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Internal Review for Interim Assessment 2026

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I. HRS4R internal review – 2024 – 2026

To implement the principles of the European Charter for Researchers, incorporated at the national level through Law No. 183/2024 on the status of research, development and innovation personnel, a series of methodologies and regulations were developed during the 2024–2026 period. These are intended to regulate research activities, ensure predictability in researchers' career development, and provide an appropriate framework for conducting research activities (All these documents are available on the Institute's website):

- Internal Regulations of the Victor Babeş National Institute ([Regulamentul intern al INCD Victor Babeş](#), 2023)
- Regulations for the Periodic Evaluation of Researchers' Scientific Performance ([Regulament pentru evaluarea periodică a performanței științifice a cercetătorilor](#), 2025-2028)
- Collective Labor Agreement ([Contractul Colectiv de Muncă](#), 2026-2027)
- Gender Equality Plan (updated for 2025–2029, [Gender Equality Plan](#))
- Code of Ethics and Conduct in Scientific Research Activities ([Codul de etică și conduită în activitatea de cercetare științifică](#), update 2026)
- CoARA Action Plan, [Action plan for CoARA](#) (2025-2027)
- The Technology Transfer Center of the Victor Babeş National Institute, Bucharest, which provides support and guidance regarding intellectual property rights ([Centrul de Transfer Tehnologic al INCD „Victor Babeş” București](#), CTT-IVB, 2026)
- Framework Methodology for Recruitment Competitions for Vacant Research Positions ([Metodologie cadru pentru concursurile de ocupare a posturilor vacante de cercetare](#), update 2025)
- Framework Methodology for the Organization of Promotion Examinations for Research, Development and Innovation Personnel Seeking Professional Advancement ([Metodologie cadru pentru organizarea examenului de promovare pentru obținerea gradului profesional de către personalul de cercetare, dezvoltare și inovare](#), 2026)

A series of operational procedures has been developed within the Managerial Internal Control System (SCIM - [Sistemului de Control Intern Managerial](#)¹) and regulates various aspects of researchers' activities (available on the Institute's intranet):

- PO-SCIM 01-01 – Ethics Training
- PO-SCIM 01-02 – Disciplinary Investigation Procedures
- PO-SCIM 01-03 – Completion, Submission, Communication, and Publication of the Statement of Assets and the Statement of Interests
- PO-SCIM 01-04 – Public Interest Whistleblowing and Protection of Whistleblowers
- PO-SCIM 01-05 – Prevention and Combating of Sex-Based Harassment and Moral Harassment in the Workplace
- PS-SCIM-02 – Responsibilities, Functions, and Duties
- PS-SCIM-03 – Competence and Performance
- PO-SCIM 03-01 – Appointment to the Position of Laboratory Head
- PS-SCIM-07 – Performance Monitoring
- PO-SCIM 07-01 – Research Results Valorization
- PO-SCIM 07-05 – Innovation Management
- PO-SCIM 07-06 – Intellectual Property Protection
- PO-SCIM 10-03 – Involvement of Undergraduate, Master's, Doctoral, and Postdoctoral Students in Research Activities

¹ OSGG nr. 600/2018 On the Approval of the Internal Managerial Control Code Applicable to Public Entities.

- PS-SCIM-12 – Information and Communication
- PO-GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation

A number of operational procedures have been developed within the Institute's Quality Management System (ISO 9001:2015) to support and regulate key aspects of research activities and researcher development. These procedures are available through the Institute's intranet and include:

- PP-01 – Research and Development Activities
- PP-02 – Education and Training
- PG-7.2 – Human Resources Management

Summary

This document presents the strategic analysis of the internal consultation conducted to assess researchers' perceptions of career development opportunities and human resources management practices at the Victor Babeş National Institute.

The institutional Human Resources Strategy survey comprised 21 questions and addressed, directly or indirectly, all 20 principles of the European Charter for Researchers. The survey was conducted between 27 and 29 April 2026, involved 32 respondents, and covered 58.18% of the Institute's active research staff at the time of the assessment.

The overall outcome of the consultation is positive, with a mean score of 3.99 out of 5, indicating a functional institutional framework that is generally well aligned with and positively perceived in relation to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

The strongest-performing areas include recruitment and selection processes, equality and non-discrimination, objectivity in performance assessment, and the alignment of training opportunities with researchers' professional development needs. All these areas achieved average scores above, or significantly above, 4.0.

The survey also identified several areas requiring further attention, notably post-evaluation feedback and career development support, remuneration policies, the distribution of benefits arising from European-funded projects, awareness of dispute resolution mechanisms, and, most importantly, researcher retention. The lowest score (2.81) was recorded for the item addressing the Institute's capacity to reduce talent outflow and retain highly qualified researchers.

Overall, the findings indicate that the Institute has established a credible procedural and regulatory framework consistent with the principles of the Charter. At the same time, they highlight the need to move towards a more mature and strategic approach to human resources management, with a stronger emphasis on career development, talent retention, transparency in decision-making, and the recognition and reward of individual contributions and achievements.

Methodology and data robustness

The survey was structured around seven thematic areas: recruitment and selection, performance assessment, promotion and career development, remuneration and leave policies, equality and non-discrimination, conflict management, and training and retention.

Participants were selected voluntarily, with the individual employee serving as the unit of analysis. While this approach provides valuable insights for organizational diagnosis and strategic planning, it also entails a degree of self-selection bias.

The distribution of respondents by position, age, and gender broadly reflects the Institute's institutional profile, supporting the relevance of the findings for the development of targeted measures and the revision of the HRS4R Action Plan.

Analysis by thematic area

I. Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and selection emerged as one of the strongest-performing areas, achieving an average score of 4.29.

Transparency of recruitment procedures received a score of 4.34, competence- and merit-based selection scored 4.21, and equal opportunities for external candidates scored 4.31.

These results confirm the existence of credible and visible procedures governing vacancy announcements, selection criteria, and safeguards against conflicts of interest and incompatibilities. They provide a solid foundation for the “Recruitment and Selection” pillar of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers.

II. Performance Assessment

The performance assessment chapter achieved an average score of 4.00. However, this overall result conceals an important distinction between the perceived objectivity of evaluations and their contribution to career development.

Annual evaluations are regarded as objective (4.28), appropriately tailored to researchers’ professional level and field of expertise (4.06), and capable of recognizing administrative and mentoring contributions (4.28). By contrast, post-evaluation feedback, including concrete professional development plans, received a score of only 3.41.

This gap is strategically significant. While the Institute appears to have established a credible and fair evaluation system, assessment outcomes are not yet sufficiently integrated into career development, mentoring, and professional growth pathways.

III. Promotion and Career Development

Promotion and career development received an overall score of 4.09, indicating generally positive perceptions while also revealing areas where greater clarity and consistency are needed.

