Career Tracking: why, for whom and how?

- the European Platform for Career Tracking and Monitoring

Laura Marin

Senior Science Officer, European Science Foundation

International Symposium on Tracking Careers of Doctoral Graduates, Tokyo, 27 February 2013
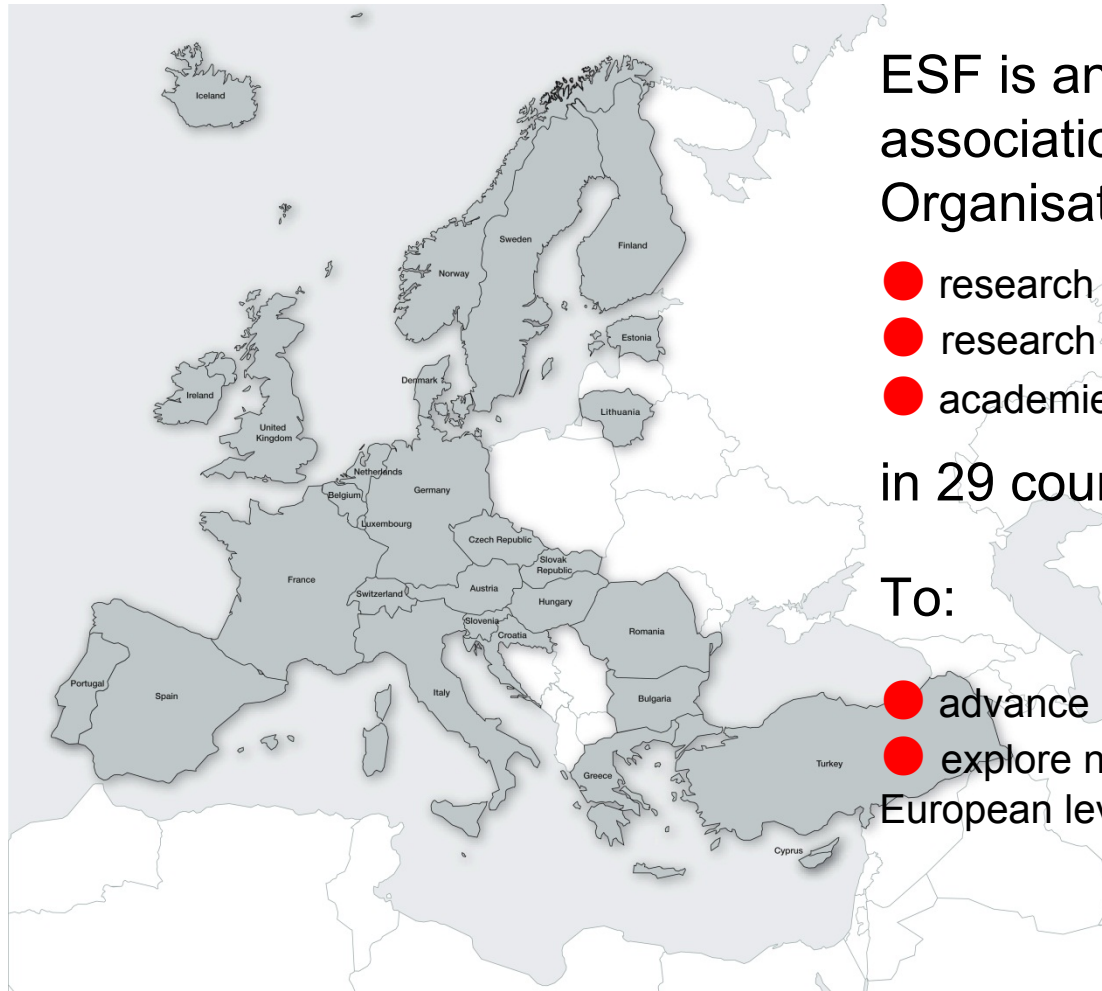
Presentation outline

- About ESF

- ESF Member Organisation Forum on Research Career Development

- European efforts on Research Career Tracking
  - Initiatives
  - Rationale of Research Career Tracking in Europe

- Development of a European Platform for Career Tracking and monitoring

- Next steps

About European Science Foundation

ESF is an independent association of 67 Member Organisations

🔴 research funding organisations
🔴 research performing organisations
🔴 academies and learned societies

in 29 countries

To:

