



Prof. Srdjan S. Stanković



ON THE REFORM OF DOCTORAL STUDIES IN SERBIA

**President, National Council for Higher
Education of the Republic of Serbia**

National Council for Higher Education

The **National Council for Higher Education** is an independent body, made up of 16 members, appointed by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia;

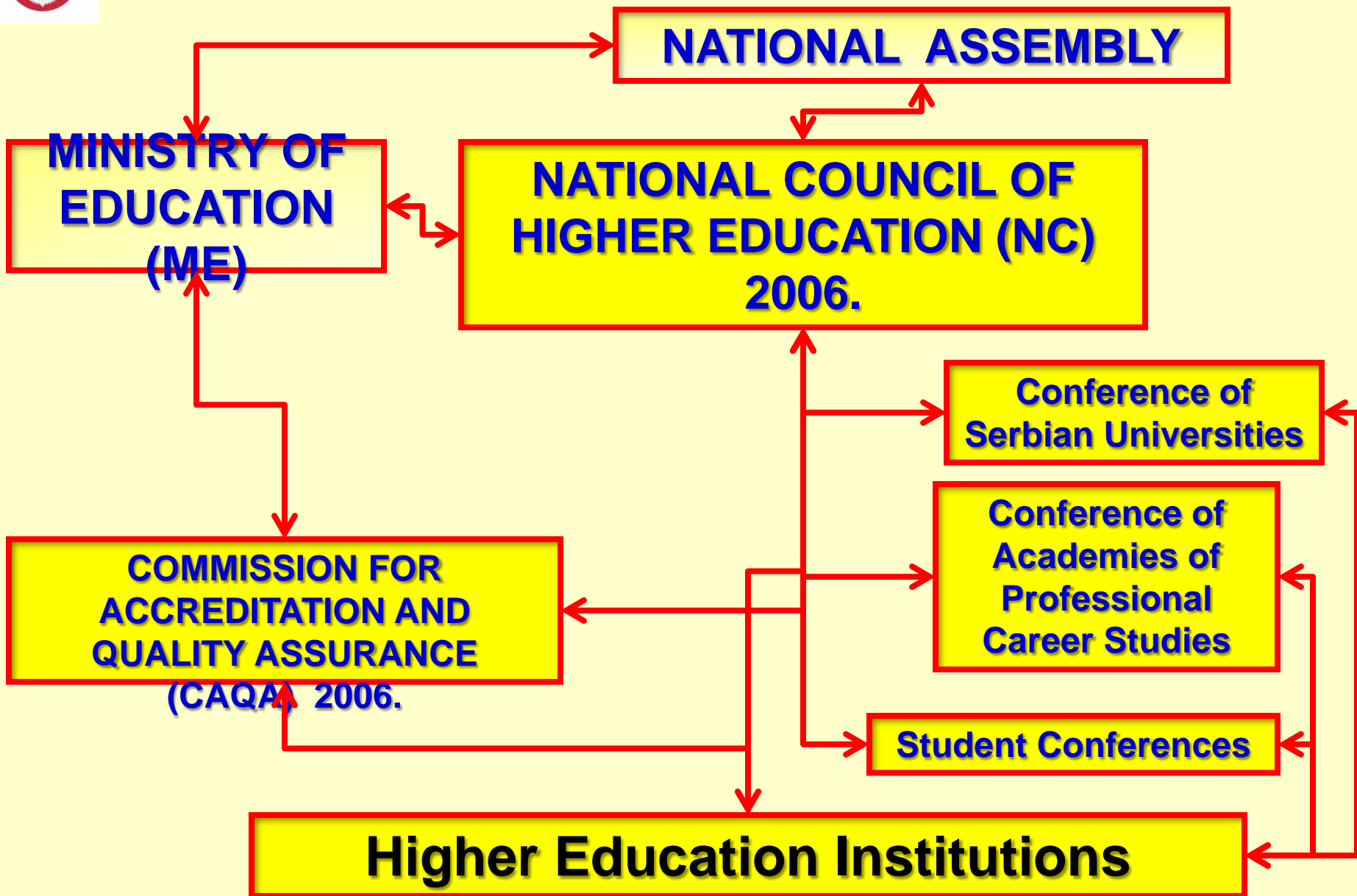
It ensures the development and promotion of the quality of higher education.