Promotion based on predefined criteria scored 4.09, equitable access to training opportunities scored 4.06, and the existence of appeal mechanisms for promotion decisions scored 4.13.

Nevertheless, the analysis identified a substantial proportion of neutral or negative responses. This may be explained by the fact that the methodology governing promotion to higher research grades had not yet been formally adopted at the time of the survey, combined with limited awareness of existing appeal procedures.

IV. Remuneration and Recognition

This represents one of the most critical areas identified by the survey, with an average score of 3.66.

Perceptions of fair and transparent remuneration policies received a score of 3.03, while the allocation of benefits and incentives derived from European-funded projects, proportionate to individual contributions, scored 3.59. The only highly rated aspect within this chapter concerned equal access to research leave and mobility opportunities, which received a score of 4.38.

From a strategic perspective, the issue extends beyond salary levels alone. It concerns the perceived relationship between effort, performance, contribution, and recognition, all of which directly influence motivation, organizational commitment, and institutional attractiveness.

V. Equality, Inclusion, and Institutional Climate

Equality and non-discrimination constitute a clear institutional strength, with an average score of 4.23.

Promotion of diversity in terms of gender, age, and ethnicity within research teams received a score of 4.53; anti-harassment policies received 4.03; and support measures for employees with disabilities received 4.13.

At the same time, the survey revealed a relatively high proportion of neutral responses regarding anti-harassment measures and disability support. This suggests not the absence of policies, but rather a need for greater visibility, communication, and practical implementation of existing measures.

VI. Conflict Management and Procedural Safeguards

The conflict management chapter achieved an average score of 4.01. However, the item addressing the prompt and impartial resolution of human resources-related disputes scored only 3.75.

Confidentiality of personal data was positively perceived (4.09), while the existence and consistent application of a clear Code of Ethics received a score of 4.19.

Overall, the Institute benefits from established procedures and regulatory frameworks. Nevertheless, awareness, trust, and practical understanding of reporting, mediation, and appeal mechanisms could be further strengthened.

VII. Training and Talent Retention

This is the most vulnerable area identified in the survey, with an average score of 3.42.

While training opportunities are considered well aligned with researchers' needs (4.03), the Institute's ability to retain talent through fair career policies and to reduce researcher outflow received a score of only 2.81, representing the lowest result across the entire survey.

These findings suggest that training opportunities are available, but are not yet sufficiently supported by clear career prospects, recognition mechanisms, and long-term professional development pathways.

HRS4R Strategic Diagnosis

The survey findings indicate that the Victor Babeş National Institute has reached an intermediate stage of HRS4R maturity. Core procedures and governance mechanisms are largely operational, visible, and positively perceived by staff. However, the institutional mechanisms linking performance assessment, training, promotion, recognition, and retention have not yet evolved into a fully integrated career development framework.

This conclusion is particularly relevant for the revision of the HRS4R Action Plan. Future measures should focus on creating stronger connections between HR procedures and researchers' professional trajectories, thereby enhancing the Institute's capacity to attract, develop, recognize, and retain talented researchers.

It should also be acknowledged that progress in some of these areas depends on the broader national research and innovation policy environment. While governmental policies generally support research career development at the strategic level, implementation is often constrained by insufficient and unstable funding. In particular, remuneration policies remain highly dependent on the Institute's success in securing competitive national and international research grants, in the absence of a predictable and sustainable annual funding framework.

Strategic Priorities for 2026–2029

Priority 1. Career Development and Talent Retention

The primary strategic objective is to transform performance assessment and training into an integrated career development system supported by individual development plans, mentoring structures, transparent promotion pathways, and targeted retention measures.

This priority directly addresses the relatively low scores recorded for post-evaluation feedback and talent retention and should constitute a central pillar of the revised HRS4R Action Plan.

Priority 2. Fairness and Transparency in Reward and Recognition

The Institute should further strengthen the relationship among performance, responsibility, and recognition, both in basic remuneration and in the allocation of benefits from competitive and international research projects.

Even within a constrained financial environment, greater transparency, predictability, and communication of reward mechanisms can significantly improve perceptions of fairness.

Priority 3. Visibility of Protection, Ethics and Appeal Mechanisms

Existing procedures related to ethics, conflict resolution, anti-harassment measures, appeals, whistleblowing, and data protection should be made more visible, accessible, and understandable to staff.

This priority is important not only from a compliance perspective but also for strengthening institutional trust and fostering a positive organizational culture.

Priority 4. Consolidation and Scaling of Good Practices

The Institute should continue to build on its strengths in recruitment, diversity and inclusion, research ethics, and training provision. These areas should be documented, communicated, and monitored as examples of good HRS4R practice, contributing to continuous institutional improvement and long-term sustainability.

Summary of Thematic Areas and Strategic Priorities

Thematic Area	Average Score	Interpretation	Strategic Priority
I. Recruitment and Selection	4.29	Well-established area demonstrating strong institutional practice and alignment with Charter principles.	Maintain and monitor
II. Performance Assessment	4.00	Strong performance in objective evaluation processes, but weaknesses remain in linking assessment outcomes to career development and professional growth.	High
III. Promotion and Career Development	4.09	Generally positive perceptions; further procedural clarification and communication are needed to ensure transparency and understanding.	Medium
IV. Remuneration, Recognition, Professional Development Leave	3.66	Critical area, particularly regarding perceptions of remuneration fairness, recognition, and reward mechanisms.	Very High
V. Equality, Diversity and Non-Discrimination	4.23	Institutional strength; existing policies are positively perceived but would benefit from increased visibility and operational implementation.	Maintain and monitor
VI. Conflict Management and Procedural Safeguards	4.01	Appropriate frameworks are in place; however, awareness, trust, and practical understanding of available mechanisms require further strengthening.	High
VII. Training and Talent Retention	3.42	Most significant structural vulnerability, particularly regarding career prospects, retention, and preventing talent outflow.	Very High

Mapping Between the Principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Internal Survey

Mapping Between the Principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Internal Survey

The 2023 version of the European Charter for Researchers² is structured around 20 key principles grouped into four pillars. These principles provide the reference framework for the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) and support the development of attractive, transparent, and sustainable research careers across Europe.

Pillar 1 – Ethics, Integrity, Gender Equality, and Open Science

1. **Research Ethics and Integrity** – adherence to the highest standards of ethical conduct, honesty, reliability, objectivity, impartiality, independence, and accountability towards current and future generations of researchers.
2. **Freedom of Scientific Research** – freedom of thought, expression, and scientific inquiry, including the ability to formulate research questions, select appropriate methodologies, challenge established knowledge, and present innovative ideas.
3. **Open Science** – promotion of open access to publications, research data, and other research outputs, following the principle of “as open as possible, as closed as necessary”, while fostering responsible open science practices.
4. **Gender Equality** – integration of the gender dimension into research content and ensuring gender equality in recruitment, career progression, leadership positions, and decision-making processes.
5. **Valuing Diversity** – recognition and promotion of diversity in all its forms, including gender, ethnic origin, religion, social background, disability, age, sexual orientation, and other characteristics, while actively preventing discrimination.

