

Eurodoc response to the RMU open letter

On February 27th, the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (Eurodoc) received a letter from the Young Scientists Council (RMU) at the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, asking Eurodoc for help regarding the military aggression by the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus. In their letter, RMU calls upon Eurodoc to support the [Open letter from the Ukrainian academic community](#). The letter highlights Russia's military aggression as a global threat to democratic values and human rights. At the same time, the important role of many Russian and Belarussian individual researchers in opposing their governments' war is recognised. However, given the lack of independence of Russian and Belarussian universities as well as the interference by their governments, RMU believes that a free dialogue and unbiased discussions with the academic institutions of these countries are impossible at the moment. Therefore, RMU calls for all collaborations with Russian and Belarussian institutions to be suspended until the end of the war and the cessation of all hostilities. At the same time, they call on the academic community to take actions and stand firmly for academic values and responsible science, also by supporting Russian and Belarussian scholars who are opposing the war.

Eurodoc, as a representative of doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level, fully condemns Russia's military aggression and considers it a threat not only to Ukraine, but also to world peace, democratic values, human rights, environment, freedoms, including academic freedom, university autonomy and equitable access. This war threatens the sustainable development of all countries in Europe, not only Ukraine.

Eurodoc holds academic freedom as a core value and condemns the infringements on basic human rights that have been reported from Russia over many years. We express our solidarity with the researchers and scientists in Russia and Belarus, who have to endure these actions. Eurodoc acknowledges the large number of individual researchers, doctoral candidates and students in Russia and Belarus who are protesting the war despite facing personal consequences and repression. We call on the international academic community to support and protect Russian and Belarussian scientists facing repression and repercussions as a consequence of speaking up and demanding peace for our countries. We agree with them: [Let's make science, not war!](#)

There is, however, a difference between these individuals and the institutions, as research is always also tied to national governments and state interests. Thus, we call on all academic institutions and universities to:

- in particular suspend all types of international scientific collaboration and cooperations with Russian institutions that are linked to military activity or dual-use technologies, have any direct benefit for the Putin regime, or [openly condone military aggression](#),
- implement a reviewing procedure of EU and national funds in order to effectively free funding of consortia who cannot ensure that their collaborations are adhering to standards of academic freedom, transparency and democratic values, and
- further formalise the criteria under which EU and national funding can be obtained to ensure and incentivise adherence to democratic values and academic integrity.

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As a grassroots federation of 29 national associations of early-career researchers (ECRs) from 26 countries across Europe, Eurodoc feels it is a moral imperative to offer not only solidarity but concrete support to our Ukrainian colleagues. We, therefore, also ask that:

- European research institutions and universities take a public position as well as implement concrete solutions in order to host doctoral candidates and junior researchers, students and academic staff who are seeking refuge from the war in Ukraine, regardless of their nationality. These activities should include, but are not limited to, scholarships, free temporary accommodation for ECRs' and their family members, counselling, space in research laboratories or university courses, and provision of language courses in the corresponding host countries;
- the European Union provides centralised access to information on support measures offered by universities and institutions;
- that all refugees from Ukraine, regardless of their nationality, as well as Ukrainians who were staying abroad prior to the attack are granted a treatment equal to EU citizens, including access to social security, health care, and residency permits.

We further call on the European nations to support all humanitarian organisations helping victims and refugees, as well as all academics and citizens choosing to stay in Ukraine. As Eurodoc, we encourage our colleagues in Europe to reach out to the many NGOs already active on the field to offer their concrete help. Eurodoc will cooperate with the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe to our best possibility in order to support other international NGOs to organise protection and support to both the threatened people in Ukraine as well as persecuted citizens in the Russian Federation and Belarus. We express our solidarity with all those suffering from this war and strongly believe that through solidarity peace will finally win.

Signed by the Eurodoc board on behalf of its member associations on March 4th, 2022

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