

Thesis e.V. – German Network  
of Young Scientists

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## Statement on the Charter & Code labeling process

THESIS is convinced that the widespread recognition of the Charter & Code will improve the working conditions for doctoral researchers and junior researchers in Europe and welcomes the current discussion about the modalities of the labeling process. We support the idea of keeping the labeling process non-bureaucratic and simple in order to maximize the number of institutions subscribing to the C&C. We embrace the plan to attach a strong role to self-monitoring, while we also agree that external monitoring at some later point in time is indispensable so as to have the state of the implementation reviewed by an independent body. Young scientists should be involved in the evaluation process to enhance the quality of the conditions. An option could be that young scientists write a report

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from their point of view about the conditions for young scientists at their institute during the evaluation process.

In our view, the success of the C&C crucially depends on the transparency of the implementation process. Transparency and regular self-assessments will be a valuable guide for doctoral researchers and junior scientists in assessing the conditions for the conduct of research and the pursuit of their scientific careers at specific research institutions. Therefore, we consider it essential to make the gap analysis and the yearly self-assessments public on the website of the institution and the European Researcher's Mobility Portal.

We deem it necessary to open the labeling process for all kinds of research institutions (university, extra-university, scholarship organizations etc.) in order to improve the working conditions in science on a broad basis. In particular, we hope that widespread recognition of the C&C will change the situation of granting doctoral researchers scholarships and stipends without paying social security and health assurance. We strongly agree with the C&C in pointing out that doctoral researchers should be treated as professionals. Under the current conditions (in Germany), the pursuit of a scientific career goes along with many uncertainties, particularly because of the lack of tenure-track positions for junior researchers. The replacement of regular labor contracts by scholarships will further diminish the attractiveness of a scientific career and many high-talented young people will decide against it if health insurance and social security are not paid.

Furthermore, young scientists should have the option to work at the institute and to interact with their colleagues at the institute. Building networks, attending conferences and holding speeches about the thesis are essential for young scientists to enhance their competences and faculties. The institutes should support such activities as a part of academic work by financing it. This includes

the option to teach, because some German institutes try to prevent teaching of doctoral researchers, although teaching is an important experience and faculty. On the other side, teaching and other responsibilities “should not be excessive and should not prevent researchers, particularly at the beginning of their careers, from carrying out their research activities” (European Charter for Researchers 2005, p. 21) and writing the thesis.

For these reasons, we encourage the working group to agree on a labeling process that ensures widespread acceptance of the C&C among a wide array of research institutions.

Reference:

European Charter for Researchers 2005:

[http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/pdf/am509774CEE\\_EN\\_E4.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/pdf/am509774CEE_EN_E4.pdf)