



The Declaration of the European Conference on Harmonization of PhD Programs in Medicine and Health Sciences

Convened in Zagreb on April 24 – 25, 2004

(hereafter referred to as the «Zagreb Declaration»)

After extensive discussion and exchange of ideas and experiences among participants coming from 25 universities and from 16 European countries having different schemes for obtaining PhD degree in medicine and health sciences regarding both form and the way of evaluation, ranging from monograph and evaluation within the same university to high standards of PhD thesis containing four or more papers published in internationally recognized peer reviewed journals, often with high impact factor and the inclusion of evaluators from abroad, the participants of the European Conference on Harmonization of PhD Programs in Medicine and Health Sciences (hereafter referred to as the «Zagreb Conference» or the «Conference») have agreed on the following:

Article 1

PhD program is intended to enable individuals, after completing and defending their PhD thesis, to carry out independent, original and scientifically significant research and critically evaluate work done by others. To assure the above, the participants of the Conference reached consensus on the following:

Article 2

As in any kind of scientific peer review process, the reviewers of PhD thesis should be competent and independent from the PhD thesis, candidates and supervisor. In this sense, the participants of the Conference would like to encourage the inclusion of reviewers from other universities and countries.

Article 3

The Conference agreed that a suitable benchmark to describe the necessary achievement is a PhD thesis based on original *in extenso* publications in internationally recognized scientific-medical journals. The independent contribution of the candidate should be clearly demonstrated (for example the candidate being the first author). The Conference recommends that the minimal requirement for the PhD thesis in medicine and health sciences should be the equivalent of at least three *in extenso* papers published in internationally recognized journals. In addition to the papers presented the candidate should provide a full review of the literature relevant to the themes in the papers, and, where necessary, a fuller account of the research methods and results. Where the PhD research is presented in other formats, such as the single monograph, reviewers should demonstrate that the contribution is at least equivalent to this benchmark, and should encourage inclusion of publication from the research.

Article 4

While the main demonstration of the achievement should be the thesis and published papers, PhD programs should include theoretical basis as well as development of technical research skills in taught courses where appropriate.

Article 5

The Conference recommends to all universities to make their PhD programs publicly available to students, lecturers and tutors from other universities and countries. All medical schools are recommended to create their web pages and written material about PhD programs in English and to make their programs open to candidates from other universities and countries. The Conference encourages the development of joint PhD programs in order to enhance the link between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area with a view to ensure higher quality and enable joint degree recognition.

Article 6

The development of well-designed and high-quality PhD programs requires substantial support by medical faculties, universities, national governments, the European Commission or private sponsors and other institutions in order to engage the best medical students into scientific research so as not to lose our future in medicine and public health.

The Zagreb Declaration was adopted unanimously on April 25, 2004 at 2:00 P.M. by:

Conference participants

Representatives of international and Croatian professional / academic associations and governmental institutions (in alphabetical order)

Association of Medical Education in Europe (AMEE)

Prof. Jadwiga Mirecka, MD, PhD, Executive Committee member

Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE)

Prof. Petr Hach, MD, PhD, President

Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER)

Prof. Charles Normand, BA, DPhil, FFPHM, President

Croatian Medical Association

Prof. Ivan Bakran, MD, PhD, Vice-President

European Medical Association (EMA)

Vincenzo Costigliola, MD, President

German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), South-Eastern European Cooperation, Curriculum Reform in Medicine

Prof. Hans Joachim Seitz, MD

Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the Republic of Croatia

Prof. Velimir Božikov, MD, PhD, State Secretary for Health

Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia

Prof. Pavo Barišić, PhD, Assistant Minister

University of Zagreb, Croatia

Prof. Aleksa Bjeliš, PhD, Vice-Rector

Prof. Helena Jasna Mencer, PhD, Rector

Representatives of medical schools and schools of public health (in alphabetical order by country name)

University of Mostar, Medical School, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Prof. Filip Čulo, MD, PhD, Dean

Prof. Mirna Saraga-Babić, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Science

University of Sarajevo, Medical School, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Prof. Jadranka Dizdarević, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Undergraduate Studies

Prof. Benjamin Vojniković, MD, PhD, Secretary General of the Medical School

University of Tuzla, Medical School, Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Prof. Lejla Begić, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Science

Prof. Osman Sinanović, MD, PhD, PhD Program Director

Prof. Husref Tahirović, MD, PhD, Dean

Higher Medical Institute of Pleven, Pleven, Bulgaria

Prof. Maria Simeonova, MD, PhD, Head of Medical Genetics Department

J. J. Strossmayer University, Medical School, Osijek, Croatia

Asst. Prof. Gordan Lauc, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Education

Asst. Professor Ante Tvrdeić, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Postgraduate Studies

University of Rijeka, Medical School, Rijeka, Croatia

Prof. Anđelka Radojčić Badovinac, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Postgraduate Studies

Prof. Dragica Bobinac, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Graduated Studies

Asst. Prof. Zlatko Trobonjača, MD, PhD

Prof. Luka Zaputović, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Science

University of Split, Medical School, Split, Croatia

Prof. Mladen Boban, MD, PhD, Dean

Prof. Željko Đujić, MD, PhD, Coordinator of Postgraduate Studies

Prof. Stjepan Gamulin, MD, PhD, Head of Postgraduate Studies Committee

Prof. Marijan Saraga, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Science

