

EURAXESS

Action Plan

Case number

2022RO847983

Name Organisation under review

Victor Babes National Institute of Pathology Bucharest

Organisation's contact details

99-101 Splaiul Independentei, Bucharest, - None -, 050096, Romania

Submission date to the European Commission

25/01/2024

1. Organisational Information

*Please provide a limited number of key figures for your organisation. Figures marked * are compulsory.*

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	70
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	1
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	0
Of whom are women *	47
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	25

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	12
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	10
Total number of students (if relevant) *	0
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	120
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	
	€
Total annual organisational budget	3159996
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	0
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	2678336
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	19974

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)

The National Institute of Pathology Victor Babeş Bucharest (www.ivb.ro), founded in 1887, is a reference center for medical research in Romania. Our mission is to discover the molecular and cellular mechanisms involved in various pathologies, from non-communicable diseases to tumor pathology. Our efforts are focused on identifying early diagnosis markers and personalized therapies. VBI provides specialized diagnostic services for patients and research services. VBI has modern laboratories for pathology, genetics, molecular biology, biochemistry, electron microscopy and an authorized animal facility. Complementary techniques are available for cellular and molecular imaging at high resolution, genomic and proteomic technologies.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please provide an overview of the organisation in terms of the current strengths and weaknesses of the current practice under the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code at your organization.

Note: Click on the name of each of the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code to open the editor and provide your answer.

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)**Strengths:**

1. **Ethics:** VBI has an institutional **Code of Ethics**. At the institute researchers are aware of and comply with the ethical principles that govern the research activity in their field of competence. The compliance with the principles in this code is ensured by the Institute Ethics Committee, which also includes non-unit specialists.
2. **Professional aspects:** The research directorates at the institute level are regularly updated to be in line with the strategic directorates funded at national and European level in the biomedical field. Thus, researchers are free to initiate research activities in accordance with the requirements of the programs in which they intend to participate. There are no restrictions/limitations on the proposed research topics or on the partnerships that are initiated. Researchers also participate in shows addressed to the general public to promote the research work of the institute, there being procedures through which the framework is created to encourage dissemination and communication actions of the results of the research, innovation, education activities. The monitoring of these actions is carried out by the Scientific Council and the results are recorded in the Annual activity report in the dedicated section. Recently, a **Technology transfer centre** was established at the VBI level and the legal department provides consultancy with regard to the intellectual property rights. There are facilities available to researchers to store research information/data. At the institute level, legislation on confidentiality and protection of personal data is implemented.
3. **Economic and financial aspects:** The specialized departments (economic-financial, legal, etc.) provide advice from the early stage of submitting project offers. During the implementation of the projects, they systematically check the correctness of the expenditure and the compliance with those stipulated in the financing contract so that the research activities carried out and the costs thereof are consistent with the objectives and intermediate or final results (where applicable) of the project. When the situation requires it, for well-justified reasons, the economic and financial department shall provide expert support to rectify the project budget, with the consent of the Contracting Authorities. Also, there are procedures regarding public procurement activities, accounting and financial reporting, distribution of accounting financial profit, organization and exercise of own preventive financial control, elaboration and approval of the revenue and expenditure budget, management control of the inputs-outputs of material inventories, disposal of fixed assets and inventory items. VBI has an internal audit department, known to the persons involved in the research activity (laboratory heads, project managers), as well as to the staff in the support compartments.

Weaknesses:

1. **Ethics:** The Code of Ethics and the members of the Ethics Committee are posted on the portal www.ivb.ro (<http://www.ivb.ro>), but only in Romanian language, which may make it difficult for foreign researchers who are either carrying out or will be carrying out their work in the institute to understand this code of ethics at institutional level. Also, although the documents on the principles of ethics and professional conduct are disseminated at the IVB level, communication needs to be improved to raise awareness and understand them.
2. **Professional aspects:** Although there is an electronic platform at the institute level dedicated to research results, it is not updated in real time. For the newly established technological transfer centre it is necessary to update the statute and to draft working procedures, in accordance with the national legislation. It would also be useful to include in the training plan for the next period the participation in specialized courses for 1-2 people from the human resources department. The management of the institute and the scientific council will pay special attention to the increase in the number of journalists and media people with which the institute's researchers would relate to promote and popularize the research activity.
3. **Economic and financial aspects:** Although at institutional level specialized compartments provide assistance in submitting offers or in carrying out projects, the different requirements of Contracting Authorities sometimes render it difficult to communicate between researchers and support staff.