🔴 advance European research
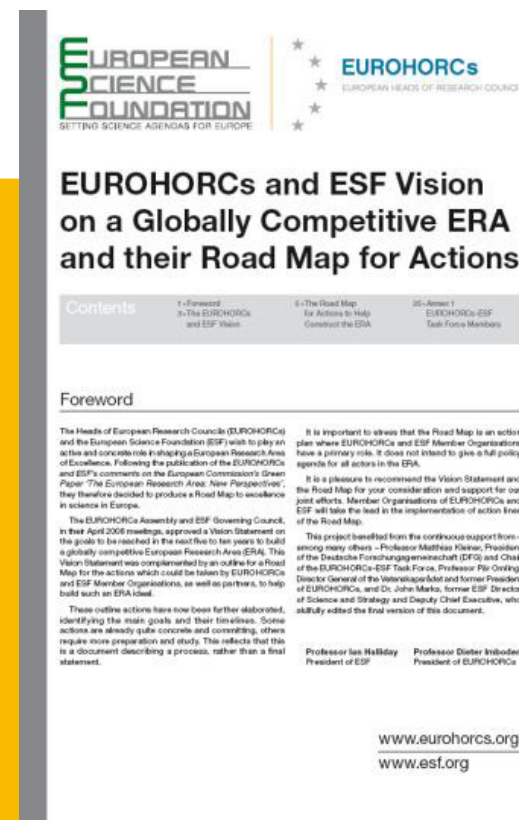🔴 explore new directions for research at the European level

ESF Member Organisation Fora
& the ERA Road Map Actions

Science Policy and Strategy

➤ *Published in 2009*

➤ *10 Actions:*

1. Strengthen the **relations** between **science, society and the private sector**
2. Promote **European research careers**
3. Develop **scientific foresight** for **joint strategy**
4. Create a **European Grant Union**
5. Address **peer review** of proposals
6. Develop common approaches to **ex-post evaluation**
7. Create **ERA Connect** and **Regional Clusters of Excellence**
8. Develop shared funding and exploitation of **research infrastructure**
9. Implement common policy on **Open Access**
10. Connect **European research to the world**

EUROHORCs

EUROHORCs and ESF Vision on a Globally Competitive ERA and their Road Map for Actions

Contents

Foreword

www.eurohorcs.org
www.esf.org

ESF Member Organisation Fora: committees to address the Roadmap actions

- **Output-oriented strategy platforms for Member Organisations to develop joint actions on specific issues, involving others as appropriate**

- **To contribute to strategy development and/or lead to the development of**
  - Good practice
  - Common procedures
  - Joint activities

- **Recent results:**
  - European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity
  - European Peer Review Guide
  - Developing Research Careers in and Beyond Europe

► *www.esf.org/mo-fora*

MO Forum *European Alliance on Research Career Development (2009-2013)*

Aim

Adopt a common strategy to ensure the attractiveness of research careers in Europe

Focus

- New concepts of mobility
- Skills development
- Career tracking

Participation

21 member organisations (European national Research Councils) from 19 countries, 7 Observers: European Commission, ERC, EUA, LERU, Foundation for Polish Science, ALLEA, Vitae

www.esf.org/EARCD

Developing Research Careers In and Beyond Europe:
Enabling – Observing – Guiding and Going Global

