

# eurodoc

## Newsletter #4 · December 2008

In this issue of the Eurodoc newsletter, we mainly focus on the conference organised by the French presidency of the Council of the European Union which took place in Rennes from November 20–21. Eurodoc was present with delegates gathering not only for the conference, but also for three Eurodoc workshops preceding the conference: on the valorisation of the doctorate, on the Eurodoc Survey that has recently been launched at <http://www.eurodoc.net/survey/>, and on mentoring as proposed by Eurodoc's Career Development Workgroup. Short reports on the course and outcomes of the workshops can be found on pages 2–3.

Following the workshops we organised in Rennes, it was a huge success for Eurodoc to be visible throughout the conference on “Young

Researchers in Europe”, being able to express the views of Eurodoc's member organisations from 32 European countries and actively participate in the debates, for instance on the *Human Resources Strategy for Researchers Incorporating the Charter & Code* which was launched by the European Commission during the Rennes conference (this page, cont. on page 2). The closing speech of the president of Eurodoc, Karoline Holländer, is reproduced on page 4.

While the conference in Rennes is clearly the focus of this issue, we would also like to feature an article by the chairperson of our Swedish member organisation SFS post-graduate student committee on a new policy that has recently been proposed by the Swedish government (page 5).

We also did not forget to include a short outline of Eurodoc's activities from September to December 2008, comprised of short logs on all the conferences Eurodoc representatives participated in. A brief summary is given on the concluding event of Eurodoc's presence in Rennes: the Board and Secretariat Meeting.

We hope that you enjoy reading our newsletter. It is the last issue this year, so we also take the opportunity to thank you for following our activities throughout 2008 – and see you next year: The next newsletter issue will be published just before our next annual conference, which will take place in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, in March 2009, co-organised by our Czech and Slovak member organisations.

Stephan Kurz

### YOUNG RESEARCHERS IN EUROPE: RENNES CONFERENCE

#### A Brief Summary of the Conference on “Young Researchers in Europe”

Since the launch of the *European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers* (C&C) in March 2005, little has been done in terms of actual implementation by European higher education institutions (HEIs) and/or governments. The non binding nature of the recommendation coupled to a relative failure in communicating the benefits of the recommendation within the European higher education and research community might provide some degree of justification to some, while others may consider that more fundamental reasons are reflected in the general lack of results that has so far characterised the Lisbon agenda. To illustrate this point, it is worth remembering that all member states that did not satisfy the 3 % GDP target in 2001 have



Rennes conference video message by Commissioner Janez Potočnik already failed by quite a margin to meet the target set for 2010 without exception.

In that context, a conference organised by the French presidency of the European Union in Rennes, 20–21 November 2008, was designed around a more modest but pragmatic and achievable goal: to contribute to raising awareness of the implementation of the C&C. The conference was the place the European Commission chose to formally release an information note calling all HEIs to implement the C&C by adopting a *Human Resources Strategy for Researchers* (HRS). This document is the product of two years of consultation of its expert groups to which Eurodoc extensively contributed.

(cont. on page 2)

### EURODOC SURVEY LAUNCHED!

Eurodoc is conducting a Europe-wide survey on doctoral researchers in cooperation with the International Centre for Higher Education Research (INCHER) at Kassel University. The survey has been launched on 4<sup>th</sup> December. Its topics include qualification requirements, career paths, funding schemes, models of training and supervision, working conditions, expected and

achieved results of scientific work and mobility.

This is the first survey of its kind and roughly 100,000 doctoral researchers from the whole of Europe are asked to take part in this study. Be one of them – add your experience to our knowledge and contribute to forming of the European Research Area. We thank you in advance for your valued cooperation.