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)**Strengths:**

The employment process for vacancies is carried out by public contest, organized in accordance with the provisions of national law and internal methodologies. The recruitment is carried out through a transparent mechanism, assuming that the conditions of the contest (thematic, bibliography, job requirements, level of competence, contest calendar, etc.) are displayed on the portal www.ivb.ro (<http://www.ivb.ro>), by publishing in a newspaper of wide national circulation, by displaying the contest notice at the institute's notice board and, where the situation requires it, on the euraxess and ancsjobs portals. The establishment of the criteria for the selection of researchers for the vacancies advertised complies with the legislation on the evaluation and recognition of scientific merits and performances, in relation to the level of qualification and competences required by the vacancy and specified in the job description to be published at the time of the announcement of the contest. The VBI methodology for occupying open research positions provides differentiated criteria in relation to the level of the vacancy (R1-R4). Quantitative assessment criteria are used in accordance with national legislation, as well as qualitative criteria referring to the professional and personal qualities of the candidate. The experience of candidates in other institutions or other fields is encouraged, insofar as it is relevant to the job concerned and variations in professional activity are not penalized. Candidates are not subject to any discrimination based on sex, age, ethnicity, nationality or social origin, religion or religious belief, language, disability, political opinion, social or economic condition.

Weaknesses:

Not all vacancies are communicated on platforms that provide national/international visibility (ancsJobs, Euraxess). The contest methodologies, national legislation, other information on the conduct of the contest are available only in the Romanian language. Also, the materials published do not contain information on working conditions, remuneration and career development prospects. At the same time, the contest methodology at institutional level does not contain aspects that establish the criteria for scientific expertise for the selection of the members of the contest committees, which are regulated by the law, and the members of the contest committee are not made public.

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)**Strengths:**

VBI is recognized nationally as one of the leading institutions in biomedical research, including thanks to the expertise of its researchers. Regardless of their career level, VBI recognizes researchers as professionals in the field, and constantly encourages their career development. Optimal working conditions are provided for employees, researchers benefiting from renovated workspaces and high-performance equipment, competitive at international level, to ensure the achievement of publishable or exploitable results by other methods.

The working hours of VBI employees established by the Collective Labor Agreement and individual labour agreements allows customized working hours, and in case of employees who are also teaching staff, variable working hours is approved, so that the didactic and research work can be harmonized, in compliance with the legislation in force. The VBI pays special attention to employees who return after a period of interruption of activity, to harmoniously reintegrate into the research activity, with variable working hours.

Stability and continuity of employment are ensured for all employees; approx. 60% of individual labour agreements are concluded for an indefinite period. Fixed-term contracts are drawn up either for temporary or specifically created vacancies in projects, or for the involvement of researchers in projects funded by non-reimbursable structural funds.

Salaries at VBI are determined by the funding secured through research projects, in alignment with the CLA salary grid. Individual performance and achievement of set indicators influence salary levels. An addendum to employment agreements may raise fixed-term salaries for staff engaged in non-Core Program research projects, contingent on project finances. Additional activities result in salary increases, as outlined in the CLA, with annual approval by the Steering Committee and Management Board.

VBI emphasizes researchers' career development by promoting scientific training and ethical research management. VBI supports vocational training, encourage attendance at scientific events, and advocate enrolling in doctoral programs. The legal department assists with intellectual property protection, while the Technology Transfer Center facilitates technology transfer to benefit society and the economy from research and development efforts.

At the institute, researchers are recognized as independent authors and co-authors in accordance with international practice in the field. VBI complies with the rules of qualification as authors/co-authors of the published works, systematized by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. The determination of the effective contribution of each participant to a research result and the qualification as co-author of a scientific paper shall comply with the four cumulative conditions: *(i)* the contribution must be significant; *(ii)* involvement in the drafting of the manuscript and the final review; *(iii)* participation in the decision on the final form in which it will be sent to the selected journal; *(iv)* the consent to undertake responsibility for both the practical part achieved and for all aspects supported in the paper, including aspects of professional ethics, and the relevant procedures in the field shall be accessible to all researchers.

