

# eurodoc Newsletter

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## Crisis Line

The national Grad Crisis-Line was set up in 1999 to provide doctoral candidates with free and confidential telephone counselling. Trained staff who understand the needs of young researchers are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.

You can SKYPE the Crisis-Line at 800-472-3457.

GRAD RESOURCES



## Editor's note

Dear Readers,

We are pleased to present you with Eurodoc's third and final newsletter for this administrative year. In this newsletter you can find reports from some of the things Eurodoc has been doing since last time.

The main news to report is that Eurodoc's AGM is fast approaching! When you next hear from us we will have a new board and administration, and a new editorial team. Perhaps some of you would like to get involved? We always have room for more volunteers. Please don't hesitate to contact us for more information, or come to Cluj and meet us in person!

We hope that you have found something useful in this or one of our previous newsletters, and we hope the new editorial team can make things even better.

*The Editorial Team*

## Register now for Eurodoc 2015

### Empowering Young Researchers in Europe: Engagement and Participation

In less than one month's time Eurodoc's members will get together for the annual conference and AGM. This year's conference will be a bit different from previous events as almost all the speakers will be Eurodoc's own members! The event should be the perfect opportunity to learn about the issues early career researchers care about, and for Eurodoc's members to learn from each other.

The conference will hear presentations from twelve Eurodoc members, and will have four workshops, one of which will be a special workshop looking at Eurodoc: past present and future. Many 'old' Eurodoccers, including two former presidents, will be present giving their thoughts on the association and how it can make itself more effective.



The Eurodoc Family

Check out the [conference](#) and [AGM](#) programme on the website, and if you want to attend, [don't forget to register!](#)

Registration will close on 13 April.

## Statement on Joint Doctoral Training

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Eurodoc has [offered its support](#) to the [Joint Declaration of Doctoral Training in Europe](#) published by the rectors conferences from France, Germany, Poland, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Eurodoc took the opportunity to reiterate its opposition to the use of ECTS to measure the skills developed during the doctorate, stating that ‘The award of a doctorate is sufficient to attest the holder’s qualifications, which are valuable for a diverse labour market.’

## Bursary Experiment in the Netherlands

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Last month Dutch Labour Party Minister Jet Bussemaker proposed a bill to the Dutch parliament that would allow Universities in the country to recruit doctoral candidates with student status and with a bursary, rather than recruiting them on an employment contract. Eurodoc and its Dutch member PNN are opposed to this experiment, and believe it will be a step backwards for the Dutch research system.

In its statement, Eurodoc emphasised how the bursary experiment will provide researchers with working conditions that go against all that is considered good practice at the European level, citing the European Commission, the European University Association, and the European Trade Union Committee for Education. The statement further emphasised how Eurodoc considers that offering employment contracts to researchers serves to better integrate them into the research community, and acts as a safeguard against them being treated as a source of cheap labour.

## Eurodoc Survey II

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The continuous growth in the number of doctoral candidates and doctoral degrees being awarded is well known, as is the more stagnant situation in the number of permanent academic or research staff. These changes have led to significant restructuring in academic and research careers. The doctorate is no longer what it once was.

Back in 2008, Eurodoc launched a Europe wide survey of doctoral candidates to try and find out more about their working conditions and how these vary across the continent. The survey aimed to fill a gap in our understanding of research careers by telling us more about the experiences of the researchers themselves, and how the changes to academia are affecting them. The report from the survey was well received at the time, and provided many interesting insights into the conditions of early stage researchers. However at the same time the survey also had many obvious gaps, and raised many questions.

Three years have passed since the first survey, and Eurodoc is looking into the possibility of developing a second, follow up survey, this time extending the focus to include post-doctoral researchers! The aims of the new survey are similar to the last one: to gather information on the circumstances early career researchers are working in, to use this to identify examples of good practice, and to make policy recommendations.

A general consultation has been conducted asking what Eurodoc’s members and various other ERA stakeholders would like to learn from such a survey. It is still early days for Eurodoc Survey II, but the wheels are turning. A survey of the scale and scope being proposed by Eurodoc will surely be of value to a great many people.

If you are interested in Eurodoc Survey II, and want to learn more, please contact [board@eurodoc.net](mailto:board@eurodoc.net)

## ABIC - Fighting for better working conditions

The Portuguese Association for grant-holding researchers (ABIC) developed an advocacy letter which was presented at its General Assembly on 28 March. With this initiative, ABIC intends to assess the current working conditions of Early Stage Researchers (ESRs) and the recent development of the National Scientific System.



In order to achieve a national perspective, ABIC had several meetings during the last months with local representatives through the country. With the public discussion of this document, ABIC seeks to collect contributions of all those who, on a daily basis, feel the consequences of not having a work contract.

During the previous year, ABIC organised several advocacy activities. ABIC has met the main funding agency in Portugal (FCT) in order to sensitise them about the cuts performed in science and the real effects they have on the work of researchers, and in the development of the country. ABIC has also developed an Open Letter with contributions from researchers from all over Portugal. With this document, ABIC aims to campaign against funding cuts and for a general improvement of the position of science and scientific workers in Portugal. This letter was later presented to the national government.

One of the priorities that most concerns ABIC is the Statute of the Grant Holder Researchers. ABIC believes that it needs to be developed in order to truly protect ESRs and guarantee them all the conditions to improve their abilities. The professionalisation of scientific workers could be a good way to achieve this same goal. ESRs, due to their special situation in Portugal, do not have the same social benefits as other workers. Examples like Social Insurance, maternity support and unemployment protection are some of the issues that we intend to set as priorities.

## Charter and Code @ 10

The European Charter for Researchers, and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers is now ten years old! To celebrate the European Commission held a 'birthday party' in Brussels, and Eurodoc was invited.

Also invited to the event were representatives from the more than 100 institutions that have received the HR Excellence in Research badge. The logo (left) is awarded to institutions who have made efforts to implement the Charter and Code.



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Those institutions who have received the award are only a tiny fraction of the number who have formally endorsed the Charter and Code. Which gives an indication of the amount of work still to be done. This was acknowledged by the majority of participants at the meeting, with a poll of participants suggesting not only that more needed to be done, but that further initiatives from the Commission would be welcome.

Eurodoc has long been a strong supporter of the Charter and Code, and encourages all research institutes in Europe to make efforts to implement its principles!

## About Eurodoc

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

Eurodoc's objectives are:

- To **represent doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level** in all 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**, organise 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**.

### Contact details:

Eurodoc  
The European Council of Doctoral  
Candidates and Junior Researchers  
Rue d'Egmont 11  
1000 Bruxelles, Belgium



For more information on Eurodoc visit  
<http://www.eurodoc.net/> or make an inquiry at  
[board@eurodoc.net](mailto:board@eurodoc.net)

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Want to publish an article in Eurodoc's newsletter? Then get in [contact with us!](#)