Take part in the Eurodoc survey at:  
<http://www.eurodoc.net/survey/>

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*Eurodocers working the whole night through until 2:22!*

Formerly known as the C&C labelling mechanism, the HRS aims at bringing effectiveness to the implementation of the C&C through an established, recognized and transparent process that is supported by appropriate templates and monitoring tools. HEIs remain free to choose whether to adopt the HRS or not, and

the European Commission has made it clear it would not be tied to any funding mechanism of the FP7. For those institutions that have already signed up to the C&C (approximately 10 % of all European HEIs), it's clear however that it should be particularly difficult to ignore or justify not abiding to such a natural commitment.

Indeed, adopting the HRS means that HEIs are serious about the C&C principles. The approach consists of undertaking and making public (e.g. on their website) a gap analysis between their existing practices and policies, and those set out in the C&C. Based on these findings, they are expected to establish their own HRS (i.e. their action plan to fill the gaps) which is submitted to the European Commission for acknowledgement. Implementation and monitoring are driven by the HEI's own quality assurance mechanisms and evaluated accordingly and regularly, including by an external review panel.

After 3 years of relative idleness, this move is welcome and strongly supported by Eurodoc, as echoed by president Karoline Holländer in her closing remarks at the conference (see page 4 for the full text). Recalling that "most [HEIs] failed to live up to the standards" of the C&C, she called for HEIs to be proactive in adopting the HRS and to "take up this opportunity to fully involve young researchers [...] especially during the steps of internal analysis and elaboration of their own strategy". Although few institutions have yet signed up to the HRS, she made it clear Eurodoc will continue to be "committed to keep working on these issues" and would keep a watchful eye.

*Francis Vella*

## RENNES FOLLOW-UP: FOCUS ON VALORISATION

### Five Principles toward a More Open Recruitment Market for Young Researchers Outcomes of the Workshop "Valorisation of the Doctorate"

The main issue of the workshop session on "Valorisation of the Doctorate" held in Rennes on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008 was to discuss possible strategies to improve job prospects for doctoral candidates in and outside academia, in accordance to the recommendations given in the Charter and Code.

Following an introduction on the concept of valorisation by François Briatte (Eurodoc) (see article on page 3), Massimo Serpieri from the European Commission (DG Research) presented the *Human Resources Strategy for Researchers Incorporating the Charter & Code*. This initiative of the Commission was later on launched during the Rennes conference and aims at putting into place mechanisms of self-assessment and transparency measures concerning the implementation of the Charter and Code documents by research institutions (the document is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/rights/>). Massimo stressed that efficient implementation of the policies needs a political dialogue and co-operation between all players, including researchers, and that especially for young researchers to successfully integrate in the (academic) labour market it is

necessary to work on better training opportunities, regular evaluation, wider autonomy for researchers and secured social security.

During the discussion it was repeatedly pointed out that the recently refurbished Europe-wide portal for job vacancies EURAXESS should be promoted and used by all universities and research institutions. Industry and other non-academic employers for researchers should be addressed to join as well.

Eurodoc itself actively seeks ways to foster further implementation of the Charter and Code. Five "*principles and recommendations towards a more open European labour market for researchers*" that should be taken into account were presented by Eurodoc president Karoline Holländer during the closing session of the conference (see page 4).

Eurodoc sees it as the responsibility of member states to ensure that doctoral candidates' work should not only be recognised, but above all also valorised. This affects the general working conditions, the income level, social and pension benefits which should be attractive for young researchers regardless of their individual career paths. This is particu-

larly important as mobility – be it geographical, inter-sectoral or any other kind of mobility – is deservedly considered a key feature of career path in research.

Any measure aimed at raising attractiveness the European Research Area and the quality of research conducted therein must respect the "human sides of mobility" finally reinforcing the important role of young researchers for a knowledge based economy. *Anja Brunner*



*Workshop organiser Wolfgang Eppenschwandtner*



## Valorising the Doctorate Is Essential to the Development of a Knowledge Economy

*Eurodoc held a workshop on the valorisation of doctoral research on November 19, 2008, which served as an introduction to and preparation for the conference “Young Researchers in Europe” organised in Rennes by the French Presidency of the EU. The following brief summarises a presentation on PhD valorisation in France on behalf of the French Political Science Job Applicants Association (ANCMSP) and the Confederation of Young Researchers (CJC), a member of Eurodoc. A full-fledged paper and slides are available at <http://ancmsp.apinc.org/Colloque-Eurodoc-Rennes-novembre>.*

“Valorisation” generally addresses the dissemination of research findings or their conversion into productivity gains through technology licensing. Yet “valorisation” also refers to improving the job prospects of doctoral candidates on both academic and non-academic markets, which constitutes an equally challenging task for European stakeholders as well as Member States such as France, where much remains to be done in that area.