As regards the complaints and appeals, although the institute does not have the institution of *Ombudsman*, the organization being a small one, they are considered for analysis and settlement by the competent institutional fora (ethics committee, disciplinary research committee, etc.). Thus, the settlement of complaints on ethical issues is the responsibility of the Ethics Committee, disciplinary misconducts (other than when involving the breach of the Code of Ethics) shall be settled by the discipline committees and conflicts on working rights and conditions are settled through the Joint Commission between the management and the employees' representatives.

Researchers are represented in the governing and decision-making bodies (Scientific Board, Board of Directors). The executive management of the institution includes a scientific manager and a scientific secretary from among researchers, the jobs being obtained by contest, according to the legislation in force. In terms of administrative and work environment aspects, researchers are supported by employees' representatives, who participate in the employees' interest in the periodic review of the collective labour agreement, wage negotiations and other aspects of working conditions.

Weaknesses:

The VBI does not have the capacity to ensure working conditions at the premises for potential employees with reduced mobility. The historic building is not equipped with an elevator. However, to the extent financial sources are identified for the consolidation of the building built in 1887, solutions for people with disabilities will be considered.

On the other hand, although it is regulated by the law, the procedure for carrying out remote activity has not been completed.

Efforts are ongoing to create a regulatory framework for career development in VBI through mentoring by senior researchers and by identifying organizations that offer career counseling services.

The rules on intellectual property and authorship / co-authorship are accessible to all researchers, being posted on the intranet, we consider it useful to regularly organize training sessions for researchers regarding protection and exploitation of intellectual property rights.

Training and development*



Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths:

As regards the relationship with the coordinators (managers/persons responsible of research projects, laboratory heads), the institutional context favours a direct, continuous interaction with the coordinators of the research activity in research projects, the immediate interaction between the coordinators and the team members being stimulated when problems arise on the resolution of which the research depends.

Each group leader is responsible for the activities of mentoring and training of young researchers under his command and encourages the development of constructive relationships with effective knowledge transfer. The large number of researchers who are also teaching staff supports the training of young people in research. Attention is paid to the theoretical and practical training of young researchers, but also to their training in the field of project management. In these trainings, more or less programmatically carried out, aspects of the risks in the research activity and specific management methods thereof are not ignored.

VBI is concerned with developing the competences of researchers to ensure performance in the research career. The concern is particularly aimed at young researchers who are encouraged to participate in scientific events in their area of professional expertise. Participation in continuous training activities is decided individually or with the line manager, being an important objective in the VBI Strategic Development Plan.

The management of VBI has permanent concerns to develop effective training methods, workshops, thematic conferences and e-learning sessions. Each year a conference is held to which a globally recognized researcher is invited (and awarded the title of Honorary Researcher of the Institute, <https://www.ivb.ro/honorary-scientist> (<https://www.ivb.ro/honorary-scientist>)) and an annual conference is held where worldwide successful lecturers are invited.

Participation in short-term mobility at conferences, workshops, symposia etc. is encouraged, with researchers having the possibility to participate in any vocational training program at national and international level, within the limits of available funds. Many young researchers have benefited from professional training courses ranging from 1 to 6 months. Researchers in the institute are encouraged to focus on attracting and training young researchers.

Any researcher, including new employees, is directly related to: *(i)* the manager of the research project in which he is involved; *(ii)* head of the laboratory in which he is employed; *(iii)* senior management (general manager, scientific manager, economic manager, scientific secretary). The project manager coordinates and trains the team members in everything related to the research activity in that project. The laboratory head intervenes whenever the competences and/or duties of the project manager are exceeded by the specificity of the issue occurred, and the resolution of some aspects of a complexity that exceeds the solving potential of the basic organizational structure (the laboratory) is done with the involvement of the superior management, in the following order: scientific secretary, scientific manager and/or economic manager (as applicable), general manager. The aim is to shorten the time necessary to solve problems to the maximum, so that the research activity is not affected.

Weaknesses:

It is necessary to implement policies for the development of the research career, which systematically and uniformly describe all practices within the institute, such responsibilities being currently undertaken by senior researchers.