University of Zagreb, Medical School, Zagreb, Croatia

Prof. Nada Čikeš, MD, PhD, ECTS Coordinator

Prof. Marija Dominis, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Postgraduate Studies

Prof. Boris Labar, MD, PhD, Dean

Prof. Zdravko Lacković, MD, PhD, PhD Program Director, Deputy Dean for Postgraduate Studies

University of Zagreb, Medical School, Andrija Štampar School of Public Health, Zagreb, Croatia

Prof. Jadranka Božikov, PhD, PhD Program Deputy Director

Prof. Luka Kovačić, MD, PhD Deputy Director

Prof. Stjepan Orešković, PhD, Director

Charles University in Prague, First Faculty of Medicine, Prague, Czech Republic

Prof. MUDr. Stanislav Štípek, DrSc., Vice-Dean for Pedagogical Affairs

University of Helsinki, Faculty of Medicine, Finland

Prof. Seppo Meri, MD, PhD, Head, Committee for Postgraduate Scientific Studies in Medicine

University of Hamburg-Eppendorf, Germany

Prof. Dr. Hans Joachim Seitz, MD, Director of the Institute for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology III
- Biochemical Endocrinology

University of Szeged, Albert Szent-Gyorgyi Medical and Pharmaceutical Centre, Faculty of General Medicine, Szeged, Hungary

Prof. László Vécsei, MD, PhD, DSc, Director of the Experimental and Clinical Neuroscience PhD Program

University of Dublin, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

Prof. Charles Normand, BA, DPhil, FFPHM, Edward Kennedy Professor of Health Policy and Management

University of Pavia, Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, Pavia, Italy

Prof. Alberto Calligaro, Deputy Dean

University "St. Cyril and Methodius", Medical School, Skopje, R. Macedonia

Prof. Magdalena Žanteva-Naumoska, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Postgraduate Studies

Prof. Ljubica Georgijevski-Ismail, MD, PhD, FESC, Member of the Postgraduate Studies Committee

Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Faculty of Medicine, Trondheim, Norway

Anne Britt Storeng, Senior Executive Officer, Research Administration

Prof. Alf O. Brubakk, Professor of Environmental Physiology

University of Oslo, Faculty of Medicine, Oslo, Norway

Sigrid Bergseng, Senior Executive Officer and Head of PhD Program University Administration

Medical Centre of Postgraduate Education, Warsaw, Poland

Zbigniew Wegrzyn, MD, Department of Education and Quality Assessment

Jagellonian University, University Medical College, Kraków, Poland

Prof. Jadwiga Mirecka, MD, PhD, Head of the Department of Medical Education

Poznan University of Medical Sciences, Poznan, Poland

Prof. Maciej Zabel, PhD, Head of PhD Program

Iuliu Hatieganu University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Prof. Petru Adrian Mircea, Vice-President of the University

University of Niš, School of Medicine, Niš, Serbia and Montenegro

Prof. Goran Nikolić, MD, Vice-Dean

University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Medicine, Novi Sad, Serbia and Montenegro

Prof. Nevena Sečen, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Foreign Communication and Foreign Students

Comenius University, Jessenius Faculty of Medicine, Slovak Republic

Prof. Kamil Javorka, MD, DSc, Vice-Dean for PhD Study

University of Navarra, Medical School, Navarra, Spain

Prof. Alfonso Sánchez Ibarrola, MD, PhD, member of University PhD Committee

List of other invited lecturers not listed above (in alphabetical order):

Tina Dušek, MD, PhD student, University of Zagreb Medical School, Croatia

Dr. Guy Haug, Expert on the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process), Bruxelles

Alena Kavalírová, graduated pharmacist, PhD student, Faculty of Pharmacy in Hradec Králové, Charles University in Prague

Dr. Cees C. Leibbrandt, MD, Former Secretary General (1999–2002) of the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS)

List of observers (in alphabetical order)

Sandra Belko, BA (English), PhD Program Secretary, Medical School, University of Zagreb; **Kristina Fišter**, MD, Research Fellow, Andrija Štampar School of Public Health, Medical School, University of Zagreb; **Asst. Prof. Ileana Linčir**, MD, PhD, Vice-Dean for Postgraduate Education, University of Zagreb School of Stomatology; **Prof. Josip Madić**, DVM, PhD, Vice-Dean of Science and International Cooperation, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zagreb; **Prof. Albert Marinculić**, DVM, PhD, Vice-Dean of Education, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zagreb; **Anita Putrić**, BA (Political Science), Senior Executive Officer of PhD Program Administration, Medical School, University of Zagreb; **Marita Mimica**, BA (psychologist), Head of Postgraduate Studies Department, Medical School, University of Split, **Miroslav Sabolek**, BA (economy), Head of PhD Program Administration, Medical School, University of Zagreb; **Assoc. Prof. Velimir Sušić** DVM, PhD, ECTS Coordinator, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zagreb; **Tea Vukušić Rukavina**, MD, Research Fellow, Andrija Štampar School of Public Health, Medical School, University of Zagreb.