The current employment profile of holders

of a doctorate in France indeed reveals a rather bleak picture of low job prospects in academia,



*François Briatte in front of the Eurodoc audience.*

different working conditions among researchers, sometimes ending in (non)academic unemployment. These factors produce the common afflictions of forced brain drain among present generations of young researchers, as well as a decreasing interest for academic careers overall. Sustaining a knowledge economy precisely

requires avoiding both pitfalls, and recent policy responses seem unlikely to reverse the trend. Perhaps this is because their goals are grounded in an ambiguous definition of valorisation that downplays the virtues of “professionalising” doctoral research instead of enhancing it by acknowledging doctoral training as a professional asset per se.

How, then, should we valorise doctoral research and raise the employment profile of doctorate holders in countries such as France? In addition to collective agreements that will secure positions for doctoral degree holders in the private and public sectors, some effort should be spent on improving material work conditions for doctoral researchers as well as monitoring recruitment procedures to ensure transparency and equal treatment. These recommendations need executive fiat and administrative support; they also require adequate levels of research expenditure; finally, they also depend on all stakeholders sharing a common vision of the doctorate as a professional experience.

*François Briatte*

## RENNES FOLLOW-UP: FOCUS ON MENTORING

### Mentoring for Doctoral Candidates? Outcomes of the Workshop on Mentoring in Rennes

Following discussions in the Career Development working group, one of the three workshops organised by Eurodoc in Rennes engaged its participants in a debate on mentoring schemes within doctoral education.

As a starting point, Nora de Vries (Eurodoc) described the current situation: only few of the doctoral candidates can actually pursue a career in academia – but hardly anyone thinks about different career possibilities before finishing their doctoral thesis. Nora therefore stressed the necessity of raising awareness among young researchers about different career paths and the discrepancy between wishes concerning academic career – and reality. A solution for this problem would be that universities and research institutions provide mentoring programmes where the mentor is not the same person as the academic supervisor. Tailored to the doctoral candidate’s need the mentor can be from inside or outside academia. Mentoring schemes range from peer-to-peer-mentoring between young researchers at the same level of education (“intervision”) to (in)formal guidance and career advice by a senior academic; any combinations are possible. In an ideal world, so Nora de Vries, each doctoral candidate would have a mentor or at least mentoring on peer-to-peer-level.

Thomas Jørgensen from the European University Association (EUA) presented the

Council of Doctoral Educations (CDE) views concerning a reform of doctoral education and the steps already made. He stressed the need to provide supervisory schemes that go beyond the individual supervisor-supervisee relationship and mentioned that the responsibility for their career also lies with the doctoral candidates. According to the EUA-CDE, European universities are more and more aware of their responsibility and the necessity to provide structured career development possibilities to their doctoral candidates.

The need to think about professional future already before and during doctoral education was then further stressed by Paule BiauDET from UPMC/Marie Curie. By stating the diverse possibilities of doctoral employability she argued that one core problem is the evaluation of skills after the doctorate by all stakeholders. Neither the doctoral candidates themselves nor the possible employers in or outside academia are aware of the transferable skills that doctoral candidates provide. Paule also pointed out another issue: for the implementation of mentoring programmes on a large scale for every doctoral candidate universities would need a lot more money than they have.

At last, a view from industry was provided by Martin G. Lüling from Schlumberger. He presented the company strategy concerning

holders of doctoral degrees. He also clarified that Schlumberger does only exceptionally hire doctoral candidates.