It is necessary to organize systematic information sessions on national/international mobility opportunities.

It is necessary to formally appoint at institutional level persons responsible for the supervision and guidance of researchers at the first two career levels.

3. Actions

The Action Plan and HRS4R strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the organization's Action Plan/HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s):

https://www.ivb.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/08_Action-plan_-EURAXESS.pdf (https://www.ivb.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/08_Action-plan_-EURAXESS.pdf)

Please fill in the list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HRS4R to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap-Analysis. The listed actions should be concise, but detailed enough for the assessors to evaluate the level of ambition, engagement and the expected implementation process. The institution should strive to provide a detailed plan, not just an enumeration of actions.

Note: Choose one or more of the principles automatically retrieved from the GAP Analysis with their implementation ratings.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 1	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)				
WP 0. Setting up the working group and the steering committee on the implementation of the AP. Establishment of working procedures. Upgrading website. 0.1. Setting up the working group and the steering committee for the implementation of the AP	(+/-) 40. Supervision	M1				
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1031 597 1150 617">Responsible Unit</th> <th data-bbox="1178 626 1394 646">Indicator(s) / Target(s)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1031 680 1115 911"> Scientific Secretary Economic Manager Scientific Manager General Manager </td> <td data-bbox="1178 786 1394 805">Documents / Decisions (1)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	Scientific Secretary Economic Manager Scientific Manager General Manager	Documents / Decisions (1)	
Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)					
Scientific Secretary Economic Manager Scientific Manager General Manager	Documents / Decisions (1)					
Action 2	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)				
WP 0. Setting up the working group and the steering committee on the implementation of the AP. Establishment of working procedures. Upgrading website. 0.2. Establishment of working procedures at the level of the working group and the steering committee	(+/-) 40. Supervision	M2				
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1031 1187 1150 1206">Responsible Unit</th> <th data-bbox="1178 1216 1394 1235">Indicator(s) / Target(s)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1031 1269 1115 1377"> Working group Steering Committee </td> <td data-bbox="1178 1313 1667 1333">Documents - meeting minutes Working procedure (1)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	Working group Steering Committee	Documents - meeting minutes Working procedure (1)	
Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)					
Working group Steering Committee	Documents - meeting minutes Working procedure (1)					

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 3

WP 0. Setting up the working group and the steering committee on the implementation of the AP. Establishment of working procedures. Upgrading website. 0.3. Update of the website with relevant information about the implementation of the strategy - a dedicated page (Career/Carieră)

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 40. Supervision

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M1-M24

Responsible

Unit **Indicator(s) / Target(s)**

Work group Documents / Deliverables Updated website

Action 4

WP 1. Ethical and Professional Aspects 1.1. Updating information on intellectual property rights' management

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 1. Research freedom

(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights

(+/-) 32. Co-authorship

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M6-M22

Responsible

Unit **Indicator(s) / Target(s)**

Legal Office
Oversight:
Steering
Committee
Scientific
Manager
General
Manager

Documents / Deliverables Guideline on national and international regulations on the management and exploitation of intellectual property rights in a dedicated section in the intranet network (1 document)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 5

WP 1. Ethical and Professional Aspects 1.2. Developing the capabilities of the technology transfer center

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 1. Research freedom

(+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations

(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M4-M23

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Technology

Transfer

Center

Oversight:

Steering

Committee

Scientific

Manager

General

Manager

Documents / Deliverables Updated legal status Operational procedures (SOP)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 6

WP 1. Ethical and Professional Aspects 1.3. Development of a training program in the field of intellectual property rights' protection

GAP Principle(s)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

- (+/-) 1. Research freedom
- (+/-) 2. Ethical principles
- (++) 3. Professional responsibility
- (++) 4. Professional attitude
- (+/-) 7. Good practice in research
- (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results
- (++) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
- (+/-) 30. Access to career advice
- (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights
- (+/-) 32. Co-authorship
- (++) 33. Teaching
- (++) 38. Continuing Professional Development
- (++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development
- (+/-) 40. Supervision

M9-M24

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Legal Office
 Technology
 Transfer
 Center
 Oversight:
 Steering
 Committee
 Scientific
 Secretariat
 General
 Manager