Pillar 2 – Research Assessment, Recruitment and Career Progression

6. **The Research Profession** – recognition of research as a professional career requiring specific competencies, responsibilities, and clearly defined roles.
7. **Researcher Mobility** – support for geographical, intersectoral, interdisciplinary, and international mobility, together with recognition of mobility as a valuable component of career development and research assessment.
8. **Research Sustainability** – commitment to conducting research that contributes to societal well-being and sustainable development, while ensuring responsible use of resources and minimizing environmental impact.
9. **Merit-Based and Transparent Recruitment** – implementation of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) principles, including clear vacancy notices, transparent selection criteria, balanced selection panels, and measures to prevent bias.
10. **Responsible Research Assessment** – assessment practices focused on research quality, impact, and the diversity of contributions rather than relying solely on bibliometric indicators, while recognizing Open Science practices, mobility, leadership, mentoring, and broader academic contributions.

² <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2023/1640/oj>

Pillar 3 – Working Conditions and Practices

11. **Fair and Inclusive Working Conditions** – provision of a safe, healthy, inclusive, and supportive working environment, including adequate resources, work–life balance measures, and prevention of harassment.
12. **Stable and Sustainable Research Careers** – promotion of career stability and predictability through transparent employment conditions and the reduction of career precarity.
13. **Fair Remuneration and Social Protection** – provision of remuneration and benefits commensurate with qualifications, responsibilities, and performance, alongside access to social protection and employment rights.
14. **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion** – implementation of active policies supporting equal opportunities, reasonable accommodation for researchers with disabilities, and measures to prevent discrimination.
15. **Participation in Research Governance** – involvement of researchers in institutional governance structures, strategic decision-making processes, and consultation mechanisms.

Pillar 4 – Research Careers and Talent Development

16. **Research Career Development** – provision of career development opportunities and support mechanisms throughout all career stages, from early-career to senior researchers.
17. **Recognition and Development of Skills and Competences** – recognition and promotion of transferable, interdisciplinary, and intersectoral skills, together with support for their continuous development.
18. **Career Guidance and Support** – access to mentoring, coaching, and career guidance services supporting professional development and career transitions.
19. **Training and Lifelong Learning** – access to continuous professional development opportunities, including training in research management, leadership, ethics, Open Science, innovation, and other relevant competencies.
20. **Shared Responsibility for Talent Development** – recognition that researchers, employers, funders, and policymakers share responsibility for creating an attractive, sustainable, and supportive research career ecosystem.

Coverage of Charter Principles Within the Internal Survey

The internal consultation survey was primarily designed as a human resources and career management assessment tool. Consequently, not all 20 Charter principles are covered to the same extent.

Some principles are addressed directly through specific survey questions, particularly those related to recruitment and selection, performance assessment, career development, remuneration, equality and inclusion, conflict management, training, and talent retention. Other principles are addressed indirectly through organizational practices and institutional policies, while a limited number are only marginally reflected in the questionnaire.

The table below presents the correspondence between the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the survey questions, distinguishing between principles that are directly, indirectly, or **insufficiently covered** by the consultation exercise.

Correspondence Between the Principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Internal Consultation Survey

Charter Principle	Survey Coverage	Relevant Survey Section(s)	Key Evidence from the Internal Consultation	Related HRS4R Action Plan Actions	Assessment and Remarks
1. Research Ethics and Integrity	Direct	Section VI – Conflict Management and Procedural Safeguards (Items 18–19)	The Code of Ethics received a score of 4.19, while personal data confidentiality scored 4.09.	Actions 15 and 16: annual awareness sessions on research integrity, ethics, and GDPR compliance.	Well covered. Additional evidence may be drawn from the Code of Ethics and institutional research integrity procedures.
2. Freedom of Scientific Research	Indirect	Not explicitly assessed	No dedicated survey item.	Supported through institutional research policies and the research environment.	The Institute's Code of Ethics and Conduct in Research includes specific provisions safeguarding researchers' autonomy and academic freedom.
3. Open Science	Limited	Not explicitly assessed	The survey does not include questions related to Open Access, FAIR data, or Open Science practices.	Action 14.	Greater awareness and visibility of Open Science policies and support mechanisms are required.
4. Gender Equality	Direct	Section V – Equality, Diversity and Non-Discrimination (Item 14)	Diversity across gender, age, and ethnicity received a score of 4.53.	Action 10.	Strong coverage. The Institute has an updated Gender Equality Plan and gender-related provisions are integrated into recruitment and promotion procedures.
5. Valuing Diversity	Direct	Section V (Items 14–16)	Diversity scored 4.53; anti-harassment measures 4.03; support for researchers with disabilities 4.13.	Actions 10–12.	Institutional strength. Further operational development is recommended regarding disability inclusion and accessibility.
6. The Research Profession	Indirect	Sections II, III and VII	The survey addresses research careers through performance assessment,	Actions 3, 4, 16, 17 and 18.	Supported by updated evaluation, recruitment, and promotion frameworks.

Charter Principle	Survey Coverage	Relevant Survey Section(s)	Key Evidence from the Internal Consultation	Related HRS4R Action Plan Actions	Assessment and Remarks
7. Researcher Mobility	Indirect	Section III (Item 9); Section IV (Item 12)	promotion, training, and retention. Training opportunities and mobility leave are positively perceived; mobility leave scored 4.38.	Actions 9, 16 and 18.	International mobility and participation in collaborative projects are actively supported, subject to available funding.
8. Research Sustainability	Limited	Not explicitly assessed	No dedicated survey item.	Reflected indirectly through institutional research strategy and responsible research practices.	Future surveys could include items related to sustainability and societal impact of research activities.
9. Merit-Based and Transparent Recruitment (OTM-R)	Direct	Section I (Items 1–3)	Recruitment transparency scored 4.34; merit-based selection 4.21; equal opportunities for external candidates 4.31.	Actions 1 and 2.	Strongly supported through dedicated OTM-R procedures and recruitment methodologies.
10. Responsible Research Assessment	Direct	Section II (Items 4–7)	Objective assessment scored 4.28; alignment with grade and discipline 4.06; recognition of mentoring and administrative contributions 4.28.	Actions 3 and 4.	Institutional evaluation procedures already incorporate non-bibliometric contributions in line with CoARA principles.
11. Fair and Inclusive Working Conditions	Direct	Sections IV, V and VI	Survey covers remuneration, leave, non-discrimination, anti-harassment policies, and conflict management.	Actions 7–15.	Well represented, although significant gaps remain regarding perceived remuneration fairness and awareness of protection mechanisms.
12. Stable and Sustainable Research Careers	Direct	Section VII (Item 21); Section II (Item 5); Section III	Talent retention scored 2.81; career-development feedback scored 3.41.	Actions 3, 4, 18 and 19.	Critical HRS4R area with direct implications for talent retention and institutional attractiveness.
13. Fair Remuneration and Social Protection	Direct	Section IV (Items 11–13)	Remuneration policy: 3.03; project-related	Actions 7 and 8.	Critical area requiring continued institutional