National Council for Higher Education

- follows the development of higher education in the Republic of Serbia and its harmonization with the European and international standards
- proposes the policy of Higher Education to the Ministry of Education
- proposes to the Government norms and standards for functioning of higher education institutions
- defines scientific and professional areas within the educational-scientific and educational-artistic fields
- defines the list of professional , academic and scientific titles and degrees

National Council for Higher Education

- **formulates the standards for the quality self-assessment of higher education institutions**
- **formulates standards and procedures for external quality assessment of higher education institutions**
- **defines standards for work permissions**
- **defines standards and procedures for accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs**
- **formulates recommendations for the conditions for the election of university teachers**
- **gives opinion about the procedures for formulation and adoption of all regulations concerning higher education**



Higher Education Institutions

Universities

Universities can perform all types and levels of studies. A HE institution has the status of university if it performs academic study programs at all levels of studies, within at least three fields (natural sciences and mathematics, social and humanistic studies, medical science, technical and technological science, and arts)

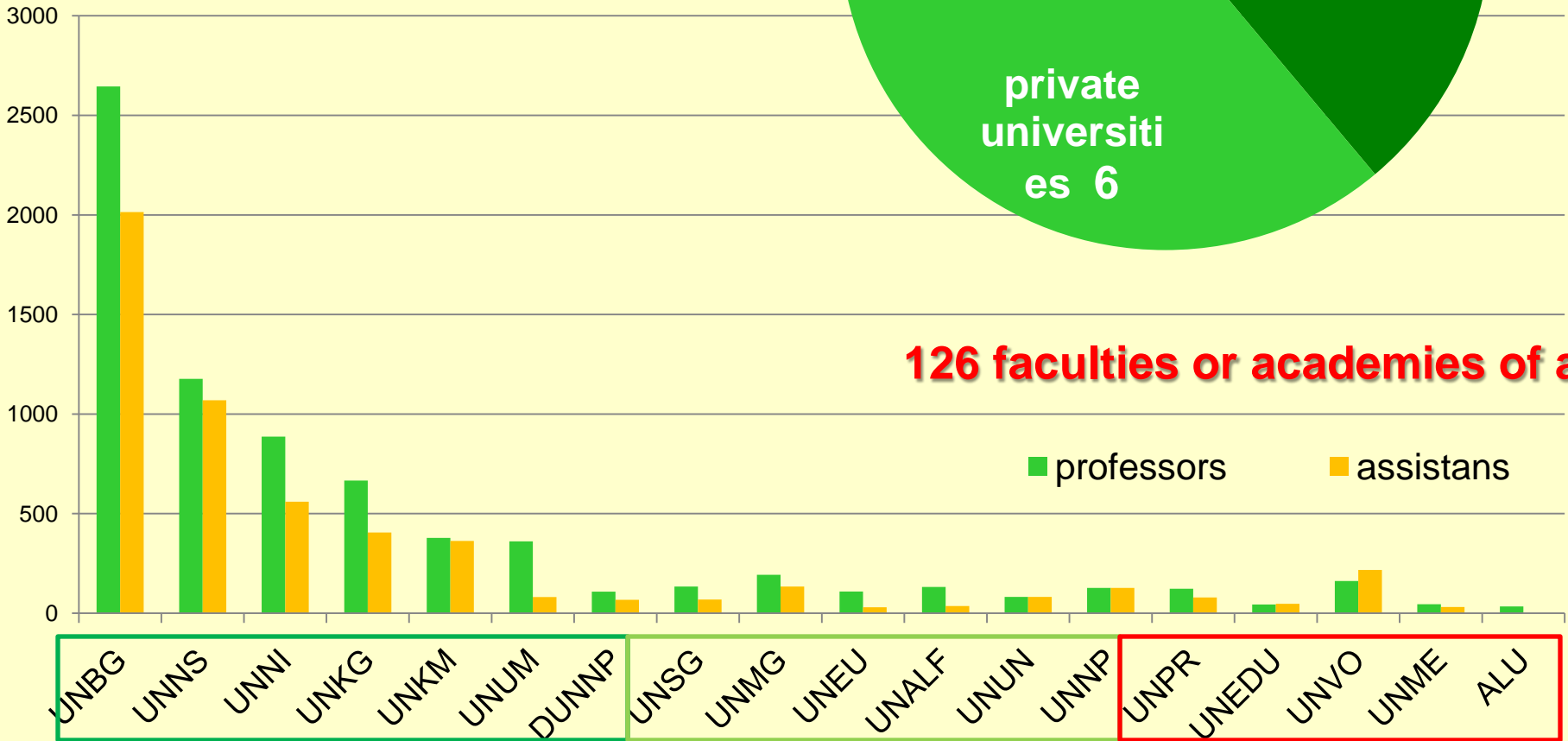
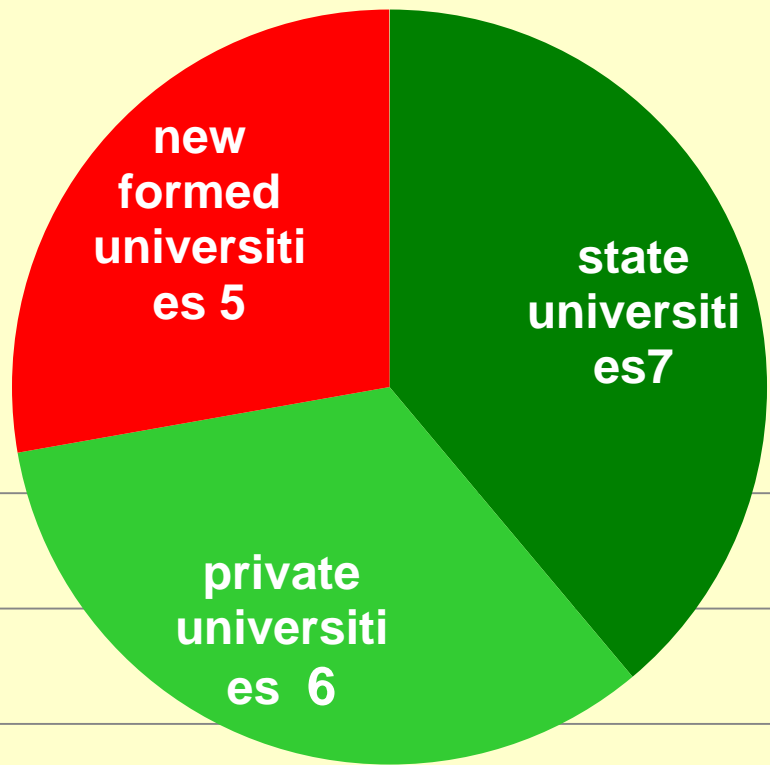
Colleges

