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Stocktaking and prospects: Doctoral Training and Research – The Link between EHEA¹ and ERA²

EURODOC Annual Conference, 11-15th March 2010, Vienna, Austria

“Stocktaking and prospects: Doctoral Training and Research – The Link between EHEA and ERA” was the topic of the annual Eurodoc conference which took place in Austria from 11-15th of March. It brought together over 200 young European researchers and leading European research policy makers and stakeholders to engage in fruitful discussions on linking the European Research and Higher Education Areas.

Among the key speakers were Peter van der Hijden and Stefaan Hermans from the European Commission, Thomas Jorgensen of the European University Association, Katrien Maes of the League of European Research Universities, and Evelina Santa, the representative of the Spanish EU presidency. The common message was that organizations like Eurodoc are an essential link in making both the EHEA and ERA a success.

Nikola Macharová, President of Eurodoc, emphasised the role of Eurodoc in strengthening the research policy dialogue. Therefore, Eurodoc conducted a European-wide survey on doctoral programmes and research to address the key issue in discussions about the situation of doctoral candidates: the lack of comparable data at a European level. Mobility of researchers, career development, supervision and training, funding and working conditions were the four central areas of the survey. Over 8900 doctoral candidates responded. The findings of the survey formed the basis for workgroup discussions during the conference.

The conference outcomes reinforced Eurodoc’s strong belief that doctoral candidates should be regarded as professionals. Accordingly, doctoral candidates should be given status, funding and voice as stipulated in the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. This will ensure that doctoral candidates get the dignity they deserve as being the main drivers of innovation and progress of the European knowledge-based society in the rapidly globalising world.

Eurodoc urges ERA and EHEA policy makers to talk with doctoral candidates instead of talking about doctoral candidates. Thus it is of the utmost importance that policy makers at all levels (local, regional, national, and international) involve young researchers when drafting and implementing policies that affect these young researchers. This conference re-assured the status of Eurodoc as a key partner and the only main voice of doctoral candidates and young researchers at the European level. Therefore Eurodoc calls on the European Union to make Eurodoc a member of the Bologna follow-up group, thus strengthening the link between the ERA and EHEA.

¹ European Higher Education Area

² European Research Area

EURODOC background:

Eurodoc was founded in Girona (Spain) on 02/02/02. It is the European Council of doctoral candidates and junior researchers. It takes the form of a federation of national associations of Ph.D. candidates and young researchers. Eurodocs objectives are:

- To represent doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level in matters of education, research, and professional development of their careers*
 - To advance the quality of doctoral programmes and the standards of research activity in Europe*
 - To promote the circulation of information on issues regarding young researchers; organize events, take part in debates and assist in the elaboration of policies about Higher Education and Research in Europe*
 - To establish and promote co-operation between national associations representing doctoral candidates and junior researchers within Europe*
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Contact:

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