Charter Principle	Survey Coverage	Relevant Survey Section(s)	Key Evidence from the Internal Consultation	Related HRS4R Action Plan Actions	Assessment and Remarks
			incentives: 3.59; mobility leave: 4.38.		attention despite external funding constraints.
14. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion	Direct	Section V (Items 14–16)	Diversity and inclusion are positively perceived, although disability-related measures generated a high proportion of neutral responses.	Actions 10–12.	Greater awareness of institutional provisions is required. Accessibility improvements should continue within the constraints of the Institute's historic infrastructure.
15. Participation in Research Governance	Indirect	Not explicitly assessed	No dedicated survey item.	To be incorporated in future consultation exercises.	Researchers are regularly consulted on major institutional decisions, including the development of the Collective Labor Agreement and other strategic documents.
16. Research Career Development	Direct	Section II (Item 5); Section III; Section VII (Items 20–21)	Career development and retention represent the most significant areas for improvement (scores: 3.41 and 2.81 respectively).	Actions 3, 4, 16, 17, 18 and 19.	Priority area for the revised HRS4R Action Plan.
17. Recognition and Development of Skills and Competences	Direct	Section II (Item 7); Section VII (Item 20)	Administrative and mentoring contributions are recognized; training opportunities scored 4.03.	Actions 16 and 17.	Continued support for the development of transferable skills and mentoring activities is recommended.
18. Career Guidance and Support	Direct / Indirect	Section II (Item 5); Section VII	The limited availability of structured post-evaluation development plans suggests that career guidance services remain underdeveloped.	Actions 3, 4 and 17.	Formalization of career guidance, mentoring, and coaching mechanisms is recommended.
19. Training and Lifelong Learning	Direct	Section III (Item 9); Section VII (Item 20)	Training opportunities are positively evaluated and broadly aligned with researchers' needs.	Actions 11 and 18.	Additional training in transferable skills, grant writing, leadership, and project management

Charter Principle	Survey Coverage	Relevant Survey Section(s)	Key Evidence from the Internal Consultation	Related HRS4R Action Plan Actions	Assessment and Remarks
20. Shared Responsibility for Talent Development					should be considered.
	Indirect	Reflected throughout the survey and strategic conclusions	Findings demonstrate the interdependence of career development, remuneration, feedback mechanisms, project participation, and HR management practices.	Actions 18–21.	Further measures are needed to strengthen talent retention and career sustainability, while acknowledging the influence of the broader national research and innovation policy environment.

Conclusions

The survey used by the Institute represents a valuable tool for assessing the Human Resources Management and Research Career Development dimensions of the HRS4R framework. However, it does not fully cover all 20 principles of the revised European Charter for Researchers.

The results of the internal consultation demonstrate the existence of a functional institutional framework supported by appropriate procedures, methodologies, and internal policies. At the same time, they highlight the need to further strengthen mechanisms for career development, talent retention, recognition of researchers' contributions, and the visibility and accessibility of institutional protection and support.

Principles Well Covered by the Survey. The principles most comprehensively addressed by the survey are:

- **Merit-Based and Transparent Recruitment (OTM-R);**
- **Responsible Research Assessment;**
- **Gender Equality;**
- **Valuing Diversity and Inclusion;**
- **Fair Remuneration and Working Conditions;**
- **Research Career Development.**

It should be noted that, in the case of Research Career Development, the survey provides stronger evidence of existing gaps and unmet expectations than of high institutional performance, thereby offering a clear basis for future improvement measures.

Principles Partially or Insufficiently Covered. Several Charter principles are only partially addressed or are not explicitly assessed within the current survey instrument:

- **Freedom of Scientific Research (Principle 2);**
- **Open Science (Principle 3);**
- **Research Sustainability (Principle 8);**
- **Participation in Research Governance (Principle 15).**

Although these principles are not directly evaluated through the survey, they are supported through institutional regulations and governance frameworks, including the Institute's Internal Regulations, the Code of Ethics and Conduct in Scientific Research (updated in 2026), and the Collective Labor Agreement (2026–2027), all of which are publicly available through the Institute's website.

Areas Requiring Further Action

The analysis identifies several priority areas for future action:

- strengthening talent retention mechanisms and improving career sustainability;
- increasing awareness of existing institutional measures supporting academic freedom and research autonomy;
- improving the visibility of initiatives promoting research sustainability, including activities developed through the Diagnostic Center and the Technology Transfer Center;
- developing and formalizing institutional policies and guidance related to Open Science;
- enhancing researchers' participation in institutional governance, consultation processes, and strategic decision-making.

Addressing these areas will contribute to a more comprehensive implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and support the Institute's continued progress towards HRS4R maturity.

Recommendation

The next institutional survey should be explicitly designed to cover all 20 principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

A revised survey framework would enable a more comprehensive assessment of Charter implementation, strengthen evidence-based monitoring of the HRS4R Action Plan, and provide a more robust basis for future internal reviews and external evaluations.

II. Gap Analysis and OTM-R Checklist HRS4R 2026

Gap Analysis Methodology and Assessment Framework

This document complements the HRS4R strategic assessment through a structured gap analysis covering the thematic areas of the European Charter for Researchers, together with an operational OTM-R (Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment) checklist focused on recruitment and selection practices.

The analysis is primarily based on evidence gathered from the internal consultation survey conducted in April 2026, which included 32 respondents and yielded an overall institutional score of 3.99 out of 5. Of the 21 survey items assessed, five scored below the benchmark value of 4.0, indicating areas requiring further attention and improvement.

The survey findings constitute the primary source of internal evidence for identifying strengths, weaknesses, and priority areas for action. Within this framework, the level of each identified gap is interpreted as an institutional risk indicator and classified as **Low**, **Moderate**, or **High**.

The operational thresholds applied in this assessment are as follows:

- **Scores above 4.0** indicate a well-established practice that is generally aligned with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and therefore correspond to a **Low Gap** level.
- **Scores between 3.0 and 4.0** indicate partial alignment and areas where further development, clarification, or institutional support may be required, corresponding to a **Moderate Gap** level.
- **Scores close to or below 3.0** indicate significant shortcomings, increased institutional risk, and the need for priority intervention through targeted actions within the HRS4R Action Plan, corresponding to a **High Gap** level.