College of professional career studies (visoke škole strukovnih studija) perform basic professional and specialist professional studies from one or more areas.

College of academic career studies (visoke škole akademskih studija) perform basic, specialist, and graduate academic studies from one or more areas.

Higher Education at universities

Number of professors: 7407
 Number of assistants : 5411
 Number of students : 216342



126 faculties or academies of arts

professors assistants

Elements of the National Report

- **implementation of the principles established by the Bologna process started in 2006/2007**
- **the ECTS system has been entirely implemented, including both the elements of workload and the elements of learning outcomes**
- **the three-cycle system defined by the Law on Higher Education has been introduced in all of the higher education institutions (academic studies)**
- **the two-cycle system defined by the Law on Higher Education has been introduced in all of the higher education institutions (professional studies - colleges)**

Elements of the National Report

- **the diploma supplement is introduced at the first two levels (given automatically and for free)**
- **the system of quality assurance (QA) has been substantially improved since 2005**
- **the QA system contains internal and external quality assurance, as well as accreditation**
- **accreditation started in 2007 and has encompassed 7 public universities (85 faculties), 6 private universities (43 faculties) i 80 schools for professional studies**
- **accreditation has to be terminated according to the Law on Higher Education before summer 201009**

Elements of the National Report

- **some problems in the application of the Law on Higher Education have been identified – an action aimed at some modifications of the text started in 2008 (the basic principles will remain unchanged) and will be completed in 2010**
- **the National Council will formulate a proposal to be given to the Government starting from a proposal obtained from the Conference of Universities (KONUS)**
- **student and teacher mobility has been increased, helped by international projects (Tempus, Council of Europe, FP7)**

