



A New Ecosystem of Early Music Studies

COST ACTION CA21161

## Report of WG 1 Education

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#### *HOW TO CITE THIS TEXT*

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In the second phase of the *EarlyMuse* action the Education Working Group (WG1) met at the invitation of the University of Zagreb | Academy of Music, to discuss teaching and researching music history in higher arts education establishments in Europe. Particular attention was paid to courses and modules dealing with music history or theory from antiquity till 1900. Based on the hypothesis that these courses/modules are presumably taught by musicologists, the aim was to clarify the state-of-the-art in the academic ecosystems of different countries. Representatives from 11 countries - Belgium, Croatia, Greece, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, and the UK - attended the meeting and shared their experiences.

The following objectives were targeted:

- The professional profile of an academic who teaches music history or theory in higher arts education establishments
- The formal requirements for such a teaching positions

Whether musicology as an academic discipline is based in a research-oriented university or performance practise-orientated conservatory varies from country to country. There are also instances of joint formal structures, when a conservatory or academy of music is a constituent part (e.g., a department) of a university. This complex landscape led to the following questions:

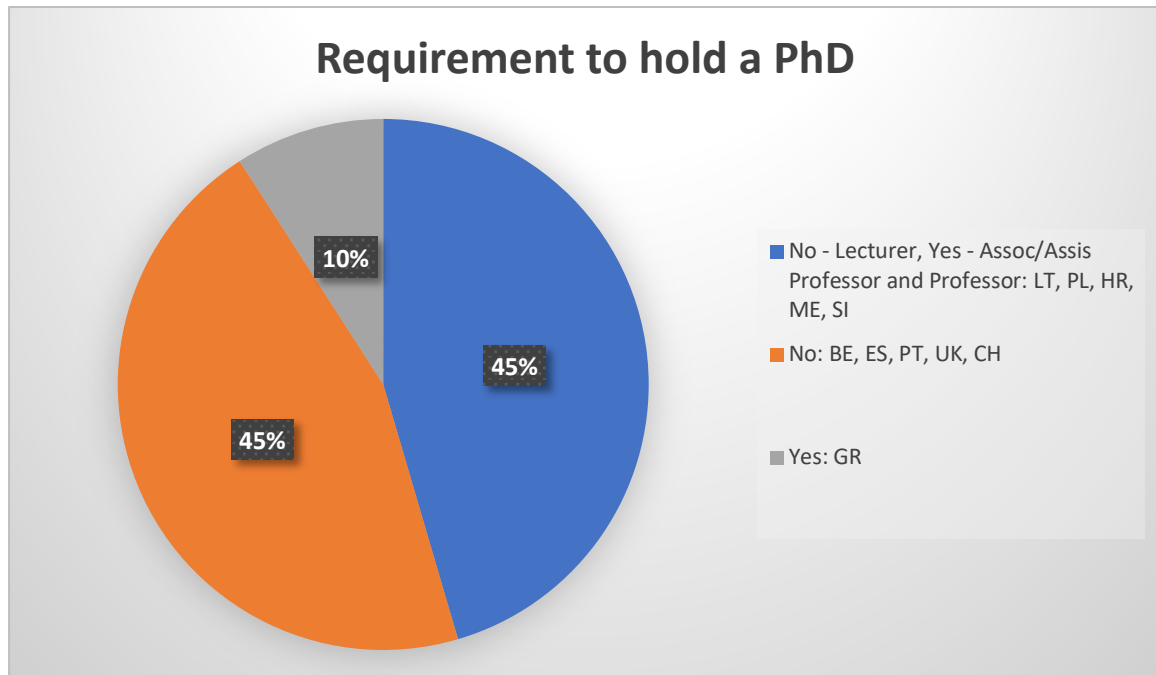
- Is the distinction between universities and conservatories worth maintaining?
- To what extent do conservatories offer an individual approach that separates them from universities?
- How might conservatories and universities collaborate in a fruitful way?

In this context, it was important to discuss and identify the strengths and needs of historical musicology within or despite the different formal constitutions and varied statuses of higher arts education establishments.

### **A PROFESSIONAL PROFILE FOR AN ACADEMIC WHO TEACHES MUSIC HISTORY OR THEORY**

A critical mass of the COST countries' higher education systems were involved in the Bologna processes, which aimed to create a common European Higher Education Area including common degree system among the participating countries. However, these processes did not include the unification of formal requirements for teaching positions. The requirements can therefore vary drastically across the European higher-education landscape. A good example are the requirements regarding the PhD. A comparison of the eleven European countries represented at the meeting highlighted three types of requirements for a doctoral degree:

- There is no obligation to hold an PhD for lecturer, but a PhD it is obligatory for the ranks of Assistant / Associate Professor and Professor
- There is no obligation to hold an PhD for any of the academic ranks
- A PhD is obligatory for all academic ranks and teaching positions (including lecturer).



Representatives from Portugal and Switzerland noted that, although a PhD is not mandatory according to the formal requirements, in practice it is difficult to achieve a teaching position without a PhD. Thus, the path of an academic can be influenced not only by regulation, but also by tradition-based expectations in the academic environment.