The purpose of this analysis is not only to identify areas of non-compliance or weakness, but also to support continuous institutional improvement by linking evidence, identified gaps, and corrective actions to the strategic objectives of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers. The resulting assessment provides the basis for prioritizing actions to strengthen researcher support, enhance career development opportunities, improve working conditions, and reinforce the Institute's capacity to attract, develop, and retain talented researchers in accordance with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

HRS4R Gap Analysis and OTM-R Assessment Matrix

No	HRS4R Area / Charter Principle	Evidence from Internal Consultation	Current Status	Gap Level	Strategic Interpretation	Recommended Action
1	Recruitment and Selection (OTM-R)	Overall score: 4.29; transparency: 4.34; merit-based recruitment: 4.21; equal opportunities for internal and external candidates: 4.31.	Good–Very Good	Low	Recruitment procedures are positively perceived and constitute an institutional strength.	Maintain current practices, update procedures annually, and strengthen external visibility.
2	Transparency of	Vacancy announcements are published on	Good	Low	The framework is established and visible, but	Annual review and periodic

No	HRS4R Area / Charter Principle	Evidence from Internal Consultation	Current Status	Gap Level	Strategic Interpretation	Recommended Action
3	Recruitment Criteria	the Institute's website, EURAXESS, and ANCS Jobs; a dedicated recruitment methodology defines transparent criteria.			requires continuous monitoring and consistent implementation.	compliance audits.
	Merit-Based Assessment and Selection	78.13% of respondents assess competence- and merit-based selection positively, while 12.50% express partial or complete disagreement.	Good	Moderate	Confidence in the system is generally high, but perceptions of impartiality could be further strengthened.	Introduce standardized assessment feedback forms and evaluation guidelines.
	Equal Opportunities in Recruitment	75% of respondents rate equal opportunities for internal and external candidates positively.	Good	Moderate	Overall perception is positive, although slightly lower than other recruitment-related indicators.	Improve communication regarding recruitment criteria and external recruitment procedures.
4	Responsible Research Assessment	Objectivity of evaluation: 4.28; alignment with discipline and grade: 4.06; recognition of administrative and mentoring contributions: 4.28.	Good	Low	The assessment framework is perceived as balanced and robust.	Maintain and periodically calibrate assessment procedures.
5	Career Development Through Assessment	Post-evaluation feedback linked to professional development plans scored 3.41.	Moderate	High	Performance assessment has not yet been sufficiently translated into structured career development and guidance.	Introduce Individual Career Development Plans and periodic Career Development Reviews (CDRs), aligned with evolving national policies.
6	Career Progression and Promotion	Promotion criteria scored 4.09; appeal mechanisms scored 4.13; a high proportion of	Good, but not fully consolidated	Moderate	The framework is positively perceived, but procedural clarity should be strengthened.	Finalize promotion procedures and implement structured
7						

No	HRS4R Area / Charter Principle	Evidence from Internal Consultation	Current Status	Gap Level	Strategic Interpretation	Recommended Action
		neutral responses due to the absence of a final promotion methodology at the time of the survey.				communication measures.
8	Access to Training and Research Mobility	Equitable access to training opportunities scored 4.06; research and mobility leave scored 4.38.	Good	Low–Moderate	Access is generally perceived as fair, although concerns remain regarding conference participation and mobility opportunities.	Apply transparent allocation criteria and strengthen support for early-career researchers.
9	Fair Remuneration	Fairness and transparency of remuneration policies scored 3.03.	Fragile	High	One of the clearest structural gaps was identified within the HR framework.	Improve transparency, communication, and complementary recognition mechanisms.
10	Recognition of Contributions in Competitive and EU-Funded Projects	Allocation of benefits related to European projects scored 3.59, with a high proportion of neutral responses.	Moderate	Moderate–High	Perceptions of fairness remain insufficiently consolidated and are influenced by unequal participation in projects.	Develop transparent allocation rules and broaden participation in competitive projects.
11	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Diversity scored 4.53; anti-harassment measures 4.03; disability support 4.13.	Good–Very Good	Low	The Institute performs well in fostering an inclusive institutional environment.	Increase visibility and communication of existing measures.
12	Anti-Harassment Awareness	21.88% of respondents expressed no clear opinion regarding anti-harassment policies.	Good, but with limited visibility	Moderate	The gap relates primarily to awareness and communication rather than policy availability.	Annual awareness campaigns and designation of clearly identified contact persons.
13	Disability Inclusion and Accessibility	31.25% of respondents expressed neutral views regarding support for researchers with disabilities; accessibility limitations exist in	Moderate	Moderate–High	Institutional commitment exists, but operational readiness remains incomplete.	Conduct an accessibility audit and develop a realistic adaptation plan.

No	HRS4R Area / Charter Principle	Evidence from Internal Consultation	Current Status	Gap Level	Strategic Interpretation	Recommended Action
		certain areas of the historic building.				
14	Conflict Management and Procedural Safeguards	Rapid and impartial resolution of HR-related disputes scored 3.75; 31.25% of respondents provided neutral responses.	Moderate	Moderate–High	Procedures are in place, but are insufficiently known or tested in practice.	Simplify procedures, develop visual guidance tools, and increase awareness activities.
15	Data Protection and Confidentiality	Confidentiality of personal data scored 4.09.	Good	Low	Existing safeguards are positively perceived.	Continue periodic GDPR training and awareness activities.
16	Research Ethics and Professional Conduct	The Code of Ethics received a score of 4.19; however, 15.63% of respondents expressed disagreement.	Good	Moderate	Awareness exists, but consistent implementation and understanding could be improved.	Continue regular training on ethics, research integrity, and responsible conduct of research.
17	Training and Lifelong Learning	Training programs aligned with researchers' needs received a score of 4.03.	Good	Low	Training provision is positively perceived and provides a strong basis for future development.	Implement annual training plans based on identified needs.
18	Talent Retention	The item addressing talent retention scored 2.81, the lowest result in the entire survey.	Weak	Very High	This represents the Institute's most significant strategic vulnerability.	Develop an integrated policy on career development, recognition, and talent retention.
19	Strategic Coherence of Human Resources Management	Survey findings link low retention levels to insufficient developmental feedback, remuneration concerns, and perceptions regarding project-related rewards.	Moderate	High	The challenge is systemic rather than procedural: individual components exist, but they do not yet function as an integrated career support ecosystem.	Strengthen HRS4R governance, introduce monitoring indicators (KPIs), and improve integration between assessment, career development, recognition, and retention mechanisms.

Prioritization of Identified Gaps

The gap analysis highlights three distinct categories of institutional gaps, each requiring a different level of strategic intervention within the HRS4R Action Plan.

