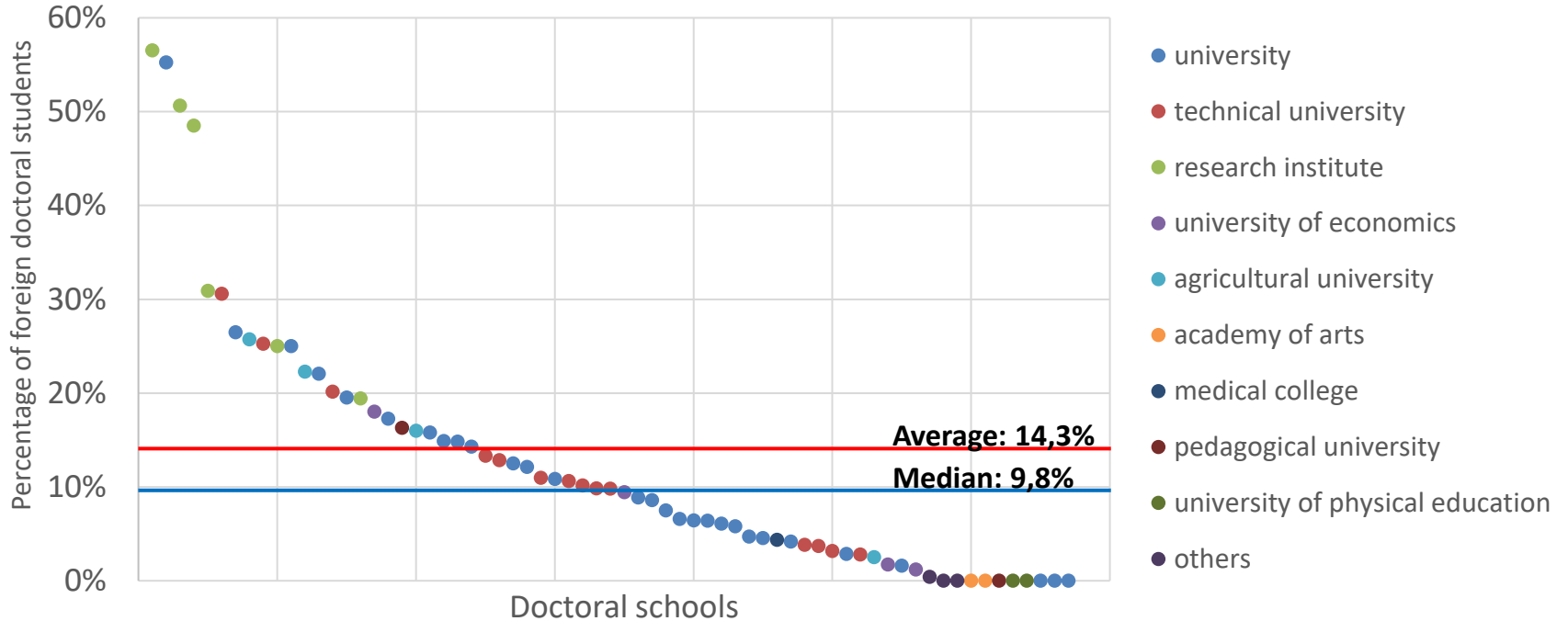
2024 Conference Participants

Number of doctoral students



2024 Conference Participants

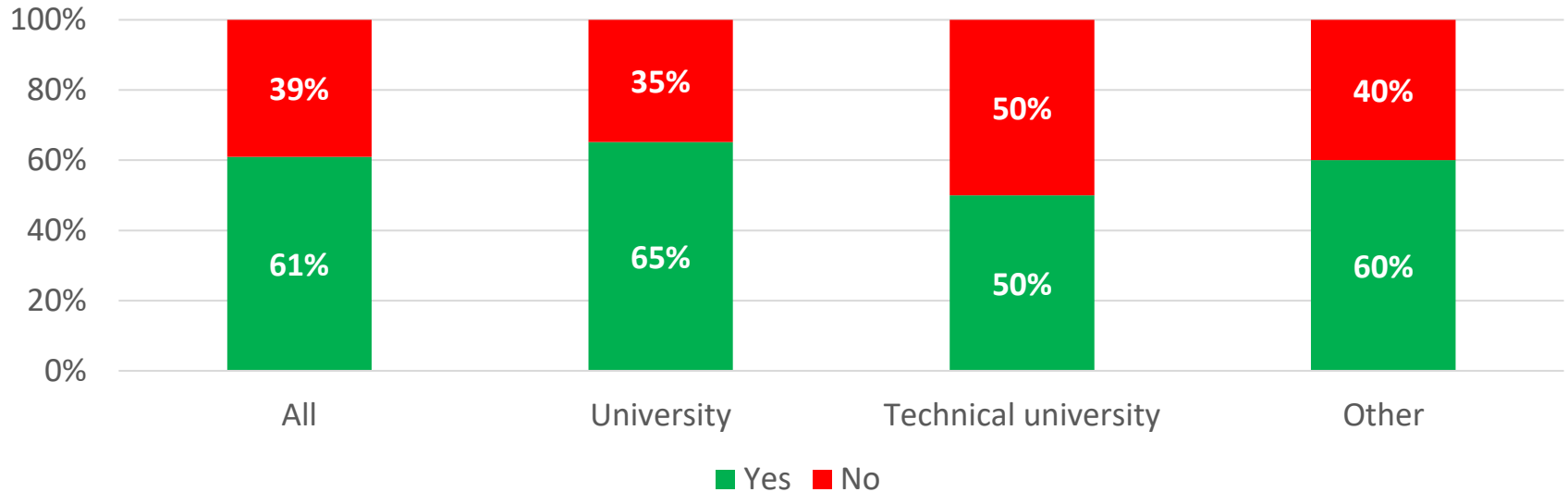
Percentage of foreign doctoral students