During discussions after the presentations, more issues concerning possibilities and problems with mentoring schemes were raised. As the main goal of mentoring is to support career development and to raise the awareness for careers outside academia, it was pointed out that only mentors from outside academia could efficiently do this and provide a breakout of academic views. Lidia Borrell-Damian (EUA) further stressed that mentoring may not be good for anyone, and that as career paths are extremely diverse, having only one mentor might imply the danger of ignoring this diversity. The relation and possible co-existence between general mentoring and specific mentoring programmes for groups which need extra support to counter discrimination were also discussed briefly. Nora de Vries asked if there was a clear statement on which level within doctoral education at which taking part in a mentoring programme would be most efficient.

Eurodoc will continue to discuss these and other issues concerning the need of mentoring for young researchers and doctoral candidates and will put forth a policy paper at the annual conference in March 2009.

*Anja Brunner*

## Eurodoc President Karoline Holländer's Closing Speech on "Young Researchers in Europe"

When in March 2000 15 European heads of governments launched the Lisbon agenda, they decided to make Europe fit for global competition – to make it the strongest and most dynamic economic area on the world map.

To face the challenges of globalisation, Europe needs to build a competitive knowledge based economy. Young researchers play a key role in this process of change. Eurodoc carries the voice of young researchers from 32 European countries.

Eurodoc has been raising the issues that have been discussed during the Rennes conference not only once. We feel strongly about them and we welcome the initiatives of the commission which have been entitled a *European Partnership for Researchers*.

I would like to start by focusing on one particular point of the *Partnership for Researchers*, which is improving recruitment procedures in a similar way to the one previously introduced by the *Charter and Code*. We all know that there is a lot of homework for European research institutions to do in the respect of the *Charter*.

Concerning improving recruitment procedures, Eurodoc has outlined 5 "principles and recommendations towards a more open European labour market for researchers" that should be taken into account:

- 1) Researchers should be provided with central and easy access to all vacancies that fit their profile. Therefore EU member states and the Commission should cooperate to

provide a single European portal for job vacancies taking into account various initiatives at the national and European level (e.g. the EURAXESS portal).

- 2) Application procedures should be simple and user-friendly – they should avoid wasting the time of young researchers by excessive administrative burden.
- 3) Positions should be open for researchers regardless of their nationality. The principle of non discrimination should be put into practice by all employers in the European Research Area (ERA) and apply to all applicants regardless of their nationality.
- 4) Application procedures should be transparent and fair. Employers should lay down their institutional guidelines and rules based on the *Code of Conduct*. To promote best practice, it could help to develop and promote sets of more concrete rules that go beyond the *Code*.
- 5) Timely information of candidates is crucial for the whole duration of the recruitment process. All candidates should be kept informed on the progress of their application.

As highlighted many times during this conference, it is the responsibility of the European Union's member states to ensure that (1) the general working conditions, (2) the income level, and (3) social and pension benefits are attractive for young researcher regardless of their career paths.

This is particularly important as mobility is not only geographic, but also e.g. inter-sectoral.

The *Partnership* should be supported by strong national, regional and local initiatives to improve the situation of young researchers.

This is the best way to ensure the attractiveness of the ERA combining the "human sides of mobility" and the quality of European research.

Still, it is also essential that higher education and research institutions take a proactive part in this process by adopting the approach of the *Human Resources Strategy for Researchers* launched at the Rennes conference.

As we all know, many institutions have undersigned the *Charter and Code*. However most of them have failed to live up to the standards that are set in this document.

The *Human Resources Strategy* will provide the necessary transparency and therefore will allow sharing best practices among HEIs in Europe.

It is essential that HEIs take up this opportunity to fully involve young researchers in the process of implementing the *Charter and Code*, especially during the steps of internal analysis and elaboration of their own strategy.

There is still a lot of work and Eurodoc is committed to keep working on these issues.