A Report by the ESF Member Organisation Forum 'European Alliance on Research Career Development' (EARCD)
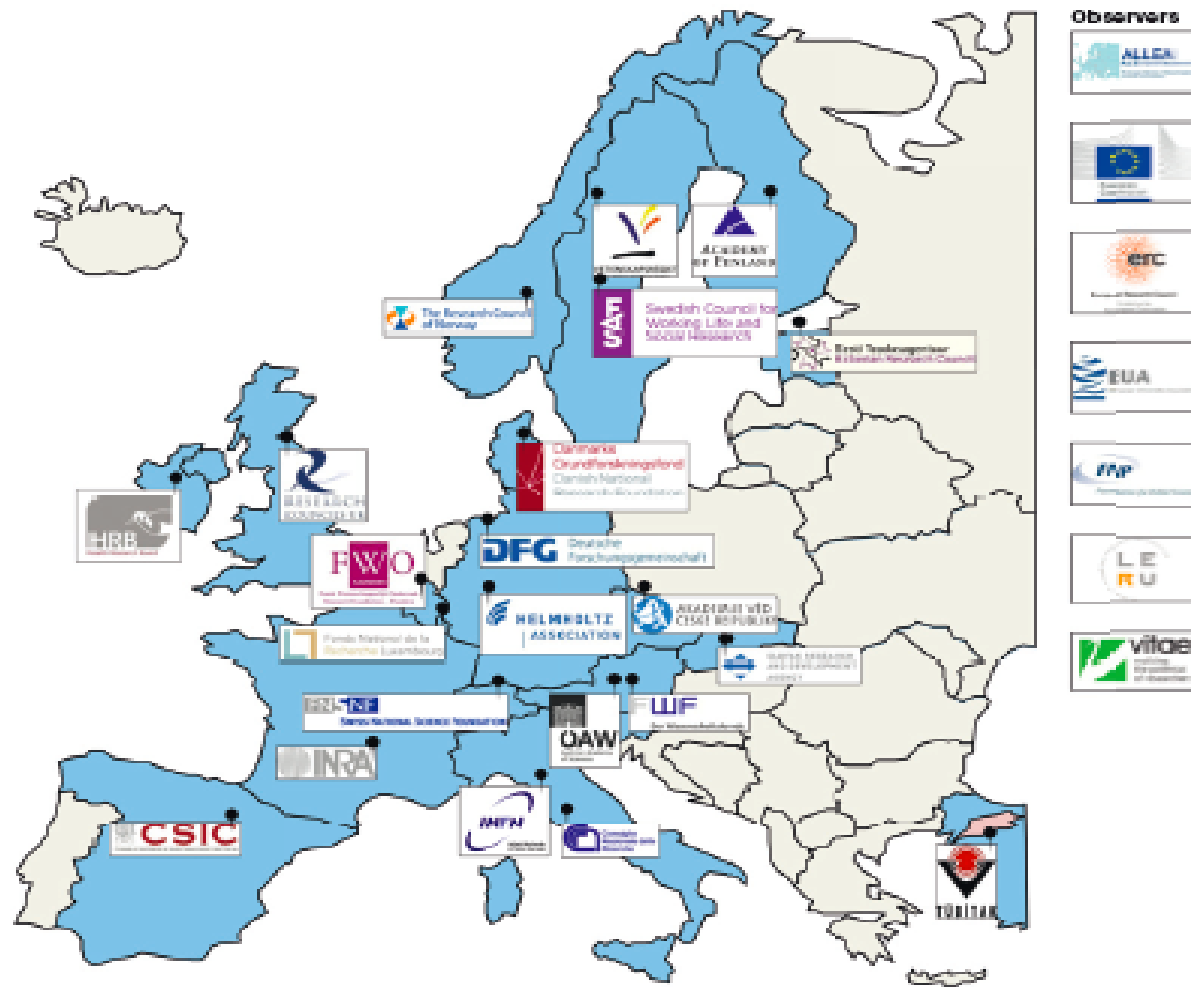
MO Forum *European Alliance on Research Career Development – December 2013*

Focus areas & key recommendations

- Enabling: creating a European Researcher Development Framework

- Observing: setting up an International Platform for Researcher Career Tracking & Monitoring

- Guiding: establishing guidelines to acknowledge new concepts of researcher mobility (international, intersectoral, interdisciplinary, virtual)

- Going Global: working towards a Global Forum for Research Career Development
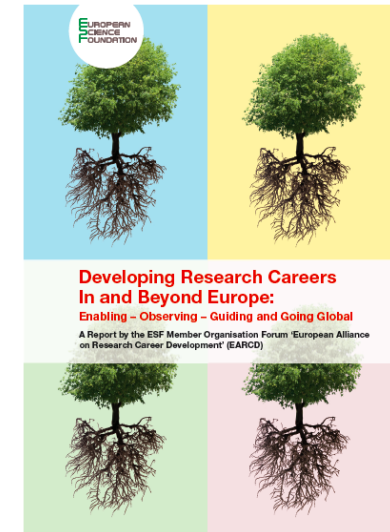
www.esf.org/EARCD

European efforts (1)
The Forum's Survey – 2011

The questionnaire

- Addressing major fields of activities
  – Taxonomy, <u>career tracking</u>, continuous professional skills development, mobility, peer review & portfolio careers

