

Researchers' Experience and Wellbeing: The European University Institute

Introduction:

Mental health is defined by the World Health Organization as a “state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her abilities, can cope with normal stress of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”¹

Studies conducted among graduate students in the United Kingdom by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, Yale University, UC Irvine and UC Berkeley identify graduate students as a population at a higher risk of developing mental health difficulties or problems due to the level of stress magnified by; relative isolation, intense academic pressure, family and financial obligations.² This assessment is also confirmed by the internal reports presented by the EUI counsellors to the Doctoral Programme Committee at the EUI in 2008 and 2010.³ If ignored, an eventual deterioration of the state of mental health among graduate students may distress the general wellbeing of the university community, slow academic progress and reduced academic productivity.

The Researchers' Experience and Wellbeing survey at the EUI was designed to assess the mental health needs and concerns of doctoral researchers with a view to sustaining a high level of the research-students' support system and developing an EUI-strategy to improve the wellbeing and mental health facilities at the Institute. Academic Service and the office of the Dean of Studies conducted the first Researchers' Experience and Wellbeing Survey over the month of October 2010.

Method of survey:

The survey was conducted on-line and based on a questionnaire developed and administered by a team of researchers at UC Berkeley on behalf of the Graduate Assembly in 2004.⁴

¹ “Mental Health in the EU: Key Facts, Figures and Activities;” Support Project, Directorate-General for Health and Consumers, Brussels, 13 June 2008.

² Brandes, Lisa; “Graduate Students Mental Health Issues at Yale University;” A presentation at the 2008 Meeting, Canadian Association of Graduate Schools, Alberta; 2008.

³ Soboul, Katia and Bernadette Van Boxel; “EUI Counselling Service Report;” 2008/9.

⁴ Hyun, Jenny K, Brian C Quinn, Temina Madon, and Steve Lustig, “Graduate Student Mental Health: needs Assessment and Utilization of Counselling Services;” *Journal of College Student Development*; May/June 2006.

Academic service and the Dean of Studies retained that conducting a parallel survey at the EUI would produce indicative results that could be analysed in a comparative perspective. The Office of the Dean of Studies obtained the permission of the UC Berkeley research team to use their survey instrument and adopted it to fit the context of the institute.

The questionnaire was sent by email to EUI researchers, accompanied by a message from the Dean of Studies explaining the objectives of the survey and assuring that results would be strictly anonymous and data would be collected and analysed on an aggregate basis. Researchers were invited to answer only those questions with which they felt comfortable and were informed that they could refuse to answer any or all of the questions.

The survey addresses the following issues:

- Researchers' self-reported mental health needs and concerns
- Knowledge and utilization of the EUI Counselling service
- The Climate in the Academic Departments
- Researchers' demographic characteristics

Participants:

The questionnaire was addressed to six-hundred and five (605) EUI researchers (589 doctoral researchers and 16 LLM students) with active student status (first to fifth year) in October 2010.

The return rate for the survey, which featured a series of highly personal questions, is 52% (313 out of 605)-- elsewhere the response rate of this type of survey barely reached what has been seen as the critical 33% benchmark.

The response population is representative of the total researchers' population in terms of; gender, academic department and citizenship. It can also be considered more or less representative in terms of academic year of registration, even though second, third and fourth-year researchers are slightly over-represented among respondents. This may be explained by the fact that first-year researchers had been registered at the EUI for only one month and therefore felt less involved in campus activities at the time. The same applies to fifth-year researchers, who do not have residence obligation and therefore project themselves beyond their EUI experience.

Mean age of respondents: 69% are between 26-30 years & 12% are younger than 25.

Male / female: 49% Vs 51% compared to actual 55% (males) to 45% (females)

<u>Academic department</u>	<u>Actual %</u>	<u>Survey respondents' %</u>
Economics	20%	15%
History and Civilization	27%	25%
Law	30%	30%
Political & Social Sciences	26%	30%

<u>Academic year:</u>	<u>Actual %</u>	<u>Survey respondents' %</u>
First year	21%	11,81%
Second year	23%	26,57%
Third year	22%	28,41%
Fourth year	18%	23,99%
Fifth year	15%	9,23%

Data Analysis:

1. Researchers' self reported mental health needs and concerns:

More than half (53%) of the respondents reported emotional or stress-related problems over the previous year. Another 76% reported having a colleague with an emotional or stress-related problem over the last 12 months.