Karoline Holländer



Take part in the Eurodoc survey at: <http://www.eurodoc.net/survey/>

## RENNES FOLLOW-UP: FOCUS ON SURVEY WORKSHOP

Eurodoc's Europe-Wide Survey Has Been Launched on 4<sup>th</sup> December

"We will survey you" was the tag line of a workshop on the Eurodoc Survey, one of the three Eurodoc workshops held in Rennes on November 19. "How to run the survey in my country? What turn-out we need? What are the milestones now?"

This workshop, immediately preceding the launch of the survey on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2008, aimed to answer all remaining questions about launching and running the survey in the countries taking part.

The workshop started with a brief overview of the current state of preparations of the survey: it is ready for launch and it is up to Eurodoc member organisations when they want to launch it in their respective countries.

Following the introductory – and rather technical – part of the workshop, Gertjan Tommel (PNN/The Netherlands) and Karoline Holländer (Thesis/Germany) shared their experiences of implementation and evaluation of national surveys on doctoral researchers which had been conducted in The Netherlands and

Germany in the past. The previous surveys triggered discussions on many aspects of the survey. In particular, various means of the dissemination of the survey – the key task in upcoming months – have been talked through.

The targeted turn-out, an issue closely related to both dissemination and evaluation of the survey, has been addressed as well. As a rule of thumb, a thousand of respondents is needed in every partial group which will be considered individually. With a feasible response rate of 10 % in a large cohort for a survey like ours, the survey should reach a percentage of all doctoral researchers in the countries taking part in the survey that will allow us to draw important conclusions.

The survey will stay online until 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009. We will continuously publish intermediate results with the aim of presenting a full report at Eurodoc Annual Conference 2010 in Vienna.

Karoline Holländer, Max Reinhardt,  
Sverre Lundemo



## Sweden: A New Threat towards Doctoral Education

The research proposal that the Swedish government recently put forward in essence tries to make universities and Higher Education institutions into sub-divisions of private business, as outlined in this article by the chairpersons of Swedish Eurodoc Member SFS post-graduate student committee and Swedish State-employed Civil Servant Trade Union.

The government recently presented its research proposal for the coming three years *A lift for Research and Innovation* which immediately gives rise to questions that need to be answered. Is it really anything to do with research? It seems more like a plan of action from government to try to make universities and higher education institutes (HEI) into R&D departments for Swedish companies. The proposal is both short-sighted and filled with too much regulatory detail.

The government is obviously trying to steer the scientific community and thinks it even knows which scientific issues will be of major importance for society in the long run. An example of this is the way in which it points out a number of "strategic areas" which are presented in the proposal – Climate, Technology and Medicine. These three overarching areas have been broken down into 23 sub-areas which are pointed out as being especially important. This is short-sighted because there is a need for research in many different scientific areas working together in order to find solutions to the problems stated in the proposal. Therefore there is a need for investment in research in the social sciences and the humanities as well.

In the same proposal, the government wants to scrap the broad "scientific areas", which universities are awarded in order to award post-graduate degrees, and replace them with narrower "research areas" which must be renewed every four years and which will be, in practice, dependent on whether the HEI can bring in its own external funding. This will not only lead to a more arbitrary division of state funds but



also lead to a creation of academic environments that are too small and that do not have a "critical mass". Such trials have been conducted earlier, but without any positive results. What is needed is a stability and long term planning that is based on a trust in academia's own ability to define relevant research problems. In the report *Life as a supervisor* conducted by the trade unions TCO and ST together with the National Union of Students in Sweden, SFS, Sweden's professors stated that the best form of research funding was direct state funds to the faculties which also guarantee a stable platform for post-graduate students. This opinion is shared with the post-graduate students themselves. If we want to create a research nation that can compete on a global plane then there is a need for the researchers of the future – today's post-graduate students – to have stable working conditions and enough research funding. Only then can the researchers develop their research area so that it becomes of benefit for society. Long-term research funding means not only more stability for individual researchers but also that they will be able to meet new problems in a reliable way.

