



Questions and Answers

On the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers

Approved by : Name

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*Research and
Innovation*

What is the European Charter for Researchers?

The European Charter for Researchers is a set of general principles and requirements which addresses the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers and their employers or funding organisations. It aims to ensure that the relationship between these parties contributes to successful performance in the generation, transfer and sharing of knowledge, and to the career development of researchers.

What is the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers?

The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers is a set of principles and requirements that aim to improve recruitment, to make selection procedures fairer and more transparent, and proposes different means of judging merit. For example, merit should not just be measured on researcher's publications, but on a wider range of evaluation criteria, such as teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, management and public awareness activities.

Why do we need the Charter and Code?

A potential shortage of researchers in Europe could pose a serious threat to the EU's innovative strength, knowledge capacity and productivity growth in the near future. Therefore, Europe needs to work on improving its attractiveness to researchers. The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers aim to do this by creating an attractive, open and sustainable labour market for researchers that offers fair working conditions and encourages researcher mobility.

What does it mean to endorse the principles of the Charter and Code?

Institutions and funders show they are committed to improving the working conditions for researchers, thereby making the European Research Area a more attractive place to do research.

Which organisations can endorse the principles of the Charter and Code?

Employers and funders of researchers from any country are invited to endorse the principles of the Charter and Code, either individually or through relevant umbrella organisations. Endorsements from organisations representing researchers (such as researcher associations

and professional associations) as well as trade unions and, more broadly, organisations that do not recruit researchers are equally welcome.

What is the benefit of sending an endorsement letter to the Commission? Is it not enough if the management decides to implement the Charter and Code within an organisation?

Endorsement letters are published on the EURAXESS website, providing added visibility to the organisations that have endorsed the Charter and Code and recognition in the research community.

How can one find out which other organisations have already endorsed the Charter and Code?

The country list of organisations that have endorsed the Charter and Code, together with copies of their endorsement letters, can be found on the EURAXESS website at <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/rights/charterAndCode>.

What is the "Human Resources Strategy for Researchers"?

The 'Human Resources Strategy for Researchers' (HRS4R) is a tool that helps employers and funders put the principles of the Charter and Code into practice. It has the following features:

- It is implemented by individual research institutions and funding organisations on a voluntary basis;
- It is based on an internal self-assessment and respects the autonomy of the institution;
- It is a simple and light mechanism, avoiding cumbersome procedures and recognising the variety of situations across institutions and national research systems;
- It is not a prerequisite for participating in the EU Research Framework Programme;
- It is a transparent approach that provides easily accessible public information on the actions of participating institutions and organisations who implement the Charter & Code principles.

What is the benefit for an organisation of taking part in the HR Strategy for Researchers?

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers helps participating organisations provide an attractive and supportive environment to researchers, through a structured process that enhances the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the actions that they would ideally already be undertaking.

Participation in the scheme sends a clear signal to researchers that the institution is committed to delivering fair recruitment practices and attractive career opportunities. In addition, organisations taking part in the process become part of a network of like-minded organisations from across Europe, providing opportunities for the exchange of experiences and the sharing of good practice.

Does the participation in the HR Strategy process create a lot of extra work or extra costs for the organisation?

The HRS4R is a voluntary process. It strives to be as simple as possible, avoid cumbersome procedures and respect the variety of situations across institutions. It is meant to be integrated into already existing institutional strategies and activities, exploiting synergies and improving already existing processes. Although a certain amount of extra work will be required at the start, this should be compensated by efficiency gains once the process is fully implemented.

What is RESAVER?

The mobility of researchers is a driver of excellence in research. However, researchers face many difficulties in preserving their supplementary pension benefits when moving between different countries. To overcome this problem, the European Commission is supporting a consortium of employers, through Horizon 2020, in creating a single European pension arrangement (RESAVER) that will offer a defined contribution plan, tailor-made for research organisations and their employees.

RESAVER will be a state of the art retirement savings product that will enable mobile employees (both EU and non-EU citizens) to remain affiliated to the same pension vehicle when moving between different countries and changing jobs.

In 2015 the employer consortium will prepare the ground for the effective establishment of RESAVER with the aim of transferring the first contributions as of 2016. The initiative should remove pensions as a barrier to researchers' mobility and contributes to the realisation of the European Research Area.

For more information please visit the project website:

<http://resaver.euraxess.org>

What will happen next?

The European Commission plans to have consultations on the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R). The Commission has scheduled a series of seminars with relevant

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stakeholders to discuss the way forward and see whether any changes are needed, especially in terms of strengthening external evaluation.

The aim of the series of seminars, to be organised throughout 2015, is to review the process with the help of an expert group, and find new quality related aspects for its implementation as part of the European Research Area ambition to create a more attractive labour market for researchers.