1. Low-Level Gaps: Consolidation and Maintenance of Good Practices

The first category comprises areas in which institutional practices are generally well-established and positively perceived by researchers. These include recruitment and selection processes, procedural ethics and integrity, objective performance assessment, diversity and inclusion, and non-discriminatory access to specific institutional benefits and opportunities.

In these areas, the strategic priority is not corrective action but rather the maintenance, monitoring, and documentation of good practices. Continued alignment with Charter principles, regular review of procedures, and systematic collection of evidence will help ensure long-term sustainability and support future HRS4R evaluations.

2. Moderate-Level Gaps: Visibility, Communication, Operationalization

The second category includes gaps primarily related to communication, awareness, and practical implementation, rather than deficiencies in the underlying regulatory framework.

Examples include appeal mechanisms, anti-harassment policies, support for researchers with disabilities, conflict management procedures, and certain aspects of promotion and career progression. In most cases, institutional policies and procedures already exist; however, their visibility, accessibility, and practical understanding among researchers remain limited.

Addressing these gaps requires targeted communication measures, awareness-raising activities, improved information accessibility, and greater operational visibility for existing mechanisms.

High and Very High Gaps: Career Development and Talent Retention. The third category comprises the most strategically significant gaps, as they directly affect researchers' career experiences, motivation, and long-term engagement with the institution. These include:

- the limited use of post-evaluation feedback as a career development tool;
- perceptions of insufficient fairness and transparency in remuneration;
- concerns regarding the recognition of individual contributions within European and competitive research projects;
- talent retention and the prevention of researcher outflow.

These areas represent the highest institutional risks identified through the consultation process and should therefore constitute the core priorities of the revised HRS4R Action Plan.

The findings suggest that the Institute has already established many of the procedural components required for an effective Human Resources Strategy for Researchers. However, these components are not yet sufficiently integrated into a coherent career development ecosystem linking performance assessment, professional development, recognition, reward, and retention.

Consequently, future HRS4R actions should focus on strengthening the connections between these elements and creating a more transparent, supportive, and sustainable research career framework capable of attracting, developing, recognizing, and retaining talented researchers.

Strategic prioritization of identified gaps

Priority Level	Strategic gap	Rationale
Priority 1	Talent retention and career sustainability	This area recorded the lowest score in the entire survey (2.81) and represents the most significant institutional risk. The ability to attract, develop, and retain talented researchers is a core objective of HRS4R and directly impacts organizational sustainability, research excellence, and long-term competitiveness.
Priority 2	Fair remuneration, recognition and reward mechanisms	Perceptions of remuneration fairness scored 3.03, while recognition of contributions through benefits associated with European-funded projects scored 3.59. These findings indicate a need to strengthen transparency, predictability, and the perceived link between contribution, performance, and recognition.
Priority 3	Career development and post-assessment feedback	Post-evaluation feedback linked to professional development plans received a score of 3.41. This gap directly affects researchers' career progression, professional development opportunities, motivation, and long-term retention.
Priority 4	Conflict management, protection mechanisms and appeal procedures	Existing procedures are largely in place, but awareness, visibility, and practical understanding remain limited, as reflected by the relatively high proportion of neutral responses. Strengthening trust in institutional support mechanisms is essential for a positive research environment.
Priority 5	Disability inclusion, anti-harassment measures and policy awareness	The primary challenge concerns operational implementation, accessibility, and awareness rather than the absence of institutional policies. Greater visibility and practical application of existing measures are required to ensure an inclusive and supportive working environment.

Strategic Implications for the HRS4R Action Plan

The prioritization exercise demonstrates that the Institute's most pressing challenges are concentrated in career development, recognition, reward, and talent retention, rather than in recruitment, ethics, or equality frameworks, which are generally perceived as institutional strengths.

Consequently, the revised HRS4R Action Plan should place particular emphasis on measures that strengthen the researcher career ecosystem, including structured career development pathways, enhanced recognition and reward mechanisms, transparent communication, and targeted retention measures. Addressing these priorities is expected to generate the greatest impact on researcher satisfaction, institutional attractiveness, and long-term organizational resilience.

OTM-R Institutional Self-Assessment

1. OPEN

OTM-R question	Assessment	Evidence / justification	Gap level	Recommended action
Are research positions publicly advertised and sufficiently visible?	Yes, to a large extent	Vacancy notices are published through multiple channels, including the Institute's website, EURAXESS, and ANCS Jobs. Recruitment transparency received a score of 4.34.	Low	Maintain multi-channel publication practices and periodically update the recruitment section of the Institute's website.
Are external candidates actively encouraged to apply?	Yes, but further improvement is possible	Equal opportunities for external candidates scored 4.31; however, positive responses accounted for 75%, indicating room for improvement.	Moderate	Increase international visibility of vacancies and further clarify recruitment criteria for external applicants.
Is recruitment communication sufficiently open, inclusive, and attractive?	Likely yes, although only indirectly evidenced	Positive results on diversity and recruitment suggest an inclusive environment; however, the survey did not directly assess the wording of vacancy notices and communication practices.	Moderate	Conduct a systematic review of recruitment templates from an OTM-R, diversity, and inclusion perspective.

2. TRANSPARENT

OTM-R question	Assessment	Evidence / justification	Gap level	Recommended action
Are selection criteria clear, accessible, and publicly available?	Yes	The survey and institutional documentation confirm the existence of a published recruitment methodology with clearly defined criteria. Recruitment transparency scored 4.34.	Low	Continue annual review and updating of selection criteria.
Are evaluation committees and assessment procedures protected against conflicts of interest?	Yes, to a large extent	Members of recruitment and evaluation committees are required to declare conflicts of interest and incompatibilities. Merit-based assessment scored 4.21.	Moderate	Further standardize documentation and provide periodic training for committee members.
Are recruitment outcomes and appeal mechanisms sufficiently transparent?	Partially	Appeal mechanisms scored 4.13; however, a significant proportion of respondents selected neutral answers, suggesting limited awareness.	Moderate	Simplify procedures and improve communication regarding appeal and complaint mechanisms.
Is the interpretation of performance indicators sufficiently clear?	Partially to largely	Annual evaluations are perceived as objective (4.28), but developmental feedback remains weak.	Moderate	Strengthen the link between performance assessment criteria and individual career development planning.

