



*»To advocate for positive change in the policies, culture, and environment that affect the quality of training, well-being, and employment conditions of early career researchers«*



**eurodoc**  
The European Council of Doctoral  
Candidates and Junior Researchers

# For early career researchers by early career researchers:

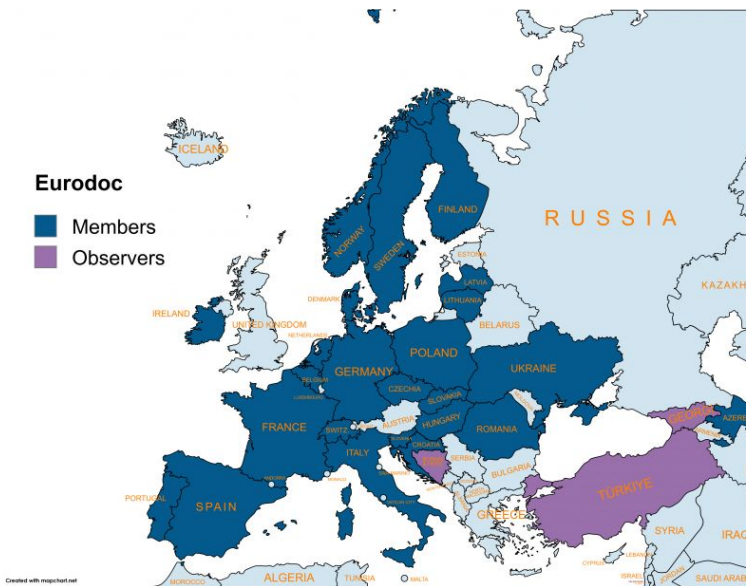
## The Eurodoc Ambassador Programme for Values and Democracy in European Research and Higher Education

**Presenter: Hannah Schoch, Eurodoc**

Authors: Pil Maria Saugmann, Hannah Schoch, Norbert Bencze, Karl Kilbo Edlund  
EUA-CDE Annual Meeting | June 5, 2025 | [valdem@eurodoc.net](mailto:valdem@eurodoc.net)



# Eurodoc



- The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (**Eurodoc**)
- A grassroots federation of **26 national associations** of early career researchers (ECRs) from **24 countries across Europe**
- **Established in 2002** and based in Brussels
- Eurodoc is run exclusively **for ECRs by ECR volunteers** in Europe



## Why are the EHEA Fundamental Values important?



Responses from participants in Group 2 of the ValDem Seminar 2, May 19, 2025



## Addressing the moment

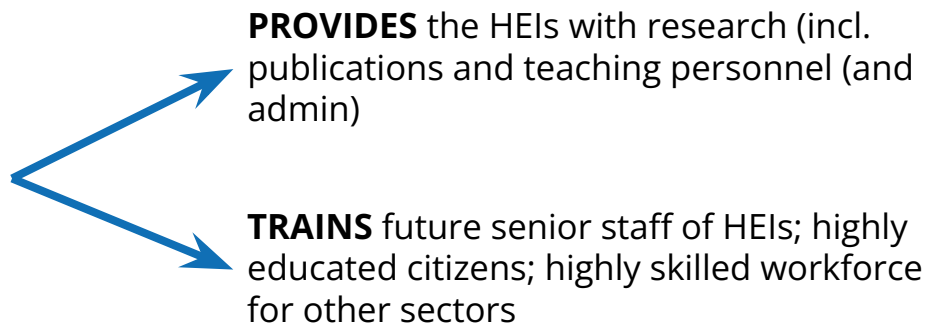
- **Democratic erosion and backsliding** across Europe and around the world
- Both **democracy** and many of the **EHEA fundamental values**, such as academic freedom and autonomy, **under threat across Europe & globally**
- **Democracy is never consolidated**, the processes of protecting and building it require **constant attention and investment**
- **Practical steps** to halt the slide towards authoritarianism
  - emphasis on factors that can be shaped by civil society groups
  - HE&R as a civil society actor
  - The HE&R community needs to protect our fundamental values



# The multiple roles of doctoral education

The university's 4 core tasks: **learning, teaching, research, outreach/democratic mission/third mission** (CoE, EHEA/BFUG)

**a research education:** centered on candidates' individual research projects and their contribution to furthering academic knowledge  
*(The Salzburg Principles, European University Association 2005)*





# The multiple roles of doctoral education

- Role of doctoral education **for the higher education system itself:**
  - Today's doctoral candidates are tomorrow's professors and academic leaders.
  - Doctoral education is the **meeting point for the ERA and the EHEA.**
  - Doctoral education is key for **how higher education shapes its own future.**
- Doctoral education is shaped by HEIs, but also significantly shapes them: potential to serve as an **effective lever for anchoring the democratic mission and the EHEA fundamental values.**



## EURODOC AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

### for Values and Democracy in European Higher Education

- For ECRs by ECRs: kicked off late spring 2025
- **anchor democracy and values** at the center of higher education and research
- **connect abstract ideas from policy and institutions** (civic and democratic mission of research and higher education) **with the people** who are doing the work on the ground
- crucial to ensure that **we as the academic community have a concrete, shared understanding**