2024 Conference Survey

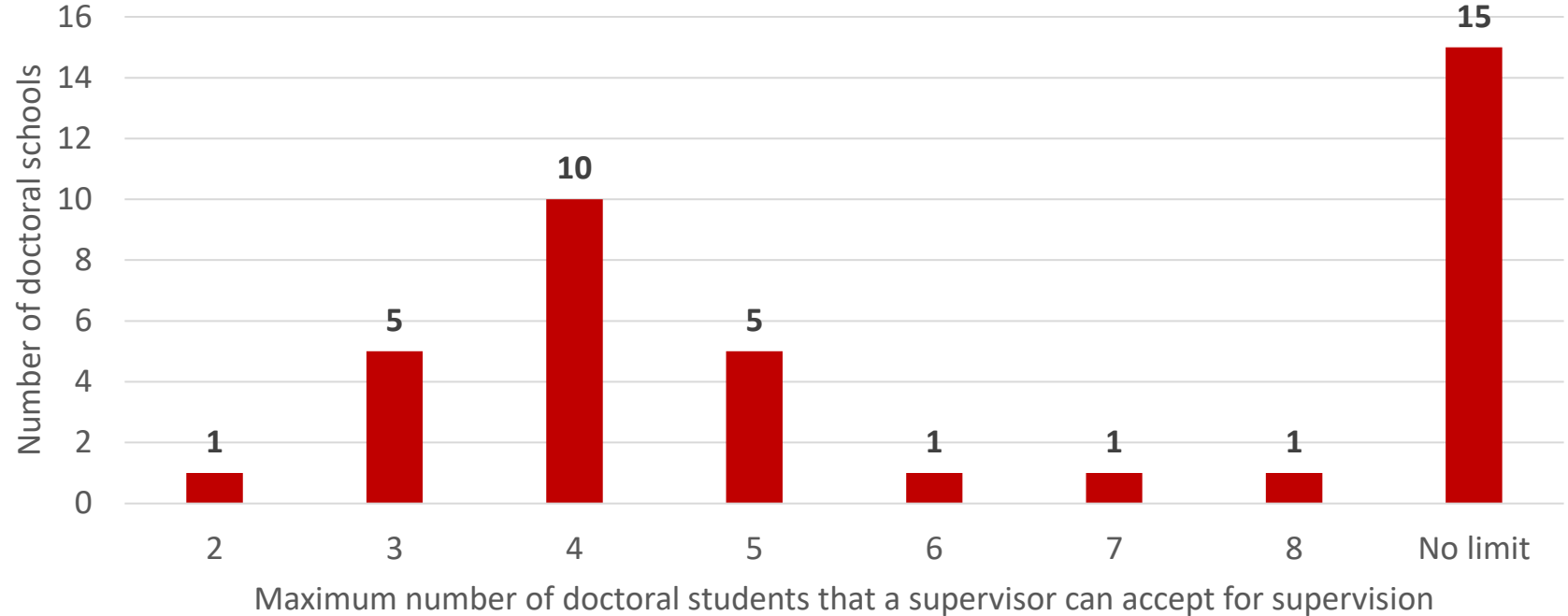
Trainings for supervisors

Are there dedicated trainings for supervisors at the doctoral school you represent?