3. MERIT-BASED

OTM-R question	Assessment	Evidence/justification	Gap level	Recommended action
Is selection based on competencies, achievements, and merit?	Yes, to a large extent	The survey item addressing competence- and merit-based selection received a score of 4.21.	Low–Moderate	Maintain current procedures and improve communication regarding evaluation principles.
Does assessment recognize non-bibliometric contributions?	Yes	Administrative responsibilities, mentoring activities, and broader institutional contributions are recognized within the evaluation framework. This item received a score of 4.28.	Low	Maintain and document this practice as evidence of alignment with Responsible Research Assessment principles and CoARA commitments.
Are differentiated contributions to research projects and institutional life adequately recognized?	Partially	Perceptions regarding remuneration fairness remain low, while recognition through benefits associated with European-funded projects received only moderate scores.	High	Develop transparent recognition mechanisms and establish clear rules for allocating project-related benefits and rewards.
Do recruited researchers have clear opportunities for career progression and professional development?	Partially	Promotion procedures are generally perceived positively; however, career-development feedback and talent retention indicators remain weak.	High	Develop a structured career development policy, introduce mentoring mechanisms, and implement formal Career Development Reviews (CDRs).

Overall OTM-R Assessment

The self-assessment indicates a high degree of alignment with the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) principles across recruitment procedures, transparency of selection criteria, and merit-based assessment practices.

The strongest areas are associated with the Open and Transparent dimensions of the OTM-R, where institutional procedures are well-established, publicly available, and positively perceived by researchers.

The most significant gaps are found within the Merit-Based dimension beyond the recruitment stage itself, particularly regarding the long-term recognition of individual contributions, opportunities for career progression, and talent retention. These findings suggest that recruitment practices are largely compliant with OTM-R requirements, while further efforts are needed to strengthen the connection between recruitment, career development, recognition, and retention throughout the researcher lifecycle.

Consequently, future OTM-R actions should focus not only on attracting talented researchers but also on ensuring that recruited researchers benefit from transparent career pathways, equitable recognition mechanisms, and a supportive environment that promotes long-term professional development and institutional commitment.

OTM-R Checklist

OTM-R Element	Status	Evidence / Justification	Priority Action
Transparent Publication of Vacancies	Implemented	Research positions are advertised through the Institute's website, EURAXESS, and ANCS Jobs. Recruitment transparency scored 4.34.	Maintain current practice and continue periodic monitoring.
Equal Access for External Candidates	Implemented, with room for further consolidation	Equal opportunities for external candidates scored 4.31. Overall perception is positive, although not entirely uniform across respondents.	Increase international visibility and outreach to external applicants.
Clear Selection Criteria	Implemented	A published recruitment methodology and clearly defined selection criteria are in place.	Annual review and updating of recruitment criteria.
Conflict-of-Interest-Free Selection Committees	Implemented, with room for further consolidation	Committee members are required to submit declarations regarding conflicts of interest and incompatibilities. Merit-based recruitment scored 4.21.	Further standardization of procedures and targeted training
Appeal and Complaint Mechanisms	Partially Implemented	Appeal procedures received a score of 4.13; however, a substantial proportion of respondents selected neutral answers, suggesting limited awareness.	Simplify procedures and strengthen communication regarding appeal mechanisms.
Merit-Based Assessment	Implemented	Objectivity of performance assessment scored 4.28.	Maintain current practices and periodically review assessment procedures.
Recognition of Diverse Contributions	Partially Implemented	Administrative and mentoring activities are recognized, but financial recognition and reward mechanisms are perceived less positively.	Review recognition and reward mechanisms
Integration of Recruitment with Career Development	Insufficiently Implemented	Career-development feedback scored 3.41, while talent retention scored 2.81.	Develop a structured career development policy and introduce formal Career Development Reviews (CDRs).
Institutional Attractiveness and Talent Retention	Insufficiently Implemented	Talent retention recorded the lowest score in the survey (2.81).	Develop targeted retention measures, strengthen career pathways, and improve long-term career sustainability.

Overall OTM-R Compliance Assessment

The Institute demonstrates a strong level of compliance with the core principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R), particularly regarding vacancy publication, transparency of selection criteria, and merit-based evaluation processes.

The assessment also highlights several areas requiring further development. These are concentrated less on recruitment itself and more on the post-recruitment stages of the researcher lifecycle, including career development, recognition and reward mechanisms, appeal procedures, and talent retention.

Consequently, the next phase of OTM-R implementation should focus on strengthening the integration between recruitment, career development, performance assessment, recognition, and retention. Such measures will support a more comprehensive researcher-centered approach and further align institutional practices with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the HRS4R framework.

Conclusions

The OTM-R gap analysis shows that the Institute's main challenge is not recruitment itself, but the integration of recruitment, performance assessment, career development, recognition, and talent retention into a coherent researcher career framework.

The Institute performs well in the **Open** and **Transparent** dimensions of OTM-R, with strong results in recruitment, research ethics, diversity and inclusion, and objective performance assessment. However, further progress is needed in the **Merit-Based** dimension, particularly in career development feedback, recognition of individual contributions, and long-term career prospects.

The findings highlight the need to strengthen career development and retention policies and to improve researchers' awareness of existing procedures, opportunities, and support mechanisms. Researchers should be able to clearly understand career pathways, promotion criteria, and the relationship between performance, recognition, and professional opportunities.

Some challenges, particularly those related to remuneration and long-term retention, are influenced by external factors, including the national research funding environment and evolving regulatory requirements. Nevertheless, the Institute can further enhance its attractiveness and competitiveness through targeted measures that improve transparency, career support, and recognition practices.

Overall, the Institute has established a solid HRS4R foundation. The next strategic step is to build a more integrated, transparent, and researcher-centered career ecosystem that supports the attraction, development, recognition, and retention of talented researchers.

III. HRS4R Action Plan – 2026-2029

No.	HRS4R Principle	Survey Analysis	Proposed Action	Type	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Indicators of Achievement	Expected Outcome
1	Recruitment and Selection	Recruitment processes are positively perceived; transparency and international attractiveness should be maintained (score: 4.29).	Annual review and update of recruitment procedures and vacancy webpages, ensuring systematic publication on the Institute's website, EURAXESS, and other relevant platforms.	Continued	HR Department; Scientific Council	Annually, 2026–2029	Updated procedures; number of vacancies published through multiple channels; updated recruitment webpage	Maintain high recruitment standards and enhance institutional visibility among external candidates.
2	Recruitment and Selection	Merit-based recruitment is generally trusted, although a minority of respondents expressed concerns regarding potential personal or political influence.	Standardize declarations of impartiality and conflict of interest for selection committee members and develop a concise internal guide on objective candidate assessment.	Continued	HR Department; Scientific Council	Q4 2026	Standard declaration template adopted; assessment guide approved and distributed	Strengthen trust in merit-based recruitment procedures.
3	Evaluation and Career Development	Post-assessment feedback remains insufficiently developed (score: 3.41).	Introduce a standard post-evaluation feedback form including strengths, development needs, and annual objectives.	Continued	HR Department; Laboratory Heads	Q1 2027	Approved template; percentage of evaluations including an individual development plan	Strengthen the developmental value of performance assessment and improve career clarity.
4	Career Development	Early-career researchers require greater visibility regarding professional	Develop and publish an institutional Research Career Development Policy outlining career pathways, promotion	New	Institute Management; HR Department	Q2 2027	Policy approved and published on the intranet and website	Increase career predictability and reduce uncertainty.

