



## EURODOC 2004 QUESTIONNAIRE - ITALY

### **A. General information on doctoral programmes and doctoral candidates.**

**1. Please give a short overview of the structure of doctoral programmes in your country (number of people enrolled and graduated, other statistical data, recruitment method, skill development, ...). Consider that some topics will be discussed in detail in sections C and D.**

No changes with reference to 2003

**2. Taking into account the 2003 Eurodoc survey on the situation of ESR ([.pdf](#)), give an update of the conditions of doctoral candidates, trying to accomplish – if possible – for the existing variety of situations about funding, duties and rights, social security issues, ... (“new” countries are obviously invited to provide these data anew).**

No changes with reference to 2003

### **B. Current topics in Higher Education and Research policy.**

**1. What is the awareness of the “Bologna Process” in your country (see <http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/> for references)? Do you know that the doctoral level will be fully inserted at the third level of higher education? What are the consequences, in your association’s opinion?**

There is a general knowledge among researchers and academia faculty members. The general population is generally neither informed nor interested to Higher Education Matters.

**2. What is the awareness of the “Lisbon strategy” in your country (see [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/era/3pct/index\\_en.html](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/era/3pct/index_en.html) for references)? Is there any debate at the political level about Research&Development?**

Yes, there is a huge debate and recently both the Education Minister (Letizia Moratti) and the Prime Minister have been to TV shows where the University reform was debated. The Academia Establishment is not favourable to such reforms neither is ADI. The reform tries to push the tenure-track much later in the career development, while both ADI and several other unions are lobbying to have the job security as soon as possible. See <http://www.dottorato.it/postdoc/documenti/tabella.pdf>

**3. In general, what are the hottest topics (in HE and R&D) under discussion in your country, in particular affecting young researchers? What are the actions and plans of your association?**

Amount of postdoc grants (Most of them are a kind of contract called "Assegno di ricerca", which is neither a scholarship nor a contract). The University reform which the present Ministry is pushing forward; The reform of the public research institutes; The amount of public budget allocated to Research and Development, by far the lowest in Europe;

**C. PhD Supervision and Training.**

**1. Please give details (with web references if possible) of any standards that exist in your country as national (or local) guidelines for supervision and training. For example do you have a code of practice for research degrees or a charter? Are there any plans to introduce such standards if you do not have them? If your country does have any standards or appropriate documentation regarding research degree programmes, we would appreciate either an English translation or summary of any documentation (if it is large) you have. Do these standards include training for supervisors, the opportunity to change supervisor, have a second supervisor? Are there review methods for 2004 the supervisor and the PhD candidate?**

No changes with reference to 2003

**2. Please list no more than five key issues affecting the supervision and training of doctoral candidates in your country. As an example this may be the dominance of certain supervisors, no orientation course for early stage researchers to plan their work etc.**

There is no evaluation of supervision

**3. Do higher education institutions in your country have any specific training programme for research students at any point during their research programme? Is there any plan for introducing or modifying them? Please give details.**

There is no National Standard and both supervision and training varies a lot among individual Departments and Universities.

**D. International Mobility.**

**1. What is the situation about incoming and outgoing young researchers at the doctoral and postdoctoral level? Is there any debate in your country about "brain drain" and "brain gain"? Please provide data if available.**

There is a sharp negative balance between the outgoing and the incoming flux of researchers, only partly offset by the fact that Italy hosts a number of European

Institutions such as the European University Institute in Florence and ISPRA. The strongest fields in fact able to attract researchers from abroad are basic physics and history and arts. The incoming researchers are for two thirds from Europe, half of them from inside the European Union, mainly from Greece and Portugal, and the other half from European countries not (yet) members of the European Union. The outgoing researchers are heading to the north of Europe, UK and Germany leading the crowd and to the United States which is still a good mark on your CV if you decide to come back.

The brain drain has been on the political agenda for some years now, Thanks to, among other things, a book edited by ADI entitled "Cervelli in fuga" And the Nobel to an Italian astronomer working in the United States. The way the actual government has tried to reverse or, at least plug the drain are more a patchwork implemented more to show that the government is doing something. There are no return packages for those expatriates and foreigners will have to apply in person, in Italian to whatever position they might be interested in.

See the paper: Brandi Carolina, Cerbara Loredana, "High Skilled Migrants Inflows and Outflows in Italy", ESRM 2004, Lisbon, 25-27 February 2004

## **2. What is the current situation of recognition of academic degrees and titles earned abroad? Do you have any “joint degree programmes” for European or international Ph.D.s?**

The problem is twofold: On the one hand, there is the need to recognition of a degree in order to gain access to the next level of higher education. On the other hand, there is the need to the recognition of a degree to get a job. The main degree, in Italy, is called "Laurea" and is roughly at the same level of the master (the 2+3 of the Bologna process). This degree is both an academic degree and a professional one. There are Job positions reserved to the holder of such degree. This is known as "Legal value" of the degree. A commission evaluate each application on a case by case basis in order to have a foreign degree recognised at the same value of our "Laurea". Doctors don't have such a problem since the doctoral degree has not "legal value". Indeed there are doctoral degrees earned in co-tutorship between institutions, mainly universities, from different member states of the European Union.

## **3. What are the five most important obstacles that, according to your organization, burdens young researchers mobility?**

Language - all the paperwork must be in Italian and still only few people can speak fluent English; Visa for those coming outside the European Union (even for those coming (back) from the United States) Accessibility / amount of grants; Culture - Italian society is still very rooted to the family origin; Degree recognition - Especially for those trying to pursue a doctoral degree in Italy.

## **E. Professional Future.**

**1. What are the perspectives for the employment of young researchers in Universities and research institutes? Are there any specific programs or initiative for recruitment? What does your national association suggest in order to improve the current situation?**

No changes with reference to 2003

**2. Are there any programs to promote the collaboration between academia and industry? Are there any programs provided by the government to support the employment of young researchers in the private sector? What is the view of your national association about these programs?**

No changes with reference to 2003

**3. In general, what are the career prospects and salary conditions for researchers, related with other professions?**

New graduates, especially at the doctoral level, still seek to work at University since, on the long run, it is thought to give more money, more job security, more freedom, prestige and power than any other job outside academia. For an idea of the comparative salaries, please see <http://www.dottorato.it/postdoc/documenti/tabella.pdf>

## **F. Gender Equality.**

**1. What is the situation in your country about social rights for maternity/paternity leave for early stage researchers, and for experienced researchers?**

Although this is not really a gender issue, those living on a grant have seldom employment rights, including parental leave. You hit the jackpot when, passing an official selection called "concorso" you get a tenure track or a full time employment. As a civil servant you have a lot more rights than the average worker at any industry.

**3. What does your association think about the necessity of taking into account family issues in the career of a researcher, whereas scientific production is often seen only from the "quantitative" side?**

Once upon a time, at the very beginning of the association, a working group was established to take care of the gender issue. It dried up after an exceptionally short time due to lack of work to do. It looks like there is not a sensible gender issue in Italy. As a matter of fact, there are more female doctoral students than male. The balance shift sharply to the male advantage as the seniority increases (and age as well). This seems to be due to the fact that the society at large expect a woman to choose the family over the career. As well as the same society expects a man to choose the career over the family. Luckily this is less so with the younger generations.

**G. General discussion.**

**Which are the ideas your association would like to put forward for EURODOC policy in 2004?**

Recognition of degree and harmonisation of academic training in Europe;  
More transparent and international rules for academic recruitment.