



### **New project:**

## **« Accountable Research Environments for Doctoral Education » (ARDE)**

In October 2010, the European University Association (EUA) and its partners, University College Cork (UCC), Universities Austria (UNIKO) and the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (CRASP), launched a new project entitled "Accountable Research Environments for Doctoral Education (ARDE)".

The role of doctoral education is crucial to the creation of the EHEA and the ERA. It serves as a bridge between higher education and the research area and prepares the researchers that will continue to forge the European knowledge society. Over the last decade, European universities have carried out major reforms in the field of doctoral education, establishing structured programmes and doctoral schools in an effort to provide more transparency and better support for their doctoral candidates. This project will seek to examine European doctoral programmes in order to gather information about existing structures, good practice and areas of concern in assuring and enhancing quality in doctoral education.

Despite the substantial reforms that have taken place in doctoral education in recent years and the fact that many would argue that there are fundamental differences between the QA developed for the first and second cycle and that for doctoral education, the means of enhancing accountability in this area have not yet been addressed systematically. The aim of this project is to begin this discussion with a survey followed by a consultation process consisting of a series of focus group sessions and an online discussion forum.

The results of this process will be presented in a final report and disseminated widely across European universities and to stakeholders such as funding organisations and decision makers at national and European levels.

Giving an overview and raising awareness of these issues will be central to the continued improvement of doctoral education. Establishing tools to enhance transparency and accountability is essential to the internal development of these programmes as well as to the implementation of the universities' research strategies. The impact of this project will therefore be of great importance to individual universities as well as to the research strategy of the EU as a whole.

### **The ARDE survey will be launched in February 2011**

For any questions or further information on the ARDE project, please contact Joanne Byrne ([Joanne.Byrne@eua.be](mailto:Joanne.Byrne@eua.be)).

