

## **The impact of legal and institutional conditions on the educational experience of doctoral candidates in law.**

In 2018, the new Act on Higher Education and Science, commonly known as Act 2.0 or the Constitution for Science. It introduced many very significant changes, one of which was the reform of doctoral education. Currently, it takes place in doctoral schools established by universities and research institutes that meet the appropriate quality conditions. These institutions have been given far-reaching freedom in shaping the principles of education, regulations and curricula. The system of financing the work of doctoral candidates has also been changed. They have obtained a reliable and fixed scholarship throughout their studies. They also emphasized the role of interdisciplinarity and internationalization.

It is rarely mentioned that these solutions are part of a broader program of doctoral education reform in Europe (reaching far beyond the European Union), shaped by guidelines formulated by representatives of universities and academics themselves (associated with the European University Association). In 2005, the Salzburg Principles were formulated and five years later they were developed by the Salzburg II Recommendations. These directives were received favourably by European ministers of science and formed the basis for reforms in doctoral education in most European countries, bringing them closer together and adapting them to the needs of the modern knowledge society.

However, there are doubts whether the new approach fits into the education of doctoral candidates in law. It is often indicated that law (especially legal dogmatics, e.g. the study of civil or criminal law) differs from other academic disciplines, e.g. strong connection with practice or methodology difficult to understand for researchers from other disciplines.

Our primary goal will be to reconstruct and analyze the educational experience of PhD students in law, and then examine how it is shaped by legal and institutional conditions. We believe that it is worth asking doctoral candidates about their own experience in this field. That is why the research team will a) investigate the legal and institutional conditions of doctoral education in Poland (before and introduction of the Constitution for Science) and the Netherlands, and b) conduct a phenomenographic study on a group of Dutch law students and two groups of Polish doctoral students law - both those attending doctoral studies under the old regulations and those studying in doctoral schools the Constitution for Science.

The project is the first attempt at a comprehensive approach to the training of doctoral students in law in Poland after the recent reform of higher education. In our research, we will use phenomenography - a method of qualitative research in an interpretative paradigm that explores the different ways in which people experience or think. Phenomenography is widely used in studies on educational experience, but very rarely when it comes to PhD students.

The proposed study will have great application potential. We hope that it will provide data to formulate postulates to improve doctoral education in legal sciences (not only in Poland) in the spirit of the new European approach to doctoral education

The project will be implemented as part of the Center for Legal Education and Social Theory at the Faculty of Law, Administration and Economics of the University of Wrocław.