Documents / Deliverables Training program (2 instruction meetings with the researchers/year) Number of participants / year

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 7

WP 1. Ethical and Professional Aspects 1.4. Development of a standard framework agreement format between VBI and partners / collaborators on the exploitation of intellectual and / or industrial property rights, compliance with ethical norms and data confidentiality

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 1. Research freedom
- (+/-) 2. Ethical principles
- (++) 4. Professional attitude
- (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M9-M18

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Legal Office
Technology
Transfer
Center
Oversight:
Steering
Committee
Scientific
Manager
Economic
Manager
General
Manager

Documents / Deliverables Standard framework agreement (1)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 8

WP 1. Ethical and Professional Aspects 1.5. Drafting specific agreements for the exploitation of intellectual property rights and copyrights of researchers in the VBI, in accordance with the legislation in the field

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 1. Research freedom
- (+/-) 2. Ethical principles
- (++) 4. Professional attitude
- (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations
- (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights
- (+/-) 32. Co-authorship

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M10-M23

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Legal Office
Technology
Transfer
Center
Oversight:
Steering
Committee
Scientific
Manager
Economic
Manager
General
Manager

Documents / Deliverables Standard framework agreements (project specific)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 9

WP 1. Ethical and Professional Aspects 1.6. Raise awareness of the importance of complying with research ethics rules and good research practices 1.6.1. Updating of information on national and EU legislation on research activities and risk assessment in research activity, in particular on the development of dual-use research of concern. 1.6.2. A standard agreement between the VBI and the clinics providing the samples, specifying the responsibilities of each party to comply with ethical rules and data privacy. 1.6.3. Organizing training sessions for staff on the importance of learning the good practice rules in research and publication

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 2. Ethical principles
- (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations
- (+/-) 7. Good practice in research

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M4-M22

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Legal Office
Ethics
Committee
Oversight:
Steering
Committee
Scientific
Manager
Economic
Manager
General
Manager

Documents / Deliverables Guideline on regulations relating to RDI activities
Information materials on the identification, evaluation and elimination of risk in the
RD activity Training program (2 sessions/year) Number of participants / year

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 10

WP 1. Ethical and Professional Aspects 1.7. Increase in administrative support for research work 1.7.1. Developing and printing an internal guideline on the regulations regarding the implications/rights and obligations of the researcher and the institution receiving the funding. 1.7.2. Building a space in the intranet network with relevant information on the steps to be taken in the research process and project management. 1.7.3. Organizing training sessions on researcher's responsibilities regarding the efficiency of expenditure in relation to achievements for a better awareness of responsibilities toward society.

GAP Principle(s)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

(+/-) 1. Research freedom

(+/-) 2. Ethical principles

(++) 3. Professional responsibility

(++) 4. Professional attitude

M2-M20

(+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations

(+/-) 6. Accountability

(+/-) 7. Good practice in research

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Legal Office

Scientific

Secretariat

Oversight:

Steering

Committee

Documents / Deliverables Guidelines Update of intranet network Training program

Scientific

(2 session/year) Number of participants / year

Manager

Economic

Manager

General

Manager

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 11

WP 1. Ethical and Professional Aspects 1.8. Management and monitoring WP 1

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 40. Supervision

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M1-M24

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Steering
Committee,
General
Manager

Documents / Deliverables Progress report (monthly) Annual activity report (2)

Action 12

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.1. Development of the OTM-R strategy

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 12. Recruitment

(+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M2-M8

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human
Resources
Office
Oversight:
Steering
Committee

Documents / Deliverables OTM-R strategy final form (1)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 13

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.2. Posting all open positions on the Euraxess portal

GAP Principle(s)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

(+/-) 12. Recruitment

(+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)

(+/-) 14. Selection (Code)

(++) 15. Transparency (Code)

M2-M24

(++) 16. Judging merit (Code)

(++) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)

(++) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human
Resources

Office Oversight: Documents / Deliverables % = no. of published positions Euroaxess / total published vacancies. (Proposed 2024: 65%; 2025: 80%).
Steering
Committee

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 14

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.3. Updating methodologies for filling research jobs, vacant management jobs to meet the mandatory OTM-R requirements

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 12. Recruitment
- (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)
- (+/-) 14. Selection (Code)
- (++) 15. Transparency (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M3-M16

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human
Resources
Office
Scientific
Council Documents / Deliverables Methodology (1)
Oversight:
Steering
Committee

Action 15

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.4. Updating the contest methodology by including the criteria for the selection of the members of the competition committee in accordance with the legal provisions and ensuring gender equality.