Significant differences in self-reported emotional or stress-related problems result between males and females, as well as among researchers from different academic departments and year of registration.

Females report a higher percentage of perceived emotional or stress related problems (61%), compared to males (44%). In addition, 10% of females reported that during the past year, they frequently or all the time felt so depressed that it was difficult to function, against 7% of males.

Gender Differences:

Perceived need	EUI Survey	UC-Berkley survey⁵
Males reporting emotional stress	44%	39%
Females reporting emotional stress	61%	52%
Males seeking help	10%	39%
Females seeking help	26%	63%

First-year researchers (the 2010 cohort) reported lower levels of stress (34%) than the other cohorts (ranging from 51% to 60%). We need to bear in mind that first-year researchers were reporting on their experience during the past 12 months, i.e. before joining EUI.

The level of stress among researchers from the same academic department ranged from 45% in ECO, to 47% in LAW, 54% in HEC and 57% in SPS.

Researchers who retain they have poor linguistic skills report higher levels of stress (60%) compared to those who believe they have good linguistic skills (52%).

Even though the perception of the level of stress is high among EUI researchers, the percentages of self-reported mind-sets that are considered to be the components of the 'depression index'⁶ are low compared to those reported by the UC Berkley survey respondents in 2004.

Perceived state of mind (frequently or all the time)	EUI Survey	UC-Berkeley survey
In the past 12 months, have you had an emotional or stress-related problem that significantly affected your well being and/or academic performance?	53%	45%
Felt things were <i>hopeless</i>	15%	67%
Felt <i>overwhelmed</i> by all you had to do	28%	46%
Felt so depressed that it was <i>difficult to function</i>	8%	54%
Felt <i>exhausted</i> (not from physical activity)	30%	42%

⁵ "Student Mental Health Committee: Final Report;" Office of the President, University of California, September 2006.

⁶ Hyun, Jenny K, Brian C Quinn, Temina Madon, and Steve Lustig, "Graduate Student Mental Health: needs Assessment and Utilization of Counselling Services;" *Journal of College Student Development*; May/June 2006.

Felt *very sad* 18% 19%

40% of EUI researchers state that they thought about using mental health services (counsellors, social services or psychiatrists) in the past year. 17% of researchers report having used EUI counselling services with a satisfaction rate of 85% and 14% report having used off-campus counselling with a satisfaction rate of 79%.

Personal, emotional and relationship issues are reported to be the major reasons why researchers may seek help (45%), followed by academic (28%), career (12%), financial (9%) and transition issues (8%). Less than 1% of researchers reported seeking help for sexual identity issues.

Reasons for seeking help	EUI Survey	UC-Berkley survey
Academic problems	21%	33%
Emotional problems	28%	50%
Career problems	12%	25%
Financial problems	9%	14%
Relationship problems	17%	31%
Transition problems	10%	not available
Sexual identity	0.8%	2%

Conducting the survey during the month of October allowed a fresh insight on the state of mental health among the researchers in the first year of studies at the EUI, since the questions asked respondents to describe and report on their concerns and needs during the past 12 months. Therefore, respondents who are currently second-year researchers, reported on their first-year experiences. Having said that, we see that the highest percentage of researchers who report to have thought about using mental health service in the past year is among current second year researchers (46%), followed by third and fourth-year researchers (41% and 43%).

2. Knowledge and utilization of the EUI Counselling Service

The Counselling Service started its activities in 2006. The service is composed of three part-time counsellors hired for a total of nine hours per week. The Service provides, free-of-charge, short-term counselling for researchers, partners and staff members.

The survey confirms the high awareness of the counselling services at the EUI (95%) and a high level of satisfaction with the on-campus services (85%). In fact, the respondents expressed higher satisfaction with EUI counselling services than with off-campus services. However, it is also important to contemplate on the additional comments and suggestions of researchers with regard to mental health services at the EUI. Many respondents pointed out the need to *improve access and information about medical services in Florence* in addition to mental health. Others requested extending the counselling services hours and range of services.

Assessment	EUI Survey	UC-Berkeley survey
Awareness of the Counselling Service	95%	76%
Considered using Counselling	40%	50%
Using the on campus counselling service	17%	31%
Using off-campus counselling	14%	11%
Satisfaction with on-campus counselling service	85%	75%

Almost one third (28%) of respondents state that they learned about the counselling services at the EUI during the September meetings with Academic Service and the Dean of Studies, followed by the EUI web site (21%), EUI faculty or administrative staff (15%), friends (13%) and counselling service flyers available on campus (11%).