The participants

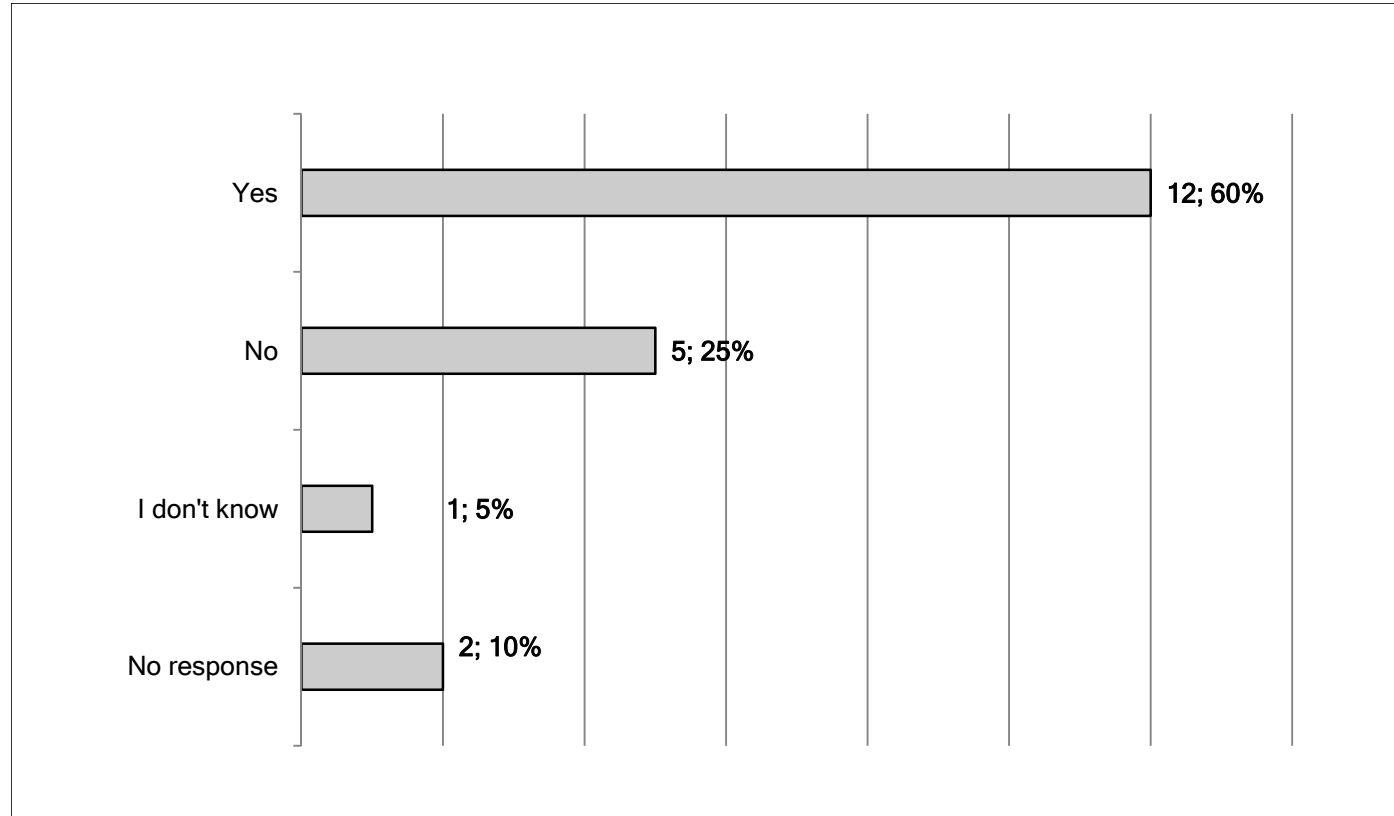- 20 organisations from 17 countries across Europe

Report January 2012

http://www.esf.org/fileadmin/links/cssd/mo_fora/careers/MOF_RC_surveyreport_final.pdf

European Alliance on Research Career Development

A Survey Analysis by the ESF Member Organisation Forum
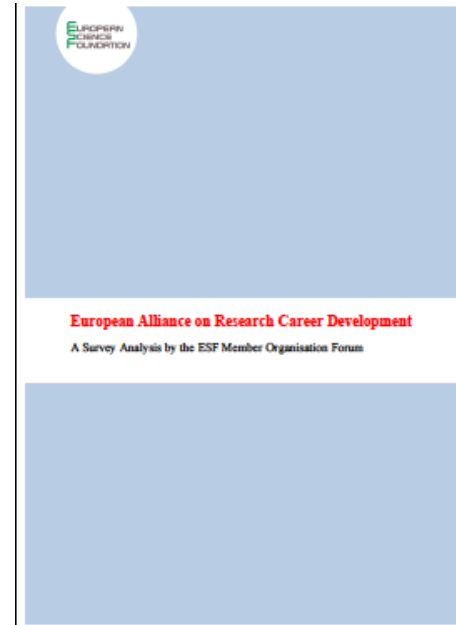
Career tracking

Earlier experience in career tracking of researchers

|	
Yes	12; 60%
No	5; 25%
I don't know	1; 5%
No response	2; 10%

But: Do all have a common understanding of career tracking?