Similarly, the teaching-experience requirements are varied, ranging from precisely quantified in years (LT, UK, GR, SI, PL, HR, PT, ME) to unquantified at all (CH, ES, BE). The requirements regarding the research track-record are formally defined in HR, PL, PT, ME, SI, while they are not strictly specified in LT, CH, ES, UK, BE, GR. In some instances, there is also a formally undefined expectation that researchers will carry out research, because results such as publications are quantitatively important (i.e., countable) to the institution.

### THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND CONSERVATORIES

The distinction between universities and conservatories remains in many European countries. In some cases, there is a fairly sharp divide between conservatory and university. A

**conservatory** is characterised by:

- selective entry for students
- the training of performers
- a focus on practice
- rather limited development of musicological knowledge and general academic skills
- in some instances cannot award doctorates in sciences (PhD), but rather in Art (Doctor of Arts),
- staff that are practitioners rather than academics
- limited attention to research

A **University**, on the other hand, is typically characterised by:

- no entry selection
- a focus on academic musicology (history and theory) and also on broader humanistic development (including integration of relevant non-musicological components into the programme, e.g., art history, literature, etc.)
- little or no place in programme for musical practice
- awards diplomas up to PhD
- trains culture-sector workers and educators, usually, but not necessarily, in the musical sphere

The meeting sought to explore this distinction between universities and conservatories more specifically in relation to individual countries. The observations gathered included the following remarks:

*“Conservatories in general offer a more individual approach as they are based on the one-to-one model. Even historical musicology is taught in smaller groups in conservatories, in contrast to the 50-100 students amphitheatres at Universities.”* (GR)

*“The approach is necessary individual in many respects even if it was not intended to be so in the start.”* (SI)

*“Playing is prioritized in conservatory. Graduate usually become performers or instrument-teachers.”* (BE)

*“Conservatories place a degree of emphasis on performance and composition activity that is different from most university courses.”* (UK)

*“Small groups of students of musicology, individual tutoring”* (HR)

*“The type of teaching that goes on in them [conservatories] is different: small classes, focussing on practical skills, chief of which the main instrument or voice lesson. When research is carried out in them, it must demonstrably link up with practice. In the present case it has to be ‘artistic research’ or at the least practice-oriented research”* (CH)

*“Due to the small number of students, educators at conservatories have the opportunity to establish much closer connections with their students over four years. This allows them to understand the interests, abilities, and weaknesses of each of their students, enabling a highly personalized experience that is greatly valued by the students.”* (ES)

*“Conservatories allow for an individual approach in many aspects.”* (PL)

The majority of the participants at the meeting advocated for maintaining a distinction between universities and conservatories. On the other hand, representatives of conservatories that operate as part of universities (MO, HR, UK-Birmingham) identified both advantages and disadvantages in the joint model. Advantages include supporting research and the progression of scholars (UK); disadvantages or challenges include that the unified rules of the university do not always recognize the specificity of art education (MO). It was also noted that the distinctive character of art academies and universities has disappeared today in Spain (“we strongly advocate for the discontinuation of musicology in conservatories and its integration into universities” [ES]).

Whatever the specific situation in individual countries, all meeting participants agreed that **closer cooperation between universities and conservatories would be fruitful for both sides.**

## THE FORMS OF FRUITFUL COLLABORATION AND STRENGTHS OF HISTORICAL MUSICOLOGY

The discussion about the ways in which universities and academies may fruitfully collaborate led to several observations.

First, by operating in a closed and autonomous way, high education institutions create **different student profiles**. The limited, or in some cases completely absent, mobility between universities and conservatories leads to a certain separation that becomes an obstacle to overcome. Therefore the WG1 meeting participants recommend **strengthening mobility between institutions** in each country at the level of students *and* academic staff. The collaborative process should be supported also by facilitating the creation of parallel or joint courses and integrative curricula.

Second, conservatories and universities are not currently making the most of opportunities for joint research. This area is often left to the universities, or each institution conducts research separately. The working group sees great potential for **joint research projects** that combine musicology and performance (and also, potentially, artistic research). A good model for such cooperation is offered by collaborative projects that cover the whole spectrum of activities from music editing to performance. Such activities would include academics, professional musicians, and students of both musicology and performance.

The possibility of **bridging musicology and performance** was identified as one of the strengths of historical musicology, despite the different formal constitutions of higher arts education establishments. Thinking more widely, the strength of a discipline lies in its **wide field of action and cultural impact**. First, historical musicology, as a discipline, has an immense **impact on understanding of music** within historical, social, cultural contexts. Second, the **preservation of musical heritage** is one of the most important contributions of the discipline. On the other hand, the preservation work ensures not only the **continuation of musical traditions**, but also **inspires future creativity** by shaping contemporary music through analysis of the past. Third, because of its rigorous analytical tools and methodologies, which allow for a detailed examination of musical compositions, it facilitates a deeper appreciation of music's structural complexities, aesthetic qualities and functional roles. Historical musicology's emphasis on archival research equips scholars with robust research skills, valuable for navigating a wide array of primary sources such as manuscripts, scores, and recordings. Fourth, historical musicologists are active beyond academic circles, **engage wider audiences through education and public outreach**, fostering a deeper public engagement with music's history. Fifth, their work in informing performance practice is particularly noteworthy, offering insights that lead to performances that resonate more closely with original interpretations, **thereby bridging the gap between past and present** musical expressions.