Respondents, who reported being aware of the counselling services at the EUI but chose not to use them, gave the following reasons for their decision:

1. No need for counselling (41%)
2. Confidentiality concerns (17%)
3. Perceived lack of quality (10%)

4. Lack of time (7%)
5. Stigma (5%)
6. Perceived costs (4%)
7. Inconvenient location (4%)

26 % of female researchers reported using the EUI counselling service and consist of three-quarters of the users of the service among researchers; on the other hand only 10% of male researchers reported using the service. Yet males express more satisfaction with the services (72% range from satisfied to very satisfied and 0% dissatisfied), compared to females (63% ranges from satisfied to very satisfied and 21% either somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied).

Some researchers expressed concern about the professional preparation, accreditation and linguistic skills among staff in the Counselling Service. A number of researchers felt that the absence of an English mother tongue counsellor created a linguistic barrier, and others maintained that the fact that no Spanish-speaking counsellor created a cultural barrier to communication. Some researches suggested that the presence of a male counsellor would give more choices to researchers who may not feel comfortable talking to female counsellors (e.g. on issues relating to relationships / identity problems).

3. Climate in the Academic Departments:

This section of the survey inquired about the level of satisfaction of researchers with their academic supervisors (focusing on the various aspects of supervision), satisfaction with administrative staff in the four academic departments, Academic Service, the overall support received from the department and the rate of competitiveness and /or support among researchers.

The level of satisfaction with supervisors revealed by the wellbeing survey of October 2010 was slightly lower (68% either very satisfied or satisfied) than the figures reported by the supervision assessment survey conducted in May 2010 (79%). The absolute negative assessments of supervision are 10% for the wellbeing survey against 4% for the supervision assessment survey of May 2010.

Contrary to the parallel survey conducted in UC Berkeley, where there was a clear correlation between functional supervision and the level of stress expressed by graduate students, the EUI wellbeing survey does not reveal such a direct correlation. In effect, 102 out of 156 EUI researchers who reported to have experienced emotional or stress related problems in the past year stated that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with supervision. Yet, all 15 researchers who stated to be either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with supervision reported to have experienced stress in the past year.

Had an emotional or stress-related problem	YES		NO		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	
How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with your supervisor?	No.	%	No.	%	
Very satisfied	47	48%	52	52%	99
Satisfied	55	53%	49	47%	104
Somewhat satisfied	29	51%	27	49%	56
Somewhat dissatisfied	10	56%	8	44%	18
Dissatisfied	12	100%	0	0	12
Very dissatisfied	3	100%	0	0	3
Not applicable					7
Total	156	53%	136	47%	299

51% of researchers maintained that their supervisors have been considerate of their personal problems; the other 49% either disagreed or felt the issue was not applicable to their case. 70% of researchers reported that supervisors encouraged their intellectual self confidence and 74% felt that supervisors were satisfied with their performance.

Many researchers took the opportunity of open-ended questions to express their concerns about the quality of the academic climate in the departments. The general feeling is that there is more need to raise awareness among supervisors about issues of wellbeing, mental health needs and concerns of researchers. Others suggest sustaining and promoting an open, liberal and democratic academic culture.

The survey reveals some variations in the academic and administrative climate among the four academic departments. On the one hand, the highest level of satisfaction with supervision is

reported by HEC researchers (73%), followed by ECO and SPS (72%) then LAW (68%); on the other hand, the highest levels of peer competitiveness are reported by HEC and SPS researchers (43%), followed by LAW (40%) and ECO (39%).

The general level of satisfaction with administrative staff in the academic departments and Academic Service ranges between 96% for ECO; 90% for HEC; 86% for LAW and 75% for SPS and Academic Service.

51% of researchers express satisfaction with the overall support received from academic departments, 14% are very satisfied and 11% are dissatisfied.

Gender difference does not seem to affect the level of satisfaction with supervision, yet female respondents perceived higher levels of competitiveness among researchers in their respective academic departments (47%) compared to males (35%) and lower rates of peer support (44%) compared to males (52%).