Distinctive features of career surveys

- **Researchers' career stages**
  - E.g. doctorate holders, senior researchers

- **Level of analysis**
  - National or organisational level

- **Types of studies**
  - E.g. programme evaluation, monitoring

- **Methodology**
  - E.g. survey, database analysis

→ No common understanding of career tracking

→ Some refer rather to monitoring

Awareness of good practice in career tracking of researchers

Yes — 6; 30%

No — 12; 60%

No response — 2; 10%
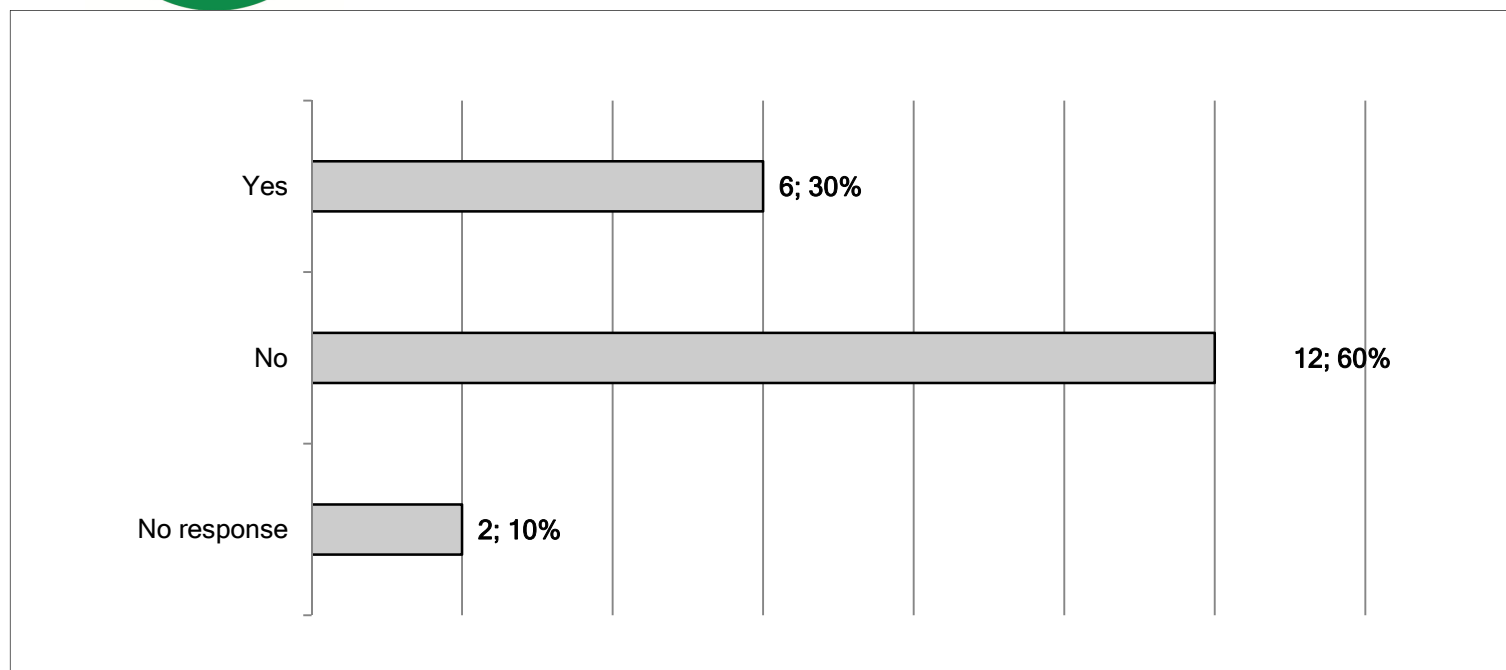
Examples

- Centre on R&D monitoring, branch at Ghent University

- Panel survey by Institut für Forschungsinfomation & Qualitätssicherung

- OECD CDH, VITAE, EUA

Career tracking: plans & motivation for setting up own systems

Yes — 11; 55%
No — 3; 15%
I don't know — 4; 20%
No response — 2; 10%
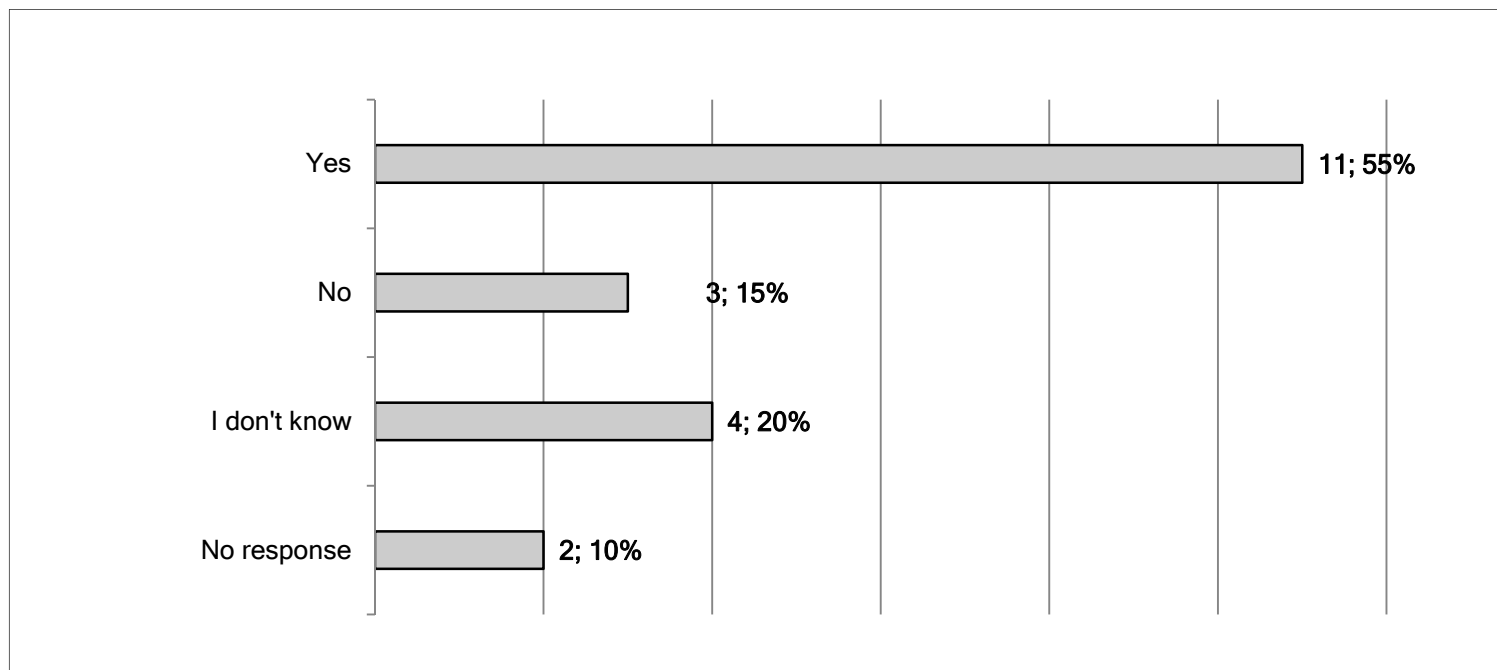
N = 20

Motivation