2024 Conference Survey

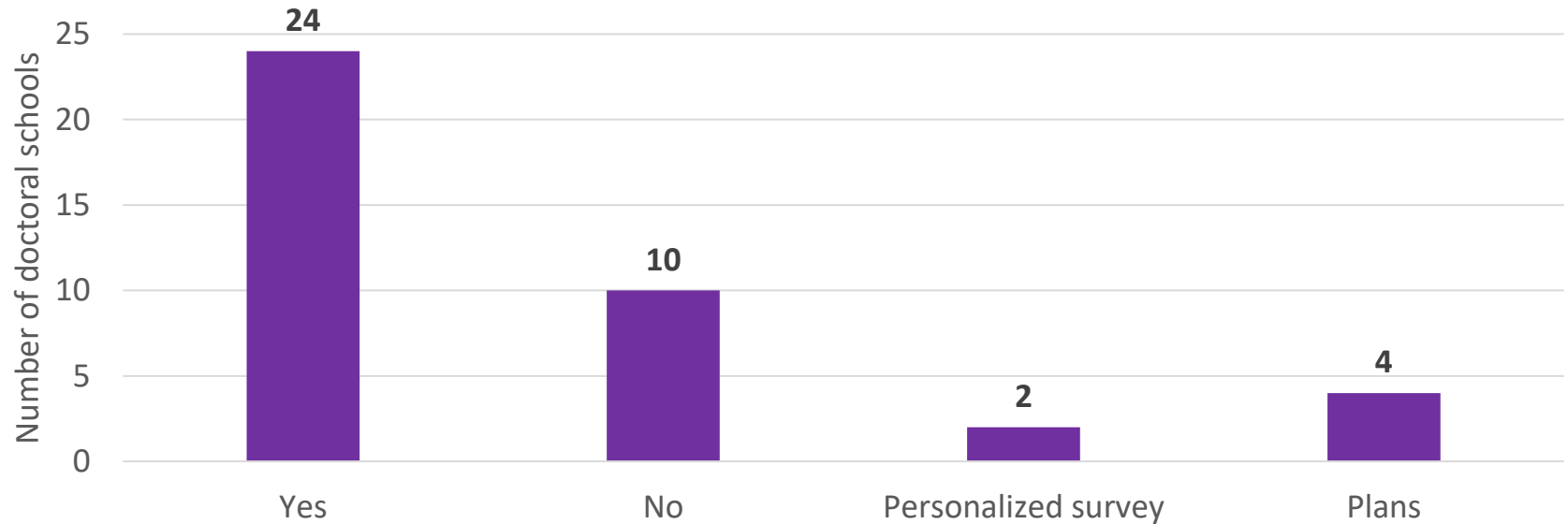
Number of doctoral students that a supervisor can accept for supervision



2024 Conference Survey

Anonymous surveys to evaluate supervisors

Does the doctoral school carry out anonymous surveys among doctoral students to evaluate supervisors?



2024 Conference Survey

How are doctoral student-supervisor conflict situations resolved?

- ***Mediation**; conversation with the doctoral student and supervisor, if further cooperation is impossible - **change of supervisor** at the request of the doctoral student*
- *Conflict situations between doctoral student and supervisor are resolved through discussions with both parties, which are carried out by the dean of the doctoral school and the head of the educational discipline. If this is not enough, a **university mediator** tries to resolve the conflict. If the conflict cannot be resolved, then the doctoral student can apply for a **change of supervisor***
- *Based on **mediation** or ethics committee*
- *Each situation is treated individually, depending on the problems raised. There are **regulations for resolving conflicts** concerning doctoral students, which were prepared in consultation with the Doctoral Students Council. In addition, support is provided by the **Doctoral Student Ombudsman***
- *A **conflict resolution procedure** has been developed*

Thank you for your attention 😊

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