

## **ANNEX 7 - FEEDBACK FORM FOR EXPLOITATION AT EUROPEAN LEVEL**

***This form is intended to gather information about the sustainability of Docent Project products/results.***

- 1) Considering the awareness and level of maturity of the European context on training paths of transferable skills and support service specific for doctoral candidates and graduates, do you think that Docent results meet the real needs in European context? And in which way?

The Docent results (Training Paths and Career Services) are positive contributions to ongoing EU/European efforts in becoming the global leader in innovation. The following value-added aspects must be emphasised: the Training Paths and modules are exhaustive, comprehensive and easy to understand; they address key issues that are salient at both national and European levels. The Career Services offer a structural blueprint (Permanent Observatory) for enabling sustainability of non-academic career paths for doctoral candidates and graduates.

Eurodoc welcomes these two products and, in addition to specific suggestions below, offers an overarching recommendation to improve readability and applicability of Docent results: in the toolkits and reports, reference to the target audience (doctoral candidates and graduates) is very inconsistent. For instance, we find the following used: doctoral candidates, graduates, students, doctorates, PhDs, PhD students, PhD candidates and participants. The multitude of terms used makes reading confusing. Moreover, the reference to doctoral candidates as 'students' is highly inconsistent with the principles of the European Researcher Charter and Code of Conduct for their recruitment, which the Docent report on Career Services also refers (p. 13). Therefore, we strongly recommend the consistent usage of 'doctoral candidates' throughout and in any future Docent communications.

- 2) According to your opinion which opportunities and constraints could meet the adoption of the DOCENT results (Training Paths on transferable skills and Careers service model) in the Universities/Research body at European level

Whilst the current economic downturn does not contribute to facilitating the smooth adoption of Docent results, the general variance in resources and funding availability throughout Europe/EU (between European-, national- and regional-levels; universities and research bodies) constitutes an important barrier. This is especially problematic for implementing the Career Service model; for instance, career services in Greek universities are dependent on European funding (they are not part of the university budget), which challenges sustainability and coherent planning. This aspect must be carefully considered and addressed when promoting the Docent results because they may further exacerbate the growing innovation divides in Europe/EU.

Another important constraint concerns the issue of quality assurance: How would the adoption or implementation of Docent results be assessed? Would this be conducted at a pan-European scale, regionally or at the individual universities and research bodies? This concern is closely related to the question of product differentiation. Whilst we welcome the Docent products, we also note that most of the Training Path modules mirror those found in MBA programmes (e.g. module 5 on 'Beyond Employment' where 'entrepreneurship', 'resilience and risk-taking' and 'how to write a business plan' are highlighted). Would implementing the Docent products result in an additional certification or would participation in these modules be at the expense of other research activities? It should be noted that, for

those doctoral candidates interested in following the entrepreneurship route, they often obtain an MBA degree prior to or after their doctorate and this effort is evidenced in an additional degree and is preferred.

These constraints, if carefully and thoroughly addressed, should not prevent the adoption of the Docent results; especially because the documents are detailed and relatively easy to use. We therefore strongly encouraged all interested parties to discuss them and explore ways of overcoming these barriers.

3) Could you estimate the cost of adoption of the DOCENT products/results: a) training paths delivery; b) career service delivery

Given the variance in 'cost' (e.g. hiring a tutor, career service counsellors and also time away from research) and resource availability (as highlighted in the response to Q2), it is difficult to offer a response to this. However, in calculating the cost associated with the adoption of the Docent products, we recommend that the following questions to be taken into consideration:

(1) Who will plan and implement such a programme?

Existing programmes are often implemented by the graduate schools, but, as we have noted earlier, resources are often unavailable for these activities in the university budget.

(2) How will doctoral candidates be motivated to attend such a programme? Would it be voluntary participation or compulsory?

Given the demands of doctoral degree (i.e. timely completion, publication, teaching obligations, dissemination and networking), we strongly caution against making these learning units compulsory without clear indications of the results to be achieved (to future employers and evidenced in certification/qualification form).

4) Analyzing costs and benefits do you think that DOCENT products/results could be adopted within the European Universities/Research bodies? Why?

As mentioned earlier, we believe that the Docent products and results could be adopted if considerations are taken for the issues we have raised, in addition to others we have not raised given space limitation.

5) Do you have any suggestions for the adoption of the DOCENT results in the European Universities/Research bodies (e.g. where and how to find human and financial resources, how to implement the activities foreseen by the project results, with which similar initiatives to promote synergies and how)?

Here we offer more specific recommendations on how to improve the dissemination and applicability of the Docent products:

(1) It is mentioned in the final page of the Training Paths document that learning units can be provided upon request; this information should be made more visible on the web page. Information can also be provided regarding dissemination strategy.

(2) Indicative teaching plans could be included in the Training Paths modules. This would be especially useful given that there is great variety of different learning units on offer.

(3) In module 3, a statement on multiculturalism and a sense for diversity is useful in the section on conflict management. It should be noted that conflict management is a new area of graduate studies and, thus, should warrant further consideration.

(4) Subsection creativity of module 5 is an area where clearly the arts and humanities are highly relevant. Therefore, it is extremely important to be more inclusive of these disciplines during implementation and consultation concerning the design of the learning units.

6) Which support could you or your organization provide to Docent Project exploitation in terms of:

- Mainstreaming (regulating local/regional/national/European systems in order to facilitate the adoption of DOCENT project products/ results)
- and/or
- Multiplication (adopting the DOCENT products/results or convincing others end-users to adopt them)

Eurodoc will generally support the dissemination of the DOCENT Project results through our own networks and following our protocols.