Elements of the National Report

- **the national QA system has not yet been accredited at the international level (in 2009)**
- **there exists a hierarchical control system which starts from the National Assembly (Committee for Education), goes through the National Council for Higher Education, and ends with the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance, which submits periodic reports**
- **the National Qualification Framework (NQF) is under consideration by the National Council of Higher Education**
- **a draft has been formulated and given to the academic community for discussion**

The higher education system in Serbia.

academic studies

Doctoral studies

180ECTS

Academic specialisation

60ECTS

Master

60

360ECTS

120ECTS

Integrated medical studies

180ECTS

Bachelor

240ECTS

professional studies

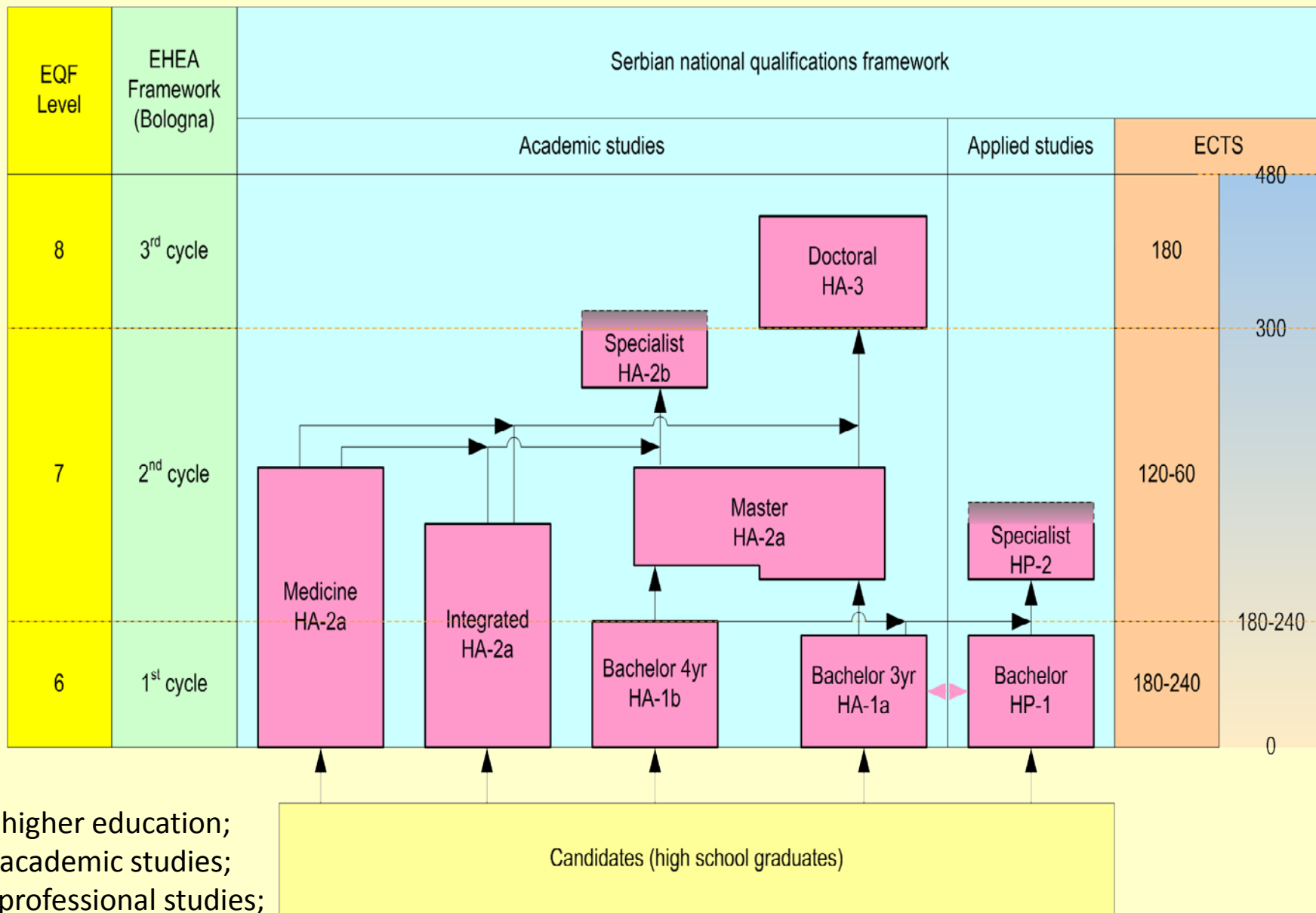
Professional specialisation

60ECTS

Professional bachelor

180ECTS

National Qualifications Framework (SNQF)



Higher Education Reform

- **PROCESS** WHICH HAS TO BE FOLLOWED AND PERMANENTLY CONTROLLED
- **ECTS SYSTEM**, INTRODUCED BY LAW, SHOULD BE ANALYSED FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF ITS ESSENCE: relation between the required and the possible
- **FEEDBACK: STUDENTS AS SUBJECTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

Higher Education Reform

- Real teaching starts when the teacher starts learning from his student putting himself at his place, so that he can understand what he learns and how he understands.

