



EURODOC'13

International Conference and Annual General Meeting

LISBON-PORTUGAL

Europe's Grand Societal Challenges

The Role of Early Stage Researchers

The working conditions of young researchers, their future perspectives and the role of scientific research in society were the main topics debated at the EURODOC'13 conference that took place at the Fundação Caloust Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal, between 4th and 5th of April, which hosted 300 researchers from different countries.

The event was jointly organised by EURODOC (The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers) and the Portuguese Association of the Grant-holding Researchers (ABIC- Associação dos Bolseiros de Investigação Científica), with the theme "Europe's Grand Societal Challenges: the role of Early Stage Researchers". The conference was opened by Slobodan Radicev, president of Eurodoc, and André Janeco, president of ABIC.

Members of EURODOC (35 national associations of doctorates and young researchers from 34 countries of the European Union and the Council of Europe) highlighted the economic situation in Europe, and the challenges that researchers, in the beginning of their career, have to face. Slobodan Radicev said that *"We have to fight for our rights and our role in and outside research institutions, no one else is going to do that for us. We need to take responsibility and give our maximum to make Europe and all European societies a better place for research and living."* André Janeco stressed the fact that this conference was held for the first time in Portugal, *"a country with its difficulties and its particularities in research, but also in economic, social and labour conditions"*. He expressed his hope that *"we can reinforce wider visions on justice and solidarity policies in Europe"*.

Based on these themes in mind, EURODOC'13 held four plenary sessions with distinguished speakers from various International, European and national organisations. The topics were:

- Plenary session I: The EU 2020 Framework Programmes for Research and Sustainable Innovation
- Plenary session II: Growing in a Healthy Environment: New trends in Research
- Plenary Session III: Working and research within the Framework of a Sustainable Society
- Plenary Session IV: Science, Communication and Social Change

Positive evaluation by participants

Feedback from the participants was very positive. One of the highlighted points was the relation between EUROPE 2020 and Horizon 2020 and the practical cases that reveal the societal challenges tackled by researchers. *"I liked, in a special way, that it was focused during the first day on the theoretical and political questions, and during the second day on the social aspects of our daily work as researchers"*, explained Catarina Costeira, PhD candidate from Portugal. The diversity of the themes analysed was also one of the aspects praised by the participants. *"They invited a lot of speakers with a large reputation and from different areas"*, said a PhD candidate representing Belgium. *"In this event we had the opportunity to discuss different topics. All of this brings an additional value to the conference"*, added a member from Macedonia. The precarious financial condition of some countries was also discussed during the two days of the event that combined, in the same place, different researchers from all over Europe. *"The divulgation of the problems that young researchers have to live with should be one of the aspects financed by European Union"*, said one Greek researcher. *"This event should happen more often"*, concluded a French researcher.

Annual General Meeting

At Eurodoc's Annual General Meeting, which took place on April 6-7, a new Eurodoc Board was elected. Slobodan Radicev (Serbia) was re-elected as President of Eurodoc, with the other positions being filled by Kristina Majsec (Vice-president - Croatia), John Peacock (Secretary - Belgium), Patrick Tuijpp (Treasurer - The Netherlands), and Jovan Shopovski (Macedonia), Marcin Styrna (Poland) and Ivo Neto (Portugal) as General Board Members.

In the upcoming year, the newly elected board will have its mission: strengthening the position of Eurodoc as a stakeholder in the European research area and higher education area; promoting the importance of the work of PhD candidates and young researchers for improvement of their social conditions; strengthening and reinforcing internal communication with individual volunteers and member associations, as well as institutional partners. The next international conference and annual general meeting, EURODOC'14, will be organized by DOSz (Doktoranduszok Országos Szövetsége) and hosted in Budapest, Hungary.



The European Council of Doctoral
Candidates and Junior Researchers

EURODOC background:

Eurodoc was founded in Girona (Spain) on 02/02/02. It 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. For general inquiries and more information about EURODOC please contact us at board@eurodoc.net. Please, visit us at: www.eurodoc.net.