Another proposal which we would like to question is the introduction of the so-called reporting liability which means that a researcher will have a duty to report commercialisable results to the university. How is this going to work in practice and what will this mean for the future? We think that this can have serious consequences for the future for the open scientific community. If the researcher is to make any money from their findings then they have to keep watch of eventual competitors. This will not favour the world-class research by which Sweden is known, but instead it will lead to protectionism. We think when it comes to commercialisable results that teachers should be exempt from the rule which normally states that the employer owns the rights, i.e. the rule which exists today should remain.

In the current Swedish Higher Education Law it states that HEIs should collaborate with society at large. Now the government is saying that results from research should come to public use at all costs. By forcing research into the grips of a policy based on a short-sighted quarterly economy is both a measure of contempt for scientific processes, but also a way of putting a gag on universities who otherwise should be a critical and democratic voice in our society.

Alexander Engström (Chairperson – SFS post-graduate student committee),

Annette Carnhede (Chairperson – State-employed Civil Servant Trade Union)

Originally published in the Uppsala Nya Tidning newspaper on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (for the source in Swedish see [http://www2.unt.se/avd/1,1826,MC=2-AV\\_ID=824862,00.html](http://www2.unt.se/avd/1,1826,MC=2-AV_ID=824862,00.html), translated by Sam Edgecombe)

# SFS

## EURODOC AFFAIRS

A Eurodoc Board and Secretariat Meeting took place in Rennes, closing the series of events Eurodoc organised and participated in there. This time, all the board, the recently elected secretariat coordinator Stephan Kurz (ÖH/Austria) and almost all secretariat members made it to the meeting at Beaulieu Campus in Rennes. Main decisions that were drawn from the meeting were that the Eurodoc Survey would be launched on December 4 (see title page), and that the topic of the Eurodoc conference to take place in Banská Bystrica in March 2009 would be *Innovations in Europe – From Academia to Practice and Back*. After some administrative tasks, the meeting was closed by the unanimous appointment of candidates for the secretariat by



board and secretariat coordinator:

- Wolfgang Eppenschwandtner (ÖH/Austria) as Eurodoc policy officer
- Snezana Krstic (individual observer/Serbia) as workgroup coordinator of the Mobility Workgroup

Three more members of the secretariat were appointed only recently:

- Anna Schiller (ÖH/Austria) as voting officer
- Francis Vella (CJC/France) as project officer for branding and
- Nora de Vries (PNN/Netherlands) as working group coordinator for the Career Development WG

Together with Max Reinhardt (Thesis/Germany), Survey WG coordinator, they form a strong team committed to do their best for Eurodoc and contribute to the advancement of the European Research and Higher Education Area.

Jan Holeček, Stephan Kurz



## Representing Eurodoc September–December, 2008: A Review of Eurodoc Activities

**9–10 September, Strasbourg (France)**

*Quality assurance in higher education establishments in Europe.*

Participation of Yvonne Al-Taie.

The core of this conference on quality assurance lied in workshops on quality assurance. “Assessment of the link between the institution’s policy and the quality of training provision” and “The relationship between training and research assessment”. The main message of the conference was that research serves the society in a broad sense and hence the issue of quality assurance in research should not be restricted to higher education institutions only.

**12 September 2008, Antwerp (Belgium)**

*EAIE 20th Annual Conference*, Session “European doctoral programmes on the world stage” Presentation by Karoline Holländer. Karoline focused on main Eurodoc activities in recent years and themes for the future in her presentation, with the aim of pointing out red-hot concerns of doctoral candidates in Europe.

**25–26 September, Kaunas (Lithuania)**

*27th Conference of Rectors and Presidents of European Universities of Technology called „European and International Cooperation between Universities of Technology“*

Participation of Brigita Serafinavičiūtė.