• Career tracking as tool to measure impact & success
   – Funding or qualification schemes (RPOs)

Forum's Survey conclusions

Researchers' career stages

- Mostly doctorate holders

Level of analysis

- National or organisational level

Types of studies

- E.g. programme evaluation, monitoring

Methodology

- E.g. survey, database analysis

➔ No common understanding of career tracking

➔ Some refer rather to monitoring

➔ Common denominator missing

European efforts (2)
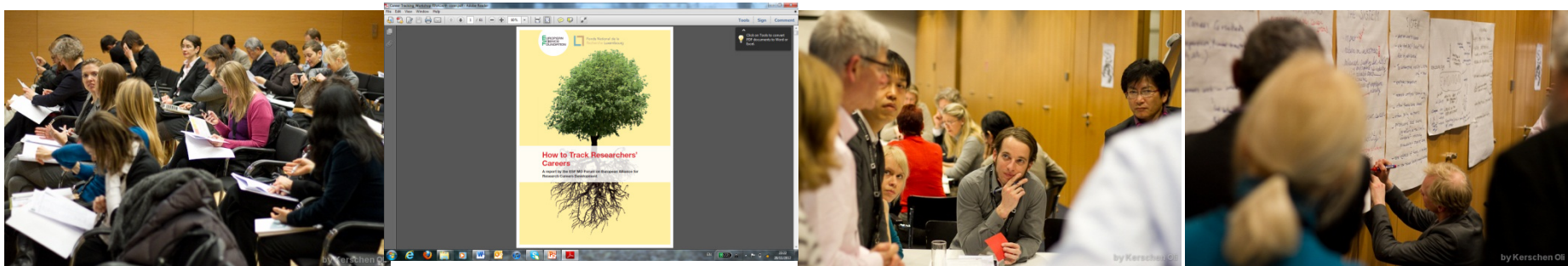
International Workshop:

"How to Track Researchers' Careers", Luxembourg, 9-10 Feb.12

http://www.researcherscareers.eu

Over 100 participants from Europe, Asia, Africa, US

- a mix of theory and practice through presenting career tracking initiatives, their methodologies and major findings,

- a forum of learning how to set up a tracking of doctorate holders / researchers in a funding agency, university, region or country.