4. Researchers' demographic characteristics

As previously stated, the response population is representative of the total researcher population at EUI. The correlation of some demographic characteristics of researchers reporting stress related problems reveals the following:

- Genders are almost equally represented in the survey (51% females vs. 49% males).
- The majority of respondents 69% are between 26 and 30 years-old. 17% is between 31 and 35 years-old; 12% is under 25 and only 2% over 36 years.
- Only 48% of the respondents identified their citizenships (due to a general reluctance to answer this question for fear of being identified). The statistical tables correlate citizenships (represented by at least 6 respondents) with various questions such as: perception of stress, depression, utilization and satisfaction with EUI counselling services. However, taking into consideration the small size of the sample of

respondents from each national group, no conclusions are being based on citizenships of respondents.

- Relationship status is confirmed to correlate with the levels of stress among EUI researchers, however, unlike the results of the UC Berkley survey, where married researchers seemed to experience less stress related problems, married/partnered EUI researchers report more difficulties related to distance, transition, financial situation and others.

Had an emotional or stress-related problem	YES emotional stress		NO emotional stress		Total/ relationship status
	No.	%	No.	%	
How do you describe your relationship status?(Multiple responses allowed)					
Single	41	54%	35	46%	76
In an on-off relationship	15	65%	8	35%	23
In a regular relationship	46	52%	43	48%	89
Partnered	33	52%	31	48%	64
Married	19	58%	14	42%	33
Separated	2	100%	0	0	2
Divorced	2	100%	0	0	2
Other	5	71%	2	29%	7
Total	163	55%	133	45%	296

- Very few (only 15 out of 313) respondents reported having children. Some researchers specified that they chose not to answer this question for privacy concerns. Therefore, no conclusions are being based on this demographic factor.
- There seems to be no direct correlation between the sexual orientation of researchers and reporting emotional or stress-related problems in the past year. Yet, some researchers suggested that EUI counsellors can benefit from specialized training to deal with sexuality issues and homophobia and need to advertise this fact.

Had an emotional or stress-related problem	YES emotional stress		NO emotional stress		Total/ sexual orientation
	No.	%	No.	%	
How do you describe your sexual orientation/identity?(Multiple responses allowed)					
Heterosexual	137	55%	114	45%	251
Gay/Lesbian	4	40%	6	60%	10
Bisexual	6	67%	3	33%	9
Transsexual	0	0	0	0	0
Transgender	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	1	50%	1	50%	2
Other	5	83%	1	17%	6
Total	153	55%	125	45%	278

General Conclusions:

The high response rate for the EUI Researchers' Experience and Wellbeing Survey-2010 (52%) compared to similar ones in UC Berkeley-2004 (33%) and UC Irvine-2008 (20%)⁷, allow us to draw some general conclusions from the data analysis.

Researchers' self reported mental health needs and concerns:

- Despite the relatively high rate of perceived emotional and stress-related problems among EUI researchers (53%), compared to (45%) in UC Berkley and (30%) in UC Irvine, the self-reported mind-sets used as indicators of poor mental health are significantly lower. For example only 8% of EUI researchers report frequent feelings of

depression that hold them back, as opposed to 54% in UC Berkley and 30% in UC Irvine. Likewise, only 1% of EUI researchers seriously considered suicide against 10% in UC Berkley and 30% in UC Irvine.

- The general trend indicating females, among graduate students, to reporting more emotional and stress-related problems as opposed to males, is confirmed by the results of the EUI survey. Similar to the results of the UC Berkley and UC Irvine surveys, female researchers tend to seek more professional help and perceive higher levels of peer competitiveness. This is consistent with a wider trend pointed out by a study on mental health in the European Union conducted by the 'Support' project for the EU Directorate General for Health and Consumers in 2008;⁸ and a fact sheet published by the NHS Confederation on key trends in mental health in 2009.⁹
- Emotional and relationship problems are reported as the main reasons why EUI researchers seek professional help, followed by academic and career problems. The causes of anxiety of EUI researchers seem to be similar to graduate students in other surveys; yet the UC Berkley respondents express higher levels of concern, especially about emotional, career and financial problems as well as sexual identity issues.
- The relatively high percentage (46%) of current second-year researchers at the EUI who report high levels of anxiety and need for professional help during the past 12 months, reveals the general difficulties faced by first-year researchers in the process of academic and social transition. This fact is also confirmed by the internal reports presented by the EUI counsellors in 2007/8 and 2009/10.
- Researchers with financial problems (18% of respondents) as well as those with inadequate linguistic skills (12% of respondents) report higher levels of anxiety than others.