Themes that were addressed at the conference included new structures of national and regional cooperation of universities, integrating universities from new member states in the European Research Area, European universities of technologies opening to the neighbouring countries, the BRIC challenge: new knowledge powers as opportunities for university cooperation, and attracting students and researchers from all over the world to European universities of

technology. International cooperation, the core of many aforementioned themes, was mainly discussed from the institutional point of view. Unfortunately there was not much discussion on the last theme and doctoral candidates were mentioned only occasionally. The next conference will take place in Copenhagen (Denmark) in September 2009.

**26 September, Brussels (Belgium)**

*Charter and Code expert group meeting.*

Participation of Francis Vella and Aurelién Lamy. The meeting concerned the Human Resources Strategy (HRS) launched at the Rennes conference later on in November 2008, which replaces the previous plans to create a Charter and Code label. Not only is Eurodoc a partner in the expert group, but we are ready to help higher education institutions carry out their gap analyses.

**30 September–1 October, Helsinki (Finland)**

*Bologna Seminar: 3rd cycle degrees: competences and researcher career*

Karoline Holländer chaired a workshop “Researcher career and best practices – Skills development as a part of the career development for doctoral candidates and younger researchers in Europe”. Renzo Rubele, Dmitri Teperik, Riku Matilainen, and Ragna Rönnholm were representing Eurodoc in different workshops.

**27–28 October, Bonn (Germany)**

*Deutsch-Italienische Hochschultage*

Jan Holeček was a member in a panel discussion “Education in Sciences and Technology: A Benchmarking between Italy and Germany” In his short talk on “Career Perspectives of

Doctoral Graduates in Europe” and subsequent discussions Jan presented a view that binational cooperation is valuable only if it contributes to the forming of the European Research Area.

**28 October 2008, Berlin (Germany)**

*KISSWIN, Conference on the presentation of the information platform for research promotion for young researchers in Germany*, Workshop: Further Development of Promotion of Young Researchers in Germany Panel member Karoline Holländer gave a presentation on “Career structures and possibilities for doctoral candidates” at a workshop on “Further Development of Promotion of Young Researchers in Germany”.

The topics touched structures that promote young researchers like working conditions, institutionalising supervision. Special attention was given to the Charter and Code and its poor implementation by most higher education institutions.

**5–6 November 2008, Dortmund (Germany)**

*“Adventure Science – Perspectives of Promotion of and Research on the Doctoral Phase”* Workshop: “Key Competences in the Doctoral Phase: Practice, Experiences, Reflections”

Karoline Holländer presented a poster on “key factors in designing doctoral programs – a call for diversity”: She addressed weaknesses of doctoral systems in Germany and communicated factors which should be taken into account in design of doctoral programmes and research training programmes at universities in general. Reflecting European perspectives, the factors were explained on concrete examples of successful implementations of the Charter and Code.

## EURODOC 2009 BANSKÁ BYSTRICA: SAVE THE DATE

26–28 March 2009 – save the dates! The 2009 edition of Eurodoc Annual Conference and General Assembly will take place in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. The city is located in the central Slovakia, surrounded by mountains. It has been a cultural and economical center of the region since the Medieval times and still maintains the position. The event will be hosted by Matej Bel University.

The conference – aiming to be a major gathering of young researchers – will bring together speakers and participants from European, national and institutional levels, policy makers as well as representatives of both academia and industry and, in particular, a number of young researchers from all over Europe. The 2009 edition focuses on roles young researchers do, could or should play in a knowledge-base econ-

omy. Attendees will be encouraged to consider the theme in different contexts in individual sessions, both novel and of constant Eurodoc interest. For instance, the programme features sessions *From Academia to Practice (and back?)*, *European Labour Market* or *Doctoral Programmes in Europe*.

The annual General Assembly will immediately follow the conference. Apart from obligatory and regular elections of the next Board, this General Assembly will also focus on the inner structure of Eurodoc addressing the fact that Eurodoc has grown to 32 members in recent years.

Find out more on the event at the conference web site <http://www.eurodoc.net/2009/>. You are welcome to come!

*Jan Holeček and Gabriela Elexová*



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