Workshop discussion:
Typologies of Career Tracking at different institutional level

International undertakings: OECD CDH

Large-scale national initiatives

UK 'Where do researchers go'; German 'ProFile'

Register/Administrative Data: examples from Flanders, Denmark, Norway

Institutional Initiatives

Wellcome Trust (UK); CIFRE Fellowships (FR); FWO Senior Researchers Survey (BE); Alexander Von Humboldt Alumni Survey (DE); European University Association (International/IT)

University pan –European initiative

EUA TRACKIT 2010-2012

www.eua.be/trackit

Workshop
Practical Recommendations

- Researchers' & PhD holders Tracking Studies should complement national Statistics or Data Registers

- Avoidance of Duplication of Data Collection

- Complementarity of Tracking Studies, Programme Evaluations & Indicator based follow-up

- Career Tracking helps identifying Systemic Weaknesses

- Choice of Purpose(s) & Scope of a Tracking Study essential before Start

- Terminological and Methodological Concerns, integrating New Approaches (CV depositories; Social Media, etc)

- **International Platform promoting researchers' career tracking, career surveys and career monitoring**
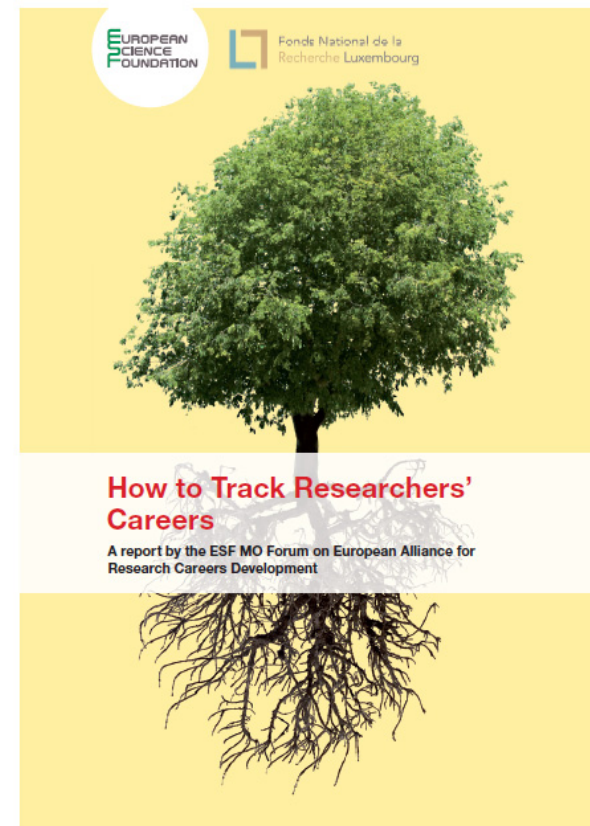
Report main conclusions and recommendations:
Rationale of Research Career Tracking

Why, for Whom and How is a specific Career Tracking Study set up?

Workshop Report: How to Track Researchers' Careers

www.esf.org/EARCD

How to Track Researchers' Careers

A report by the ESF MO Forum on European Alliance for Research Careers Development

Report main conclusions and recommendations:
Rationale of Research Career Tracking (1)

Why and For Whom? Stakeholders benefits

Research funders / policymakers:

- Impact: What is the true value of a PhD? (compared e.g. to a masters)
- Accountability
  - o Inform about policy and practice
  - o Inform about outcome of career funding schemes and impact of doctoral programmes in view of their mission and objectives
  - o Identify the effect of (non) funding
  - o Justify public investment in doctoral training
  - o Awareness raising/communication about benefits of research careers
- Enhance effectiveness and efficiency
- Structural approach to research careers and the labour market for researchers: capacity building according to supply/demand
- Understand and enable different forms of mobility
- Policy planning

Report main conclusions and recommendations:
Rationale of Research Career Tracking (2)

Why and For Whom? Stakeholders benefits

Research performing organisations / universities:

- Creating transparency and know-how about institutional workforce, jobs and career paths
- Career development
- Institutional competitiveness/profiling the institution
- Inter-institutional/inter-sector collaborations and networks

Individual researchers

- Provide career orientation and information on career destinations, programmes etc.
- Job satisfaction
- Demonstrate attractiveness of research career/perception of quality of career
- Understand the motivation to engage in doctoral training
- Realising the broad variety of successful careers – not just in academia.

Developing Guidelines: Setting up a Career Tracking Study

HOW?