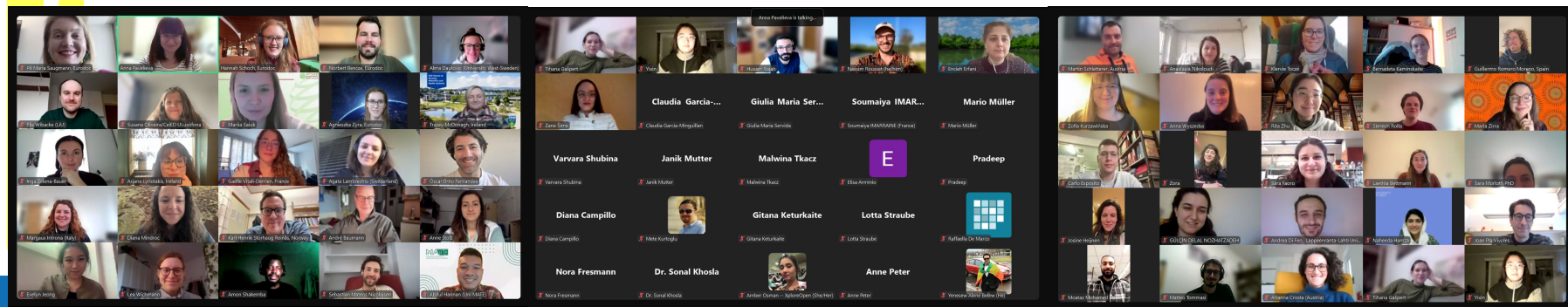


# EURODOC AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

## for Values and Democracy in European Higher Education



- PART I – THE DEMOCRATIC CONTEXT OF HE IN EUROPE
- PART II – EHEA FUNDAMENTAL VALUES
- PART III – INSTITUTIONS, LEGISLATIONS, AND QUESTIONS OF ALIGNMENT
- ca. 60 participants from 26 countries and from across all the disciplines





## PART I – THE DEMOCRATIC CONTEXT OF RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN EUROPE

- [1.1] Institutions for Democracy in Europe | Gerhard Ermischer (Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe)
- [1.2] Experts in Democracies | Lisa Herzog (U of Groningen)
- [1.3] The EHEA and the Democratic Mission | Paola Mattei (Uof Milan)
- [1.4] Higher Education and Civil Society Ronaldo Munck (Dublin City U)
- [1.5] Trust in Science | Agata Gurzawska (Verity Project)
- [1.6] Higher Education, Research, Culture and Human Rights | Helle Porsdam (U Copenhagen)

## PART II – EHEA FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

- [2.1] Academic Freedom | Liviu Matei (King's College)
- [2.2] Institutional Autonomy and the Role of Public Authorities | Peter Maassen (U of Oslo)
- [2.3] Academic Governance and Representational Rights Bjørn Stensaker (U of Oslo)
- [2.4] Ethics, Integrity and other Societal Expectations of Research(ers) | Tom Lindeman (ENRIO)
- [2.5] ALLEA Code of Conduct | Maura Hiney (ALLEA)
- [2.6] Higher Education in Europe: The Bologna Process and the EHEA Fundamental Values | Sjur Bergan (independent education expert, former Head of the Council of Europe's Education Depart.)

## PART III – INSTITUTIONS, LEGISLATIONS, AND QUESTIONS OF ALIGNMENT

- [3.1] The ERA and the EU Institutions and Legislations for Researchers
- [3.2] The Legislation for Academic Freedom | Olga Ceran, Vasiliki Kosta (U of Leiden)
- [3.3] The Council of Europe | Jelena Drca (Council of Europe)
- [3.4] UNESCO | Noah Sobe (Section for Higher Education, UNESCO)
- [3.5] Doctoral Education in the Bologna Process and the Salzburg Recommendations | Ann MacPhail and Peter Hanenberg (EUA-CDE)



## But does the system live up to the fundamental values?

Doctoral candidates and early career researchers can be empowered

- as drivers for the protection and promotion of the fundamental values of the European Higher Education Area and
- for the democratic mission of research and higher education in the present and the future.

However, **these fundamental values themselves**, especially academic freedom, participation in academic governance and institutional autonomy, **are not yet fully embedded in doctoral education.**

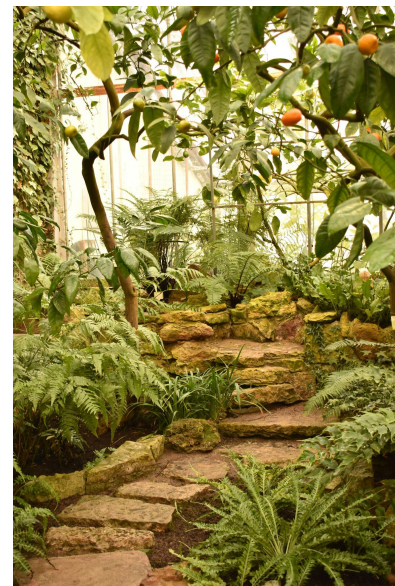


## Conclusion

- **Enable early career researchers** to deepen their understanding and to become **ambassadors for the democratic mission and the six EHEA fundamental values** of within their institutions, their research communities, and society: further education of ECRs as an important lever for the **present and future of academia**, as future senior faculty are current early career researchers
- **Public trust and a fruitful dialogue with society** can only take place if we **hold ourselves and our peers accountable** in terms of upholding the fundamental and democratic values, and we can only do so **if we are fully informed on the rights and responsibilities** such as academic freedom, research ethics, integrity, and participation in governance



# Thank you!



contact details course organisers: [valdem@eurodoc.net](mailto:valdem@eurodoc.net)

contact details Eurodoc: [board@eurodoc.net](mailto:board@eurodoc.net)