No.	HRS4R Principle	Survey Analysis	Proposed Action	Type	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Indicators of Achievement	Expected Outcome
		progression opportunities.	criteria, and mobility opportunities.					
5	Promotion and Career Progression	Promotion regulations were not fully implemented at the time of the survey, affecting perceptions of transparency.	Organize dedicated information sessions on promotion criteria, procedures, and applicable regulations.	New	Institute Management; HR Department; Legal Office	Q4 2026	Information sessions delivered; participation records	Improve understanding and consistent application of promotion procedures.
6	Complaints and Appeals	Awareness of appeal mechanisms remains limited.	Publish a concise guide describing appeals procedures, timelines, responsibilities, and required documentation.	Continued	HR Department; Legal Office	Q1 2027	Guide published; information session organized	Improve awareness of procedural rights and appeal mechanisms.
7	Working Conditions and Rewards	Remuneration policies are perceived as insufficiently transparent and equitable (score: 3.03).	Prepare and communicate an explanatory note on salary structures, grading criteria, responsibilities, and performance-related elements.	New	Administrative Management; HR Department; Finance Department	Q1 2027	Explanatory document approved and communicated	Improve transparency and perceptions of fairness.
8	Working Conditions and Recognition	Respondents perceive a weak relationship between performance and reward.	Conduct an annual review of legal and financial options for recognizing differentiated contributions, including project leadership, mentoring, and institutional service.	Continued	Administrative Management; HR Department	Annually, 2027–2029	Annual internal report; recommendations produced	Strengthen recognition of diverse contributions.
9	Recognition in EU-Funded Projects	Limited participation in European projects affects perceptions of fairness and opportunity.	Establish an internal support program promoting participation in European projects, including mentoring for	New	Scientific Council	2027–2029	Number of mentoring sessions; number of researchers involved in projects	Broaden participation and reduce perceptions of exclusion.

No.	HRS4R Principle	Survey Analysis	Proposed Action	Type	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Indicators of Achievement	Expected Outcome
			proposal preparation and integration of early-career researchers into project teams.					
10	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Diversity is perceived very positively (score: 4.53).	Increase awareness of institutional diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity policies through targeted communication and monitoring.	Continued	HR Department; Ethics Committee; Management	Q3 2027	Annual awareness sessions; monitoring data available	Document and reinforce institutional good practices.
11	Anti-Harassment and Safe Working Environment	Existing anti-harassment measures are not fully known by all staff.	Conduct annual awareness campaigns on harassment prevention, unacceptable behavior, and reporting channels.	Continued	HR Department; Ethics Committee	Annually, starting Q4 2026	Awareness materials distributed; participation recorded	Increase visibility and trust in protection mechanisms.
12	Inclusion and Disability Support	Staff awareness regarding institutional readiness to support persons with disabilities remains limited.	Develop a minimum institutional accessibility and accommodation plan for future recruitment and employment situations involving researchers with disabilities.	Continued	Administrative Department; HR Department	Q3 2027	Priority measures identified and approved	Improve institutional readiness for inclusion.
13	Conflict Management and Procedural Safeguards	HR dispute-resolution mechanisms are perceived as insufficiently visible (score: 3.75).	Review and simplify the HR dispute-resolution procedure, including timelines and responsibilities.	Revised	HR Department; Legal Office; Management	Q2 2027	Revised procedure adopted and communicated	Improve accessibility and confidence in dispute-resolution mechanisms.
14	Research Ethics and Integrity	The Code of Ethics is positively perceived, but communication efforts should continue.	Organize annual awareness sessions on research ethics, research integrity, Open Science, and	Continued	Ethics Committee; Scientific Council	Annually, 2026–2029	At least two training sessions per year; materials distributed	Strengthen the institutional culture of ethics and integrity.

No.	HRS4R Principle	Survey Analysis	Proposed Action	Type	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Indicators of Achievement	Expected Outcome
			reporting mechanisms for misconduct.					
15	Data Protection and Research Environment	GDPR provisions are generally well perceived but could be communicated more effectively.	Update internal GDPR guidance annually and integrate it into regular staff information sessions.	Revised	Data Protection Officer; HR Department	Annually	Updated guidance materials; staff participation records	Increase awareness and operational compliance.
16	Training and Lifelong Learning	Training opportunities are positively evaluated (score: 4.03).	Develop an annual training and mobility plan based on identified needs, covering scientific skills, grant writing, project management, leadership, and transferable skills.	Continued	HR Department; Scientific Council	Annually	Annual training plan, participation rates, and number of training activities	Maintain positive perceptions and increase training effectiveness.
17	Mentoring	Additional support is needed for early- and mid-career researchers.	Establish a formal mentoring program with clearly defined roles, objectives, and expectations.	New	Scientific Council; Research Group Leaders	Q2 2027	Mentoring program approved; mentor-mentee pairs established	Strengthen researcher development and retention.
18	Talent Retention and Career Stability	Talent retention represents the most significant institutional vulnerability (score: 2.81).	Develop an institutional retention package combining career pathways, mentoring, project participation, recognition mechanisms, and mobility opportunities.	Revised	Management; HR Department; Scientific Council	Q3 2027	Retention package approved and implemented	Reduce talent outflow and improve institutional attractiveness.
19	Monitoring and Continuous Improvement	Long-term HRS4R implementation requires systematic monitoring.	Introduce annual HR KPIs related to promotion, training participation, project involvement, career satisfaction, and retention.	New	HR Department; Management	Q1 2027 and annually thereafter	KPI dashboard; annual HR report	Enable evidence-based monitoring and decision-making.

No.	HRS4R Principle	Survey Analysis	Proposed Action	Type	Lead Responsibility	Timeline	Indicators of Achievement	Expected Outcome
20	HRS4R Governance and Communication	Several identified weaknesses are related to limited visibility rather than the absence of policies.	Update the dedicated HRS4R section of the intranet and website, including policies, procedures, action plans, responsibilities, and progress updates.	Continued	HRS4R Coordinator; IT Department; HR Department	Q1 2027	Updated webpages; published documents; information sessions	Increase transparency and strengthen organizational culture.
21	Internal Review and Continuous Improvement	Continuous monitoring and adjustment of the Action Plan are required.	Establish an annual internal review of the HRS4R Action Plan, including progress assessment, timeline adjustments, and staff consultation (survey).	New	HRS4R Working Group; Management	Annually	Review reports; updated Action Plan	Ensure continuous improvement and strategic adaptability.