Definition of the Scope, Implementation Strategy and Methodology

Phases of the Implementation Process of a career tracking study

Phase 1 Study Design	Phase 2 Carry out Study	Phase 3 Ressults & Dissemination

Feedback   Loop
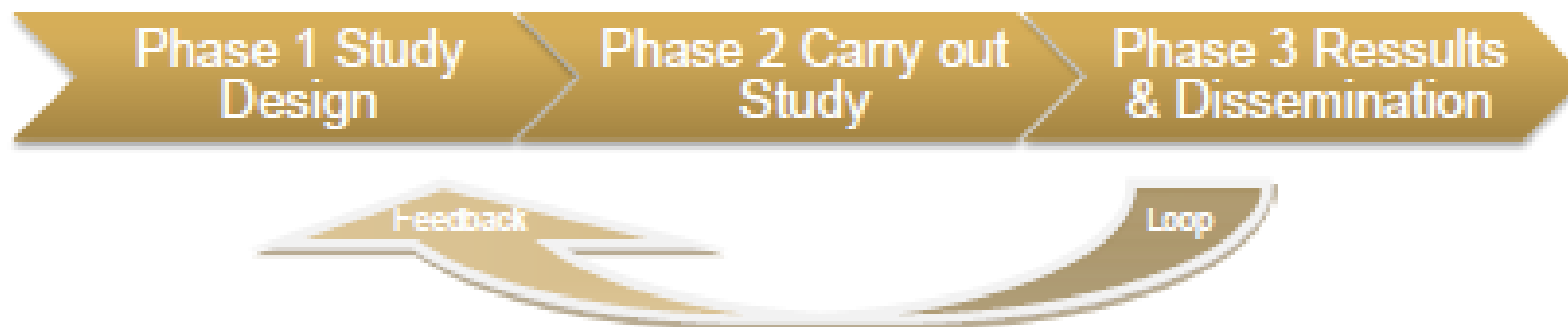
Workshop
Recommendations

Way forward

➢**International Platform promoting researchers' career tracking, career surveys and career monitoring**

"Imagine a Europe in which we know the career trajectories of the many you PhD and Postdocs that we fund. Imagine being able to correct the imbalance between opportunities for young researchers in private sector and the relative paucity of positions in academic settings"
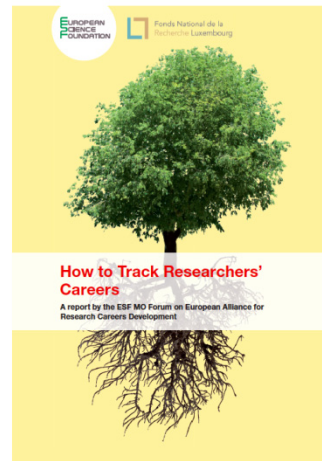
European efforts (3) Ways forward/1

Joint initiative to promote career tracking across Europe

- Achieve a coherent approach across Europe (& beyond): Establishing a **Dialogue**

- Set up an open **platform**
  - Involvement of different stakeholders: why? for whom? how?
  - New approaches to tracking
  - Monitoring of research careers
  - Use of novel technologies & social media

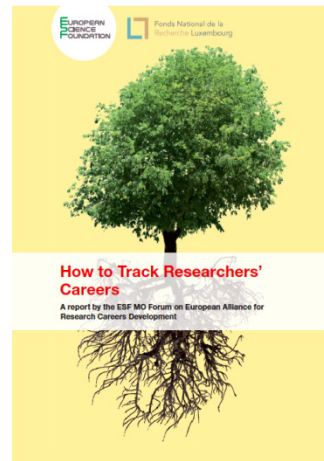- Vision: develop a Career Observatory
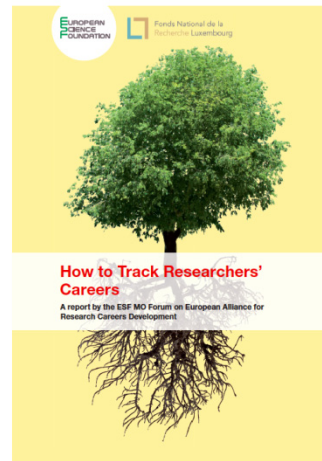
Ways forward/2

Joint initiative to promote career tracking across Europe

- **Purposes**
  - Tracking the quality of research training and skills
  - Tracking to find out where researchers move in their careers
  - Tracking for accountability & impact assessment

Ways forward/3

Joint initiative to promote career tracking across Europe

- Modular approach: **elements**

  – Repository of data & good practice models

  – Provide **orientation** on how to conduct a career tracking study: Manual on how to conduct career tracking surveys efficiently

  – Tool box/ Manual

  – **Pilot study** based on a mixed methods approach, using questionnaire modules and defining a minimal 'core' questionnaire

  – **Build a data-portal** as a decentralised information source, giving access to national/supranational data sources

Next steps:

- Needs analysis: February 2013
- European Expert Workshop: London, 22 March, 2013
- International Workshop: Oslo, May 2013
  "Developing Research Careers In and Beyond Europe"
  www.esf.org/oslo-workshop
- Start of the pilot projects
- Develop common methodology / manual: autumn 2013

More info:

www.esf.org/EARCD

Acknowledgements: in collaboration with Ulrike Kohl and Beate Scholz