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 12. Recruitment
- (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)
- (+/-) 14. Selection (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M10-M18

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human
Resources
Office
Scientific
Council Documents / Deliverables Methodology (1)
Oversight:
Steering
Committee

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 16

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.5. Developing a career development plan in research, to schedule the periodicity of higher-level job contests for R1-R3

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 12. Recruitment
- (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)
- (+/-) 14. Selection (Code)
- (+/-) 28. Career development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M10-M20

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human
Resources
Office
Laboratory
leaders,
Scientific
Council
Oversight:
Steering
Committee

Documents / Deliverables Updated plan for career development in research according with the new legislation (1)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 17

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.6. Developing a standard info document about working conditions, remuneration and career development prospects on the institutional website for each research position

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 12. Recruitment
- (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M3-M15

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human Resources Office Scientific Council Oversight: Steering Committee Scientific Manager, General Manager

Documents / Deliverables Standard info booklet about research career in VBI (1)

Action 18

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.7. Identify organizational structures that provide career counseling services

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 28. Career development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M12-M23

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human Resources Office Scientific Council Oversight: Steering Committee

Documents / Deliverables Number. of mentoring meetings (at least 1/year)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 19

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.8. Carrying out a progress assessment procedure for researchers at the beginning of their careers (R1-R4)

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 40. Supervision

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M12-M19

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human Resources Office Laboratory leaders, Scientific Council Oversight: Steering Committee Scientific Manager, General Manager

Documents / Deliverables Methodologies for assessing career progress (4)

Action 20

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.9. Development of a procedure dedicated to the Human Resources Office for the implementation of the mandatory OTM-R requirements

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 12. Recruitment

(+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M2-M12

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human Resources Office Oversight: Steering Committee

Documents / Deliverables HR procedure for HRS4R implementation (1)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 21

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.10. Creating a dedicated employment section on the VBI website

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 12. Recruitment
- (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)
- (+/-) 14. Selection (Code)
- (++) 15. Transparency (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M6-M8

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human Resources Office, IT specialist
Oversight: Steering Committee
Documents / Deliverables Website. Career Section (1)

Action 22

WP 2. Recruitment and career development 2.11. Management and monitoring WP2.

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 40. Supervision

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M1-M24

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Steering Committee, General Manager
Documents / Deliverables Progress report (monthly) Annual activity report (2)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 23

WP 3. Increasing the VBI visibility and excellence in research 3.1. Increasing the participation of VBI in collaborative networks (clusters, PPPs, etc.)

GAP Principle(s)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

- (++) 4. Professional attitude
- (+/-) 6. Accountability
- (+/-) 7. Good practice in research
- (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results
- (+/-) 9. Public engagement
- (++) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
- (++) 23. Research environment
- (+/-) 24. Working conditions
- (++) 26. Funding and salaries
- (+/-) 28. Career development
- (++) 29. Value of mobility
- (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights
- (+/-) 32. Co-authorship
- (++) 38. Continuing Professional Development
- (++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development

M5-M24

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Laboratory
leaders,
Scientific
Council
Oversight:
Steering
Committee
Scientific
Manager,
General
Manager

Documents / Deliverables Number of participations (10) Number of projects submitted (10) Number of funded projects (2)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 24

WP 3. Increasing the VBI visibility and excellence in research 3.2. Supporting researchers for the development of marketable products (patents)

GAP Principle(s)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

(+/-) 1. Research freedom

(+/-) 2. Ethical principles

(++) 3. Professional responsibility

(+/-) 6. Accountability

M6-M24

(+/-) 7. Good practice in research

(+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results

(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Legal Office
Technology
Transfer
Centre
Oversight:
Steering
Committee
Scientific
Manager
Economic
Manager
General
Manager

Documents / Deliverables Number of patents filed / year (2) Number of patents granted / year (1)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 25