⁷ Eno Loudon, Jennifer; "Results of UC Irvine Survey of graduate students' mental health;" UC Irvine, 2008.

⁸ "Mental Health in the EU: Key Facts, Figures and Activities;" Support Project, Directorate-General for Health and Consumers, Brussels, 13 June 2008.

⁹ "Fact Sheet: Key Facts and Trends in Mental Health;" Mental Health Network, The NHS Confederation,, November 2009.

Assessment of needs for the EUI counselling services:

- Taking an overall look at the levels of awareness, satisfaction and demand for counselling services at EUI, we see that there is a very high rate of awareness about the service (95%) compared to 76% in UC Berkeley and 68% in UC Irvine.
- EUI researchers stated that the September meetings with Academic Service and the Dean of Studies together with the Web site and flyers available on campus were the main sources of information about counselling and other health services.
- 40% of EUI respondents have considered using counselling services. 31% of respondents actually use counselling services (both off and on campus). In comparison with other surveys, we see that 17% of EUI respondents use on-campus counselling services, whereas; 27% and 25% of respondents seek on-campus counselling in UC Berkeley and UC Irvine respectively.
- Consistently with the findings of the other surveys, concerns about confidentiality, lack of quality and social stigma are reported to be the main reasons for deciding not to use on-campus counselling services at EUI. Some uneasiness expressed in open-ended questions also touched upon linguistic and cultural barriers as well as doubts about the professional training and accreditation of the counsellors themselves.
- Respondents express a high level of satisfaction with EUI counselling services (85%) as compared to satisfaction with off-campus services (79%) and the satisfaction rate in UC Berkeley (75%).
- Many respondents took the opportunity of the survey to raise problems of medical services at the EUI and requested more information and support for researchers' physical health. "Physical health issues are a much bigger problem" was a recurrent comment made by a number of respondents to the survey.

Assessment of academic and administrative support for researchers' wellbeing:

- The survey results are more or less consistent with the supervision assessment survey conducted a few months earlier. The general rate of satisfaction with supervision ranges between 68% and 79%. This confirms the Doctoral Programme Committee discussions about the pockets of dissatisfaction (ranging between 20 and 30%) that need to be addressed at the departmental levels.
- Despite the fact that all respondents (15) who stated to be either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with supervision reported high levels of stress, the survey results do not lead to a direct correlation between the level of satisfaction with supervision and stress-related problems. In addition, gender differences do not affect satisfaction with supervision at the EUI, as opposed to the findings of the UC Berkley study. Yet, it is important to take a careful look at the open-ended questions where many respondents pointed out the importance of promoting a more open and democratic culture of supervision and teaching.
- A number of respondents focused on the need to raise more awareness among academic and administrative staff regarding issues of general wellbeing and mental health of researchers.
- The high satisfaction with administrative support reaches 96% for ECO and 90% for HEC.

Recommendations driven from previous surveys and reports:^{10 & 11 & 12}

General Recommendation for the promotion of healthy educational environments:

- Focus on prevention and promote students' wellbeing by enhancing extracurricular activities, career, housing and other support services.
- Build a sense of community among graduate students and combat academic isolation.
- Expand key academic support and learning services to enhance students' ability to manage academically-related stress (language training and academic skills)
- Increase campus-wide awareness programs on mental health and wellbeing
- Positive incentives for faculty involvement and support for students' wellbeing and re-examination of pedagogical traditions. In many situations faculty find themselves to be a 'front-line counsellor'
- Examine University policies on crisis management responses (crisis management protocols)
- Establish cooperation and partnerships among the various departments, student support services and the counselling service
- Multilevel and multi-program approach
- Share research and promising practices with others

¹⁰ "Student Mental Health Committee: Final Report;" University of California; September 2006.

¹¹ Edmonton, Alberta; "Graduate Student Mental Health Issues;" University of Yale; 2008.

¹² Hyun et al; "Graduate Student Mental Health: Needs Assessment and Utilization of Counselling Services," Journal of College Student Development; June 2006.

- encourage more ‘female friendly’ campus services (for instance, provide some female personal care products in the campus shops... etc)

Mental Health and Well-being Workshop:

Towards a healthier Institution promoting a positive learning environment

The workshop was organized by Academic Service and the Office of the Dean of Studies in order to establish a knowledge base for the development of an institutional strategy to improve well-being and mental health facilities at the Institute.