SOREN KIERKEGAARD

- Do not force children to learn using force and brutality, but rather direct them to learn by subjects attractive to their spirits.

PLATO

Higher Education Reform

- **LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCES**
- **NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK:**
participation of the academic society, employers
and the state
- **TRANSPARENCY: mutual recognition of degrees**
- **IMPORTANT ACTIVITY: MODIFICATIONS OF
THE LAW ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

Strategy of Higher Education

- **AT THE UNIVERSITIES, PEOPLE ARE UNITED BY THE AIM TO SEEK THE TRUTH AND TO TEACH THE TRUTH USING SCIENCE.**
- Therefore, **research** is the primary duty of the Universities, and **teaching** is their second duty. Having in mind that the transmission of mere knowledge and skills would be insufficient for understanding the truth, **education** is the essence of both research and teaching.
- There exists an **inseparable unity** between the aims of research, teaching and education.

KARL JASPERS

Doctoral Studies

- One of the **substantial problems** in the higher education reform in Serbia
- Before 2005 the Doctoral Degree was given to those candidates who successfully completed and defended their **doctoral theses**
- The **thesis** was a piece of research work by which the candidates were able to prove their ability to approach and solve complex problems in their disciplines by strictly applying the scientific methodology
- The prerequisite for working on a doctoral thesis was the Magister degree (6 – 10 postgraduate courses and a Magister thesis)

Doctoral Studies

- The Law on Higher Education from 2005 introduced **doctoral studies** harmonized with the **Bologna** three cycles system
- Doctoral studies correspond to the **third cycle** depicted within the **National Qualifications Framework**
- By definition, doctoral studies last **three years**
- They contain a number of doctoral courses, projects and seminars leading to the **DOCTORAL THESIS**
- The thesis has to represent a **contribution to the scientific field**, verified by a thesis committee
- The main results of the thesis **have to be published** in a scientific journal from the SCI list

Doctoral Studies

- By LHE from 2005 to each activity a number of credits is assigned
- Each candidate has a **supervisor** responsible for the thesis as well as for the choice of the courses and research projects
- The thesis is **defended** in public
- After the approval by a Committee at the University level the candidate is **promoted** (**Doctor of Science**)
- Approximately, the theses quality corresponds to the theses quality before 2005
- The doctoral courses and research projects correspond to the former Magister degree

Doctoral Studies

- Doctoral studies are still being **accredited** by the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance
- The majority of faculties and Universities in Serbia already enrolled doctoral students
- The number of students has been prescribed by accreditation
- Special **standards**, proclaimed by the National Council for Higher Education, define prerequisites for professors to be elected to teach at the doctoral level
- Additional criteria have to be fulfilled for supervisors

Doctoral Studies

- **ACUTE IMPLEMENTATION**
PROBLEMS: LACK OF UNDERSTANDING THAT DOCTORAL STUDIES ARE CRUCIAL FOR BOTH SCIENCE AND EDUCATION
- **LACK OF ORGANIZED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR UNIVERSITIES AND STUDENTS**
- **NEEDS FOR HARMONIZATION OF THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE**
- **A BY-LAW IS BEING CREATED BY A SPECIAL COMMISSION IN ORDER TO SET UP A BASIS FOR THE **SYSTEM** OF DOCTORAL STUDIES IN SERBIA**

Doctoral Studies

ACTUAL GOALS:

- Solving financial aspects (Universities and students)
- Enhancing collaboration between **Universities** and scientific **Institutes**
- Strengthening collaboration with **Industry**
- Developing **INTER AND INTRA UNIVERSITY CENTERS FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES** (Doctoral Schools)
- Adapting the Law on Higher Education and the corresponding By-Laws