WP 3. Increasing the VBI visibility and excellence in research 3.3. Increasing the participation of VBI in events of media coverage of science and technology

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 9. Public engagement

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M2-M24

Responsible Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Laboratory leaders, Scientific Secretariat, Scientific Council Oversight: Steering Committee Scientific Manager, General Manager

Documents / Deliverables Number of appearances on TV programmes (2) Number of radio appearances (2) Number of books (1) Number of posts on social media platforms (3)

Action 26

WP 3. Increasing the VBI visibility and excellence in research 3.4. Management and monitoring WP2

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 40. Supervision

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

M1-M24

Responsible Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Steering Committee, General Manager

Documents / Deliverables Progress report (monthly) Annual activity report (2)

Unselected principles:

(++) 10. Non discrimination (++) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) (++) 20. Seniority (Code) (++) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code) (++) 22. Recognition of the profession

(++) 25. Stability and permanence of employment (++) 27. Gender balance (++) 34. Complains/ appeals (++) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies (++) 36. Relation with supervisors

(++) 37. Supervision and managerial duties

The establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HRS4R strategy. Please also indicate how your organisation will use the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Toolkit and how you intend to implement/are implementing the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, please provide a short commentary demonstrating this implementation. If the case, please make the link between the OTM-R checklist and the overall action plan. (max. 1000 words) *

The recruitment and selection process of staff in the institute shall comply with the principles of open, transparent, merit-based recruitment established by national regulations which have been transposed into the framework methodology for job vacancies. However, this methodology will be reviewed in accordance with the EU recommendations, OTM-R requirements and national legal requirements. All relevant information for research career will be updated on the website of the VBI. Thus, for the application of OTM-R and AP at institutional level, a working group will have to be designated to ensure their implementation. Given the complexity of the whole process, actions will be distributed in a balanced manner over the entire implementation period. Each measure will be monitored in particular by the steering committee so that, if the situation so requires, the necessary corrective action can be taken immediately.

If your organisation already has a recruitment strategy which implements the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment, please provide the web link where this strategy can be found on your organisation's website:

URL:

<https://www.ivb.ro/hrs4r-strategia-de-resurse-umane> (https://www.ivb.ro/hrs4r-strategia-de-resurse-umane)

4. Implementation

General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan: (max. 1000 words)

The AP was developed based on a careful GAP analysis that identified the issues that need to be improved to be in line with the European Charter of Researchers. Thus, three directions of action (WP) have been defined:

WP 1. Ethical and professional aspects

WP 2. Recruitment and career development

WP 3. Increasing the visibility of VBI and excellence in research

At the same time, the proposed actions will be the main drivers in support of the achievement of the objectives for the strategic field of human research resources in accordance with the Strategic Development Plan of the IVB for the period 2022-2027.

Thus, the 3 WP will have to respond to the following wishes:

WP 1. Ethical and Professional Aspects	Strengthening of the institutional commitment to the ethical principles of the research profession Increasing the support for researchers in carrying out research activities
WP 2. Recruitment and career development	Increasing the quality of the human resource and the concern for attracting and training young people, while maintaining the critical mass necessary for a performing activity, to the extent of the available funds. Ensuring a transparent institutional framework for monitoring and evaluating progress during the research career. Encouraging and supporting the mobility of researchers by participating in scientific events and/or conducting trainings in prestigious laboratories, including in laboratories of Romanian researchers in the diaspora.
WP 3. Increasing the visibility of VBI and excellence in research	Increasing the visibility of VBI at national and international level by effectively promoting the results of the RDI activity, establishing partnerships, increasing the mobility of human resources for professional improvement and by organizing scientific events. Increasing efficiency for the dissemination and exploitation of research results, complying with standards on professional ethics and the protection of intellectual property.

The Action Plan will be implemented by a work group consisting of representatives from all VBI professional categories (researchers, administrative staff) and the Steering Committee (composed of members of the institutional management and senior researchers) will coordinate and evaluate the implementation process of the Institute Action Plan. The work group will be divided into teams dedicated to each action line and the teams will constantly interrelate to harmonize actions and correlate implementation efforts.