On the basis of presentations from Scottish and English experts, Barbara Lawton (the Association for University and College Counselling - University of Leeds), Kathryn Hill (Research and Policy adviser in the Mental Health Foundation), Sandy MacLean (Project Manager and advisor for the Supporting Student Mental Health and Well-Being project – Scotland’s Colleges) and Tom Finnigan (Director Student Based Services, Lancaster University) part of the EUI-community, including researchers, administrators and some professors, met on Friday 18 February to try and find ways towards, as the workshop title announced, ‘a healthier institution’ and to enhance ‘a positive learning environment’. The workshop was set up by Fatma Sayed in order to draw conclusions from the results of the EUI ‘Researchers’ Experience and Wellbeing Survey’, conducted in the autumn term of 2010. Workshop sessions discussed the following issues:

- Promoting Mental Health among PhD Researchers
- Identifying the characteristics of a healthy institution
- Assessment of the EUI Researchers’ experience and wellbeing
- Supporting Student Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Institutional policies and strategies promoting mental health and well-being in higher education
- Implications for the EUI - Session to draw final conclusions and recommendations

For many participants the workshop was an eye-opening event, alerting us to many issues of mental health, well-being and personnel policy, that deserve wider and in some cases urgent attention. All speakers emphasized the importance of mental health issues for the persons and

institutions involved. In the private and public sector 'mental health' is a principal cause of absenteeism; at university it is one the major reasons for students at all levels to intermit (or terminate) their studies.

Principles

Mental health policy has gone through a major shift over the last years, moving from a 'stop-gap' approach that dealt with problems only when they became acute mainly via psychological and counselling services, to a more comprehensive, 'holistic' approach. As far as academic institutions are concerned three key principles of this new approach stand out.

First, it is vital to integrate mental health, well-being and personnel policies at all levels of the institution --i.e. in our case researchers, supervisors and administrators-- and to involve senior management from the very start in a leading role. Personnel policy, student (academic) services, counselling and psychological services need to be fully integrated, under the responsibility of a team of senior managers.

Second, institutions should move to a policy that actively promotes a healthy life and seeks to prevent mental health problems from arising. A wide range of devices to raise awareness of health issues are available-- from putting up informative websites to offering 'first aid in mental health' training to researchers, administrators and supervisors.

Thirdly, this new approach recognizes the unity of the life of academic research/learning with general well-being, which amongst others means that academics should not only be trained in acquiring academic and research skills but also skills of 'emotional intelligence'-- now seen as being equally important to a successful --and happy-- academic and personal life.

Recommendations:

Recommendations approved by the Doctoral Programme Committee for an action plan to be discussed and eventually implemented in cooperation and coordination the various departments, services and Units at the EUI:

1. Recognize the importance of 'social spaces' and develop sports facilities on campus. Where space is physically scarce, as it is at the EUI, consider turning computer labs into 'common rooms' with just a small number of terminals, wifi and access points for laptops, and comfy furniture offering space for study and conversation.
2. Adding a joyful touch to the physical environment in the EUI campuses and creating a friendlier cosy environment. For instance. establishing seating spaces in the EUI gardens and children playground areas and so on.
3. Do not set counselling and medical services physically apart, but integrate them with all student services, thus lowering a range of access thresholds.
4. Offer courses to PhD-researchers on 'balancing the act' between becoming 'Dr. Who' and the other aspects of life and offer a number of sessions during the first term (but not immediately at the beginning) on the social and cultural opportunities and problems of Florence.
5. Assure the integration of mental health services on campus with those in Florence.
6. Develop an active policy for 'partners' at all levels of the institute, recognising that a major part of researchers, administrators and professors come to Florence living in an enduring personal relationship.

7. Recognize that across Europe academic institutions such as ours are facing growing problems with alcohol and drugs-- as indicated by some of our researchers in the survey. Provide information materials, introduce the self-testing machine in Bar Fiasco and adopt the 'Italian code' of not giving more to persons who are drinking too much.
8. Rethink what to do in cases of anxiety and depression. More specifically, reconsider the policy of granting 'intermission' to one of developing individual pathways for researchers facing anxiety and depression, which means that researchers, supervisors and mental health workers join forces and set out individual study plans, which will not involve intermission, but can adopt alternative time frames.
9. Conduct a 'mental health and well-being survey' for the EUI administrative and professorial staff, in order to be able to develop a more comprehensive health policy at the EUI.