

Eurodoc visiting Ukrainian academia: Recovery must start now

The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (**Eurodoc**), representing over a million early career researchers (ECRs) across Europe, is calling on the EU to allocate dedicated funding for the recovery of Ukraine's research and higher education sectors.

Russia's war in Ukraine has also massively impacted the Ukrainian higher education institutions (HEIs). Thus, **the president and vice-president of Eurodoc will visit Ukraine in order to over three days (1) meet with the Minister for Education and Science, with the leadership of the National Research Foundation, and other political stakeholders; (2) meet representatives of ECRs from all of Ukraine; and (3) meet with science communicators.** This allows Eurodoc to get a better understanding of the situation and work towards solutions for supporting Ukrainian ECRs and the situation of the HEIs.

As researchers and academics, it is our responsibility to put focus on the role research and higher education must play in the recovery of Ukraine and in a democratic Europe. It also is our responsibility to advocate for high quality education for the generations of students to come and the needs of academic staff, in particular for **early career researchers as they will shape Ukrainian and European higher education for the coming decades.** These are the academics who are educating tomorrow's teachers, engineers, doctors etc. It is also this generation of academics who, as researchers, must address the economical, environmental, and societal challenges that Ukraine will face in the wake of the war. As was the case in the aftermath of WWII, society will need researchers from all disciplines: from the medical and natural sciences, to the social sciences and the arts and humanities to deal with the human catastrophes as well as to collaborate with society to shape the future.

In the €53 billion support to Ukraine by the EU, member states, and European Financial institutions so far, however, no money had been allocated for the Ukrainian higher education sector. A strong research and HE sector, however, is necessary in today's knowledge economy and will be important for a sustainable recovery after the war: In Ukraine, the war has caused a drop from 1.7% to only 0.4% of the GDP being allocated to research and higher education. For Ukraine to recover as a knowledge economy, its academia must receive the necessary support to retain the current generation of Ukrainian ECRs. We commend the mention of HEIs and research infrastructure in the European Commission's proposed Ukraine Facility. **With this visit, Eurodoc calls on Ursula Von der Leyen and EU ministers to equally allocate money to the Ukrainian research and higher education sector.**

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Eurodoc, the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers, is a grassroots federation of 25 national associations of early-career researchers (ECRs) from 23 countries across Europe. Eurodoc was established in 2002 and is based in Brussels. As a representative of doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level, Eurodoc engages with all major stakeholders in research and innovation in Europe.