The implementation of the AP will have to be carried out on two levels: one at the level of each structural unit (laboratories, administrative offices) to identify specific needs and possible implementation difficulties and second, at the level of the whole institute, to harmonize the measures ordered accordingly.

To achieve the full involvement of the scientific community, consideration shall be given to: *(i)* a presentation to all staff of the HRS4R strategy, action lines and measures ordered through the AP; *(ii)* the posting of quarterly progress reports on the VBI intranet; *(iii)* the opportunity to disseminate the HRS4R strategy implementation process at events organised in the Institute.

An internal review of the HRS4R strategy will be carried out periodically taking into account either possible impediments to the implementation of the AP identified by members of the scientific community or updates to the Charter regulations at European level. The work group will review the C&C principles and the OTM-R policy and shall consider possible adjustments necessary to prevent the likelihood of failure to meet the proposed objectives.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist below, which you will need to describe in detail:

Note:Click on each question of the checklist to open the editor.

How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The working group will have a few weekly meetings to analyse: (i) the progress in implementing specific measures; (ii) the possible impediments to the AP implementation; (iii) the identification of necessary corrective measures. On a monthly basis, the work group shall draft a report on the matters referred to it and send it to the Steering Committee. The progress report must contain: (i) indicators/targets reached; (ii) possible deliverables; (iii) concrete objectives to be achieved for the next period (1 month). In the event of one or more objectives/indicators not achieved, the progress report shall record this explicitly, with the justification of the causes that led to the failure and the solutions identified for the correction in the immediate period. The next progress report will contain a separate section dedicated to the objectives/indicators for which corrective measures/actions have been ordered and how they have been achieved. After analysing the progress report, the Supervisory Committee shall approve this report or shall order measures by resolution for the period immediately to come.

How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Both the working group and the Steering Committee will be composed of representatives of the research groups. Thus, the involvement of researchers will focus on 3 levels: *(i)* the working group and the supervisory committee including members of the research groups *(ii)* the scientific council which will analyse the certified and validated progress reports in its ordinary meetings ; *(iii)* the scientific community of the VBI in its entirety (R1 – R4) by publishing these progress reports on the intranet of the Institute.

How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy. *



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

HRS4R aims to integrate the fundamental principles contained in the European Charter of Researchers and the Code of Conduct in their recruitment with institutional rules and principles. We want to create and develop an organizational culture, in line with the strategies developed at the level of the European community. The collective labour agreement (in force since 2023) contains a separate chapter (Chapter IX) that takes over *ad litteram* the European Charter of Researchers of 2005. Therefore, we consider that no major impediments will be encountered in the correlation of the VBI organizational policies with the EC HRS4R. The permanent update of the HR strategy at institutional level according to the recommendations of the European Commission will support the development of the VBI toward research excellence by improving the working conditions and career development offered to researchers.

How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

GAP, OTM-R and AP were analysed during their development by both the supervisory committee and the Scientific Council and top management of the VBI. The work group and the Steering Committee will consist mainly of representatives of the scientific community in the institute (including laboratory decision-makers), which will ensure the successful implementation of the strategy. Also, as mentioned above, the work group will be a link between all stakeholders (researchers, scientific council, administrative staff, top management). Monthly monitoring of progress reports, their publication on the institute's intranet and providing feedback from each researcher is a guarantee of the successful implementation of the strategy.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Monitoring the progress of the strategy implementation will involve: *(i)* meetings of the working group; *(ii)* preparation of the progress report and submission for the approval to the steering committee; *(iii)* progress analysis during the ordinary meetings of the scientific council. Thus, the steering committee and institutional decision-makers will regularly be informed about the progress of the implementation, achievement of objectives and indicators according to the AP. This will enable institutional decision-makers to determine the measures to be taken to ensure that the proposed targets are not met and to eliminate the associated risks.

How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

For each activity proposed to be carried out in „Actions” chapter, the duration of implementation, the person/persons responsible for the fulfilment and the targets to be achieved have been established. The Steering Committee will regularly monitor the level of achievement of the strategy progress.

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process: (max. 1000 words)

The principles of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Recruitment are largely respected by the methodology existing in the VBI. More attention will be given in the next period to actions that promote the career development of researchers and the attraction of new talent, depending on the available financial resources.